

To: Council

On: 26 September 2019

Report by: Director of Environment & Infrastructure

Heading: Audit on the Condition of Secondary Schools Mineral (Red Blaes) Pitches & Proposals for Future Investment

1. Summary

- 1.1 At the Council meeting of 9 May 2019, the Council agreed to undertake a full audit on the condition of all Secondary Schools red blaes pitches and bring back a report detailing proposals for future investment and the report be submitted to the first meeting of the Council following the Summer recess. Red blaes pitches are more widely defined as mineral pitches.
- 1.2 There are eleven secondary schools within Renfrewshire. Three secondary schools have mineral pitches as part of their school pitch provision, St Benedict's, Linwood and Gryffe High Schools.
- 1.3 An audit has been undertaken of the three mineral pitches used as part of the secondary school estate. These pitches have been audited against Sport Scotland standards for mineral pitches and all three have been assessed as satisfactory, the highest standard set out in the Sport Scotland criteria.
- 1.4 Future investment proposals for the mineral based pitches at the schools set out in section 1.2 of this report will be undertaken through the lifecycle maintenance programme as set out in section 6 of this report.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Council:

- 2.1 Notes that a full audit has been undertaken of all secondary school mineral pitches;
 - 2.2 Notes that the three secondary mineral pitches have been assessed as being in satisfactory condition as set out in section 4 of this report.
 - 2.3 Approves the future investment proposals as set out in section 6 of this report.
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3. Background

- 3.1 There are eleven secondary schools within Renfrewshire. Seven schools have synthetic all-weather pitches only, one school has a synthetic all-weather pitch and a mineral pitch, and two schools have a singular mineral pitch only. One school, Paisley Grammar, has no pitches within the school grounds, using the Seedhill Playing Fields to support the delivery of the school curriculum. A summary of schools and pitches is set out in appendix 1.
- 3.2 The three mineral pitches within the secondary school estate are located at Linwood and St Benedict's High Schools and Gryffe High School, where they also have an all-weather synthetic pitch.
- 3.3 Renfrewshire Leisure operate community football pitch facilities within Renfrewshire. These are synthetic all-weather pitches and grass pitches available for the community to lease. These football pitches are located throughout Renfrewshire and are a combination of standalone community and sports facility pitches and school pitch availability for community use outwith school hours, as set out in appendix 2 of this report.
- 3.4 Mineral pitches
 - 3.4.1 Mineral pitches in Scotland were traditionally constructed of burnt pit shale (mineral). Over the last 20 years the availability of red burnt pit shale has decreased and a product called "golden grit", a granite mineral

is used to replenish the top surface. Mineral pitches were designed to withstand extensive wear and high levels of rainfall. However, during periods of cold and wet weather, they can be subject to 'frost heave' and they can become water logged. The three mineral pitches within Renfrewshire secondary schools use "golden grit".

3.5 Synthetic pitches

3.5.1 Over the last 20 years a number of the existing mineral and grass pitch facilities in Renfrewshire have been replaced with synthetic all-weather facilities. These pitches have been developed to more closely mimic the playing characteristics of good quality natural grass surfaces. The pile length is longer and more open, and the infill uses rubber crumb. These facilities are usable all-year round excluding extreme winter weather conditions.

4. **Audit of Secondary School Mineral Pitch Facilities**

4.1 Sport Scotland set out defined standards for all pitch construction materials, including mineral pitches. For mineral pitches the standard is as follows:

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| Grade 3 | Satisfactory standard: Set as the desirable satisfactory standard, able to accommodate a number of games per week without serious deterioration in playing quality. Drainage system is maintained appropriately to ensure efficient functioning. |
| Grade 2 | Requires renovation of the playing surface: Drainage functions ineffectively for various reasons such as ground conditions not allowing water to reach the drainage system, a damaged system incorrect maintenance. Exhibits similar problems to Grade 1 pitches although less severe.
Generally provides a poor-quality playing surface. |
| Grade 1 | Requires reconstruction: Typical problems of waterlogging, uneven surface loss, mineral cover and consistent ball reaction. Generally provides a poor quality playing surface. Difficult to maintain and unable to sustain more than occasional use without serious damage to the pitch. |

4.2 The audit of Renfrewshire's three secondary school mineral pitches has been assessed against the Sport Scotland standards and the summary of the audit condition is set out in the table below:

School	Condition
Gryffe	3
Linwood	3
St Benedict's	3

4.3 Gryffe High School has both a synthetic all-weather pitch facility and a mineral pitch facility. The school delivers the curriculum requirements through these two facilities, predominantly through the synthetic all- weather pitch with the mineral pitch being used predominantly in the summer to support athletics.

4.4 Linwood and St Benedict's High Schools both have one mineral pitch. The school delivers the curriculum requirements through these facilities.

5. **Audit of Secondary School Synthetic Pitch Facilities**

5.1 In addition to auditing the secondary school mineral pitch facilities, an audit was undertaken of all the secondary school synthetic all-weather pitch facilities. Sport Scotland also set out defined standards for synthetic pitches. The standard is as follows:

- Grade 3 Satisfactory standard: The pitch has been constructed in accordance with recognised technical and performance specifications and has been maintained appropriately so that the required performance and playing characteristics have been preserved.
- Grade 2 Requires rejuvenation: The surface does not deliver the required performance and playing characteristics.
- Grade 1 Requires refurbishment: The carpet surface has become completely worn out and needs to be replaced, possibly with the same carpet type and possibly with a more modern or sports specific surface. Repairs to or, exceptionally, renewal of the sub-base, might also be required.

5.2 The audit of Renfrewshire's secondary school synthetic pitches has been assessed against the Sport Scotland standards and the summary of the audit condition is set out in the table below:

School	Condition
Castlehead High School	3
Gleniffer High School	3
Gryffe High School	3
Johnstone High School	3
Park Mains High School	2
Renfrew High School	3
St Andrew's Academy	3
Trinity High School	3

6. Future Investment Requirements

- 6.1 The three mineral based pitches at Gryffe, Linwood and St Benedict's High schools are currently assessed as being in a satisfactory condition. These pitches are subject to regular maintenance to retain the pitches in a satisfactory condition. These pitches, like all infrastructure assets require lifecycle maintenance investment on top of the regular maintenance requirements over time. In the case of mineral based pitches this being to renew drainage and minerals elements of the pitch infrastructure.
- 6.2 Linwood and St Benedict's are PPP Schools. Under the terms of the contract, these mineral pitches require to be maintained to a satisfactory condition to the end of the contract in 2038.
- 6.3 The mineral based pitch at Gryffe High School is not at the point in its asset life where long term investment is required to improve the drainage and playing surface. The mineral pitch at the school will be inspected on an annual basis to update the asset condition. At the point when the asset condition survey recommends long term investment, the future pitch requirements will be reviewed in conjunction with the school and Renfrewshire Leisure to provide a facility that meets the future needs of the school and the community.
- 6.4 The synthetic pitch at Gryffe High School is scheduled for renewal, in conjunction with the school in 2021/2022.
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Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – The costs to renew school pitches is funded from the Council's capital budget for asset lifecycle replacement.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None
3. **Community/Council Planning** – None
4. **Legal** – None
5. **Property/Assets** – More effective use of community assets
6. **Information Technology** – None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** - None
9. **Procurement** – None
10. **Risk** – None
11. **Privacy Impact** – Not required
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – not applicable
13. **Climate Risk** – None

List of Background Papers – None

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Appendix 1

School	Number of Pitches	Nature of Pitches
Castlehead High School	2	Synthetic Rubber
Gleniffer High School	1	Synthetic
Gryffe High School	2	Mineral Synthetic
Johnstone High School	1	Synthetic
Linwood High School	1	Mineral
Paisley Grammar	0	No facilities on-site, use of Seedhill Playing fields both astroturf and grass pitches
Park Mains High School	4	Synthetic Astro hockey Running track Grass rugby
Renfrew High School	1	Synthetic
St Andrew's Academy	1	Synthetic
St Benedict's High School	1	Mineral
Trinity High School	1	Synthetic

Secondary School & Community Football Pitch Facilities in Renfrewshire

Location	Types
Ralston Sports Centre	Synthetic & grass
Seedhill Sports Centre	Synthetic & grass
Renfrew Sports Centre	Synthetic & grass
ON-X leisure Centre	Synthetic & grass
Johnstone Community Hub	Synthetic
Ferguslie Sports Centre	Synthetic & grass
Park Mains	Synthetic
Johnstone	Synthetic
KGV Renfrew	Synthetic
Trinity	Synthetic
Gryffe	Synthetic
St Andrew's	Synthetic
Castlehead	Synthetic
Gleniffer	Synthetic
KGV Renfrew	Grass
St James	Grass
Bishopton	Grass
KGV Johnstone	Grass
Thomas Shanks Johnstone	Grass
McMaster Centre	Grass
Morar Drive	Grass
Todholm Marshes	Grass
Inchinnan Playing Fields	Grass
Moredun Playing Fields	Grass
Durrockstock Park	Grass
Glenpatrick Playing Fields	Grass
Erskine	Grass
Kirklandneuk	Grass
Viewfield Park	Grass
Lochwinnoch Annex	Grass
Argryffe	Grass
Houston Football Pitch	Grass
Kilbarchan Football Pitch	Grass