

Leicester  
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED:

SAFFRON

CABINET

24<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2001

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**PROPOSED REFURBISHMENT OF SAFFRON LANE SPORTS CENTRE  
ATHLETICS TRACK**

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**Report of the Director of Arts and Leisure**

**1 Purpose of Report**

This report explains the progress made regarding the proposed refurbishment of Saffron Lane Sports Centre athletics track. It also seeks approval to proceed with the submission of a Stage 1 Lottery Bid to Sports England to refurbish the track.

**2 Summary**

The athletics track and field areas have deteriorated in recent years and have now reached the stage where extensive refurbishment is necessary.

The Stage 1 lottery submission will be based around athletics needs but will require consultation with representatives of the Leicester Riders to ensure a coordinated, partnership approach to the scheme.

An Athletics Strategy was written in 2000 highlighting the issues facing athletics and the need for the clubs to work together to enable the sport in Leicester to develop.

An Athletics Action Group has been formed to resolve these issues and to agree a sports development plan.

On completion of the sports development plan it is proposed to submit a Stage 1 Lottery Bid to Sport England in an effort to raise the finance required to refurbish the track and field areas.

Should the bid be successful, then Saffron Lane Sports Centre will need to be closed for a period of up to six months whilst refurbishment takes place. The track is currently operating as normal.

The gym will remain open throughout this time as it too will be completely refurbished in September. An Inclusive Fitness Initiative bid has just been

successful in securing £30,000 towards the provision of fitness equipment for the disabled.

Responsibility for the submission of a lottery bid lies with the Acting Head of Sports Services

### **3 Recommendations**

Members are recommended to note this report and to give approval for a stage 1 Lottery Bid to be submitted.

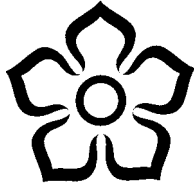
### **4 Financial & Legal Implications**

The closure of Saffron Lane Sports Centre for track refurbishment is necessary both to be able to carry out the work and to provide the necessary revenue savings of £100,000. This will be used as the City Council's contribution towards the lottery bid. Approval has already been given for an operating lease to finance the gym equipment. The total cost of the track refurbishment is expected to be about £300,000, £200,000 of which will be applied for from Sport England.

Officers, in the interim period will investigate alternative grant aid options to ensure there is a contingency should the lottery application be rejected or fall short of the amount applied for.

### **5 Report Author**

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**SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

The athletics areas of Saffron Lane Sports Centre are now in need of considerable refurbishment and repair.

Discussions have been progressing with The Leicester Riders and it has been clear that the athletics side of Saffron Lane Sports Centre will not be affected by the Arena development. A decision to prepare a lottery submission was made to refurbish the track and field areas, seeking financial assistance from Sport England Lottery Fund.

The project lead for this refurbishment is the Head of Sports Services

In 2000 an Athletics Strategy was devised, and shortly after an Athletics Action Group formed to begin implementation of the strategy and prepare a Lottery bid. Consultation has taken place with local athletics clubs including Leicester Coritanians, Owls Athletics Club and Leicester Walking Club and with representation from national athletics organisations.

The refurbishment will include renovation of both the track and the field event areas and is expected to cost in the region of £300,000.

If approved it is hoped the bid will be submitted within the next few months and if successful work could begin in April 2002.

This bid will not affect other lottery submissions currently being made as each application is treated on a “stand-alone” basis.

It is proposed to close the track for up to six months whilst refurbishment takes place, although as the gym will be completely refurbished in September 2001, it is intended to maintain this service whilst refurbishment takes place.

To submit a bid the following are needed:-

- 1) Athletics Sports Strategy – completed 2000.
- 2) Sports Development Plan – nearing completion

## **1 Financial Implications**

The project is expected to cost £300,000. £100,000 will be contributed from the Sports Services central revenue budget as a result of savings accrued whilst the track is closed and this will be utilised as funding towards the bid.

Other grant aid opportunities will also be investigated in an effort to reduce the call on the Sports Lottery.

## **2 Legal Implications**

If the lottery bid is successful, the refurbishment contract will be put out to tender. All legal requirements will be adhered to.

## **3 Other Implications**

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	PARAGRAPH REFERENCES WITHIN SUPPORTING PAPERS
Equal Opportunities	No	
Policy	No	
Sustainable and Environmental	No	
Crime and Disorder	No	
Human Rights Act	No	

## **4 Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972**

None.

## **5 Consultations**

Consultation has taken place with members of the various athletics clubs that use Saffron Lane Sports Centre, with Sport England, representation from national athletics organisation and Arts and Leisure Finance Section.