Approval to award contract for works at Whitebank Stadium, White Bank Road, Limehurst Village [Hollinwood]

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Jean Stretton, Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise

Officer Contact: Helen Lockwood, Executive Director, Economy, Skills and Neighbourhoods

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17 October 2016

Reason for Decision
The purpose of the report is to provide Cabinet with details of a recent tender exercise in relation to planned works at Whitebank Stadium, Limehurst Village.

Recommendations
Cabinet is asked to note the contents of the report only, with a further Part B report being considered later in the Cabinet agenda.
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1 **Background**

1.1 In September 2011, the Council completed a number of transactions to secure the use of the Whitebank Stadium for Oldham Rugby League Football Club (ORLFC), namely:

- The acquisition of the Freehold interest in the land shown edged red on the attached plan. The land measures approximately 4.85 acres and was purchased by the Council from Molson Coors Brewery.
- The acquisition by the Council of a leasehold interest in the adjacent land shown edged blue on the attached plan. The land is leased from Enville Estate.
- The grant of a leasehold interest in the whole site (i.e. the land edged green) to ORLFC for a term of 15 years with an option for the club to acquire the site at the end of the term.

1.2 Following promotion of ORLFC to the Championship and notice from the Rugby Football League that Whitebank Stadium failed to meet minimum ground standards for the league, ORLFC ceased playing competitive games at the ground and entered into an agreement with Stalybridge Celtic to play games at Bower Fold. On 19 July 2016, Oldham RLFC surrendered their lease agreement with the Council.

2 **Current Position**

2.1 In September 2016, the Council agreed to enter into an initial agreement for a lease with AVRO FC whereby, upon the Council securing planning permission for a range of improvement works and carrying out the programme of works, AVRO FC would be granted a 25 year lease across the whole of the site (Modern.Gov2740). In line with the agreement for a lease, the Council has now submitted a planning application (PA/339093/16) for the proposed improvement works at Whitebank Stadium and this is due to be determined at the Planning Committee on 16 November 2016.

2.2 The works detailed in the planning application have been tendered in consultation with colleagues in the Corporate Procurement team. As part of this process, the Authority approached a total of 7 companies which had been recommended by Council’s procured sports pitch consultant (Surfacing Standards Limited).

2.3 Details of the opportunity were uploaded onto the Chest on 3 October 2016 and the tenders were returned on 17 October 2016 (i.e. a 14 day tender period). Of the 7 companies approached, 4 returned a tender.
3 Public Health, Sport and Leisure

3.1 The loss of grass pitches at the Lancaster club could be mitigated with the development of a 3G artificial pitch development at the Whitebank stadium. The pitch at Whitebank is currently assigned as a rugby pitch, albeit not currently used. Having a rugby pitch at this site is factored into the overall borough supply and demand of pitches.

3.2 With the installation of an improved specification to allow both rugby and football to be played on site, this would offer the potential for wider and more flexible participation across sports and support long term sustainability of the asset.

  [Neil Consterdine – Head of Public Health and Leisure]

4 Options/Alternatives

4.1 There are a range of options available to the Council and these can be summarised as follows;
- Do Nothing
- Issue a contract for completion of the works to the party submitting the most economically advantageous tender

5 Preferred Option

5.1 It is considered preferable for the Council to award the tender to the company submitting the most economically advantageous tender. Full details of the appointment, together with the financial implications of the appointment would be set out in the separate, Part B report.

6 Consultation

6.1 None.

7 Financial Implications

7.1 These are detailed in the separate, Part B report.

8 Legal Services Comments

8.1 These are detailed in the separate, Part B report.

9 Procurement Comments

9.1 These are detailed in the separate, Part B report.

10 Co-operative Agenda

10.1 The Council are seeking to make a sizeable investment in a facility that is expected to accommodate significant community use. The facility would help
provide better access to sport for the residents of Limehurst Village who, compared with average data for Oldham, are considered to be less healthy, less active and less likely to participate in sports.

10.2 The Council have also had a series of discussions with Regenda about the works and both Regenda and Contour are supportive of the Council's proposals.

11 IT Implications
11.1 None.

12 Property Implications
12.1 These are detailed in the separate, Part B report.

13 Environmental and Health & Safety Implications
13.1 None.

14 Equality, community cohesion and crime implications
14.1 The Council are working with a series of partners including local sports clubs, Regenda, Contour and the Football Association to deliver a facility which can accommodate a range of sporting activities.

14.2 Whitebank Stadium also provides a social club on the site and it is expected that this would not only provide refreshments for stadium users, but also host a range of community events – including functions and parties.

15 Equality Impact Assessment Completed?
15.1 No.

16 Key Decision
16.1 Yes.

17 Key Decision Reference
17.1 ECEN-16-16

18 Background Papers
18.1 None.

19 Appendices
19.1 Appendix One – Plan.
Appendix One

Oldham RLFC - Whitebank Stadium

[Map of Whitebank Stadium area]

Drawn by: LB
Division: PDI
Drawing No:
Date: 23.08.11 Scale: 1:2000

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