

# North Yorkshire Council

## Assistant Director - Resources

13 February 2026

### Grant Acceptance for the Football Foundation Playzones Programme to install a 2G multi-use games area at Gallows Close, Scarborough

#### Report of the Assistant Director – Highways and Infrastructure

#### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 That the Chief Finance Officer (sub-delegated to the Assistant Director - Resources) authorises the acceptance of a grant to the maximum sum of Two hundred and seventeen thousand and seventy-four pounds and seventy-five pence (£217,074.75) from the Football Foundation to install a Playzone facility at the Gallows Close Centre, Scarborough.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There is a well-used multi-use games area (MUGA) owned by The North Yorkshire Council (NYC) located at Gallows Close in Scarborough that currently comprises of a fenced-in tarmac playing surface with goal ends and flood lighting. The playing surface is in poor condition in places with historic patch repairs and is in need of re-lining. The surrounding fence is in poor condition and not of the standard seen on more modern facilities.
- 2.2 The wider site comprises of a children's play area with a variety of equipment (maintained by NYC) and also is home to The Gallows Community Centre (TGCC), which plays a key role in supporting the Barrowcliffe community as a local hub.
- 2.3 We have been offered a capital grant from the Football Foundation to invest in and transform the facility to a Playzone facility with a 2G surface which will increase usage of the facility by a wide variety of user groups and sports (including football, hockey, cricket and basketball).
- 2.4 As with all Football Foundation Playzones, it is expected the facility will be run by a community anchor organisation who has the skills and capacity to manage facility bookings and routine maintenance. The local community organisation which is proposed as the anchor is The Gallows Community Centre Ltd (TGCC) and this is well supported by the local community, including the relevant elected NYC divisional members. TGCC have a track record of delivering programmes of work and achieving self-sufficiency through managing grant programmes and engaging volunteers

#### 3.0 FOOTBALL FOUNDATION PLAYZONES PROGRAMME

- 3.1 The programme delivers capital investment funded by the Premier League, the FA and the Government through Sport England and aims to engage with local communities to create sports and activity spaces to tackle inequalities in participation. Funding aims to deliver new or refurbished outdoor 'mini pitches' designed for football and other sports and activities. The focus is on improving access for priority groups from; lower socio-economic backgrounds, women and girls, disabled people and people with long term health conditions, and also those from ethnically diverse communities.

- 3.2 A key aspect of a Playzone facility is that income is generated to cover the cost of future maintenance and services and to fund eventual surface replacement. An 'activation plan' has been developed by TGCC following extensive engagement with local stakeholders including local football and athletic clubs who will become regular paying users of the facility. The activation plan is predicated on introducing a gated access to the facility (similar to that seen on tennis courts) where bookings are made on-line via a platform. This represents a change from the current open 24/7 free of charge access. However, this is mitigated by offering regular free-to-use sessions for the community that complement the paid for sessions from local sports clubs.

#### **4.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES**

- 4.1 TGCC undertook a community survey to collate views on the potential investment in a Playzone. It was distributed to local groups and TGCC carried out several events in the community. This resulted in 215 completed questionnaires being returned with 98% of respondents saying the investment would be positive for the area with very high levels (92%) of respondents saying they would utilise the facilities on a regular basis.
- 4.2 In addition to the survey work TGCC have engaged with key local groups including Barrowcliffe Big Local, Community Safety, Scarborough Athletic FC Foundation, SPARKS (coaching, counselling and careers service) and others to gain support for the proposal.

#### **5.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

- 5.1 The proposed investment in the MUGA and operating model will contribute to all the ambitions in the Council Plan 2025-29 as set out below.
- Supporting thriving places and empowered communities that live, work and do business in North Yorkshire,
  - Developing more sustainable and connected places across North Yorkshire,
  - Ensure the people of North Yorkshire are safe, healthy and living well; and to
  - Maximise the potential of North Yorkshire's people and communities.

#### **6.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 6.1 The option to not accept the grant offer from the Football Foundation was considered but rejected. This was because the opportunity to significantly upgrade an asset owned by the Council would be lost, along with the wider benefits of addressing access to safe high quality play facilities for the target groups referenced in paragraph 3.1 of this report.

#### **7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The Football Foundation estimates that Playzone refurbishments typically cost around £225k, with the proposed scheme at Gallows Close projected to cost £235k. The maximum total project cost is £289,433 (which includes cost of delivery, plus prelims, overheads and a contingency). The inclusion of contingency monies is to mitigate against the risk of any potential cost rises as a result of unexpected occurrences during the build stage.
- 7.2 The grant offer of £217,074.75 equates to 75% of the total maximum project cost with the remaining 25% (£72,358) being delivered as match funding. Any decreases in costs are shared across the same 75/25 split, as would any increase in costs up to the maximum Football Foundation grant award value of £249,999.99 i.e. total project cost of £333k. Any increases above this value, and any issues with securing additional match funding will need to be covered by NYC – there is no existing budget for this.

- 7.3 Participation in the programme requires a minimum contribution of 25% of the total capital cost. A breakdown of the match funding is shown in the below table for information and has been confirmed with partners as secure. There is no requirement at this stage for North Yorkshire Council to provide any match funding.

Source	£ Value
Big Local	£10,000
PFCC	£20,000
Beyond Housing	£8,000
North Yorkshire Sport	£16,358
NYC Communities	£15,000
Gallows Centre	£3,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£72,358</b>

- 7.4 As with any capital programme, there will be a resulting ongoing revenue cost to maintain and protect the investment. This is estimated at £13k per annum. A key component of Playzone projects is to deliver an 'activation plan' where an engaged and committed group of organisational and club users provide the basis of paid for hire sessions. This income is then used to cover maintenance costs, provide free of use sessions to the community and additionally a sinking fund to cover the eventual repair and replacement of the infrastructure. An activation plan has been developed and is included as Appendix A to this report, and projected income of £22k per annum exceeds the £13k required for maintenance and the sinking fund. Details of maintenance responsibilities and the sinking fund will be included in the lease between NYC and TGCC.
- 7.5 It is proposed that in addition to the maintenance and sinking fund revenue cost, a separate contingency fund should be in place to mitigate for the event of an income shortfall. The proposal is that this fund should be taken from the surplus fund at a rate of 10% per annum. Details of this fund will be specified in the contract between the TGCC and NYC.
- 7.6 Any surpluses available after covering maintenance costs, the sinking fund and the contingency will be fed into a Sports Development Fund where a board will determine how these funds will be spent, but funds must be spent to benefit the community. The make up of this board is still to be agreed.
- 7.7 The grant will be paid to NYC via a claims basis i.e. once NYC have received a contractor invoice, a claim can be made to the Football Foundation to draw down on the grant. There will be a cost to NYC in relation to staff time in order to administer the grant – this can be met from existing staffing budgets.

## 8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The terms of the grant are governed by the Football Foundation General Terms and Conditions of Grant and subsequent Offer Letter. These are currently being revised by the Football Foundation and when received the revised terms will be reviewed by Legal Services if any of the revised terms present unacceptable risk to the Council then the grant offer would be declined.
- 8.2 The Grant may require the Council to enter into specific legal obligations, these may include a restriction on the Council's title preventing the disposal or letting of the premises without the prior written consent of the Football Foundation and /or the granting of a legal charge over the premises in favour of the Football Foundation as security for the funding. Any decision to agree to such conditions must be taken in accordance with the Property Procedure Rules.

8.3 It is proposed that TGCC will be the operator of the facility, who will manage the maintenance of the site and booking system, including administration of the associated finances. TGCC have requested a 10-year lease for the facility which will run concurrently with a contract between NYC and TGCC to formalise the working arrangement and to ensure the General Terms and Conditions of Grant are not breached. Any decision regarding the grant of such a lease must be taken in accordance with the Property Procedure Rules and all negotiations in respect of the terms of such a lease will need to be progressed by the property services team. The contract is being progressed by Legal Services and the Lease by Property, Procurement and Commercial.

## **9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) was completed as part of the preparation of this report, see Appendix B, and has concluded that if the funding application is successful and the project comes to fruition, there are highly likely to be positive benefits for the protected characteristics of age, disability, sex and race – due to how the grant funding is targeted to prioritise those groups. The Council will be working closely with TGCC in implementing the scheme and will organise regular monitoring meetings with them on how the site is performing, post implementation.

## **10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 A Climate Change Implication Assessment, see Appendix C, highlighted the proposed upgrade to the MUGA has a broadly neutral impact as compared to the current operation, with the exception that final specification of floodlighting offers the opportunity to use a modern and efficient low energy solution.

## **11.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

11.1 TGCC and partners represent an excellent opportunity to access significant funding from the Football Foundation Playzone scheme that will see a transformational change in the quality of an NYC asset and the ability for key user groups to access and benefit from the facility.

## **12.0 RECOMMENDATION**

12.1 The Chief Finance Officer (sub-delegated to the Assistant Director – Resources) authorises the acceptance of the Football Foundation grant offer for the sum of £217,074.75 for the purpose of installing a Playzone facility at the Gallows Close Centre, Scarborough subject to appropriate terms and conditions being agreed and agreement of the sources of match funding set out in this report.

### **APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – Activation Plan

Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix C – Climate Change Impact Assessment

### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

Football Foundation Suite of Documents (electronic files and guidance downloaded from the Football Foundation).

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Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.