

North Lanarkshire Council

Report

Finance and Resources Committee

approval noting

Ref X8895230/WP

Date 24/09/20

Re-allocation of land at Morven Street, Coatbridge from Education & Families to Environmental Facilities

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek council consent for the re-allocation of land currently within the remit of Education & Families to Environmental Facilities. This will enable Environmental Facilities to develop plans for the expansion of Coltswood Cemetery.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Finance and Resources Committee:

- (1) Consider the contents of this report and,
- (2) Agree the proposal for this site to be re-allocated from Education & Families to Environmental Facilities for the purpose of expanding Coltswood Cemetery on the understanding that any SportScotland requirements are met in relation to the loss of the disused playing field and appropriate planning consent is obtained before any development commences.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority Improve North Lanarkshire's resource base

Ambition statement (22) Facilitate a North Lanarkshire wide approach to asset rationalisation, including with communities and partners

1. Background

- 1.1 A report detailing the council's Cemeteries Service burial space needs was presented to the Environment & Transportation Committee in May 2019, outlining the approach required to secure land for the extension of existing cemeteries, including Coltswood Cemetery.
 - 1.2 The land currently sits within the remit of Education & Families and would require to be re-allocated to Environmental Facilities so that the land falls under their remit and control in future.
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2. Report

- 2.1 Environmental Facilities have approached Asset & Procurement Solutions to assist with the proposed re-allocation of land at Morven Street, Coatbridge extending to 26,909 square metres (6.65 acres) or thereby. The land is identified on the plan attached to this report at Appendix 1 and, comprises of a disused grass football pitch, a dilapidated changing pavilion and general open space.
 - 2.2 Education & Families have confirmed that they have no objection to the land being released from their remit and they have submitted a report to the Head of Asset & Procurement Solutions to that effect. It is recognised that Sport Scotland may seek compensatory provision if the playing field is lost to facilitate the cemetery extension.
 - 2.3 The land and pavilion on the site is listed within the body of the document which historically transferred certain playing fields and facilities to the management of North Lanarkshire Leisure. North Lanarkshire Leisure have advised that the disused pavilion and former playing field at Morven Street, Coatbridge are “surplus to the current sports provision requirements given the level and quality of service this can deliver in the current state and the potential scaling up of complementary capacity in the area to meet demand from compensation, still to be agreed in line with the outline draft sports pitch strategy and to be formally approved by SportScotland.”
 - 2.4 Where there is no objection from Services or Local Members to land or property being declared surplus and passed to another Service or marketed for sale, the Head of Asset & Procurement Solutions has delegated authority to agree the surplus declaration without the requirement to report to Committee. However, in this instance two Local Members have raised concerns about the loss of this recreational area and, why the playing field has fallen in to disuse.
 - 2.5 Should the site be taken forward for a cemetery extension, SportScotland will be formally consulted on the loss of the football pitch. In past experience, where a football pitch is not in active use and SportScotland agree with this position, the way of addressing the loss of a football pitch often recommended by SportScotland is in the form of upgrading existing local sports facilities to more comprehensively serve the local community. This is supported by the stated intention of North Lanarkshire Leisure as noted at 2.3 above. If the development is to proceed, the impact on open space provision for the local community would require to satisfy the requirements of the council’s Planning Service. The Planning Service will require to take the impact of the development into account and may impose conditions on any planning consent to mitigate the loss of open space.
 - 2.6 As at April 2019 Coltswood Cemetery was projected to run out of burial lairs in December 2026. The recreational land at Morven Street offers the only opportunity for a cemetery expansion adjacent to the existing facility. Ground investigations have been carried out which demonstrated that the Morven Street land is suitable for cemetery purposes, offering the potential for the development of new lairs that could provide capacity for an estimated 25 years.
 - 2.7 It is recommended that Committee approve the re-allocation of the land from Education & Families to Environmental Facilities on the understanding that detailed planning permission would require to be obtained before any cemetery expansion can be implemented and, that the planning process would consider the loss of the playing field.
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3. Equality and Diversity

3.1 Fairer Scotland

COSLA Leaders have endorsed the Fairer Scotland Action Plan which includes an action on funeral poverty. Local Government is committed to working with the Scottish Government to understand the reasons for variation in funeral charges and look at whether the way this information is presented can be made more consistent. COSLA is also committed to bringing local authorities together to discuss ways they can contribute to tackling funeral poverty and North Lanarkshire Council are engaged in these discussions. No impact under the Fairer Scotland Duty in relation to this report.

3.2 Equality Impact Assessment

No Equality Impact Assessment has taken place at this time.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial Impact

Environmental Facilities has allocated funding in the council's 2018-23 capital budget for burial space development. The expansion of Coltswood cemetery was a project identified in a report approved by the Environment and Transportation committee on 1st May 2019.

Should there be any requirement arising from the consultation with SportScotland to upgrade existing local sports facilities this would need to be accounted for in future capital budget allocations.

4.2 HR/Policy/Legislative Impact

North Lanarkshire Council is required under the terms of the Burial and Cremation (Scotland) Act 2016 to provide facilities for the burial of those who have passed away.

4.3 Environmental Impact

The environmental impact of cemetery extensions and new cemetery development will be considered as part of the planning process.

4.4 Risk Impact

Management of risk is ongoing through the project management process.

5. Measures of success

- 5.1 The re-allocation of the land at Morven Street, Coatbridge to Environmental Facilities will help facilitate the development of this land for cemetery expansion in keeping with the additional burial space needs at this location. The use of adjacent land will also have cost and efficiency benefits by expanding an existing site rather than the significant investment required in a new site.
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6. Supporting documents

6.1 Location Plan

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James McKinstry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

James McKinstry
Head of Asset & Procurement Solutions

LOCATION PLAN - For Information Only

Title: Morven Street

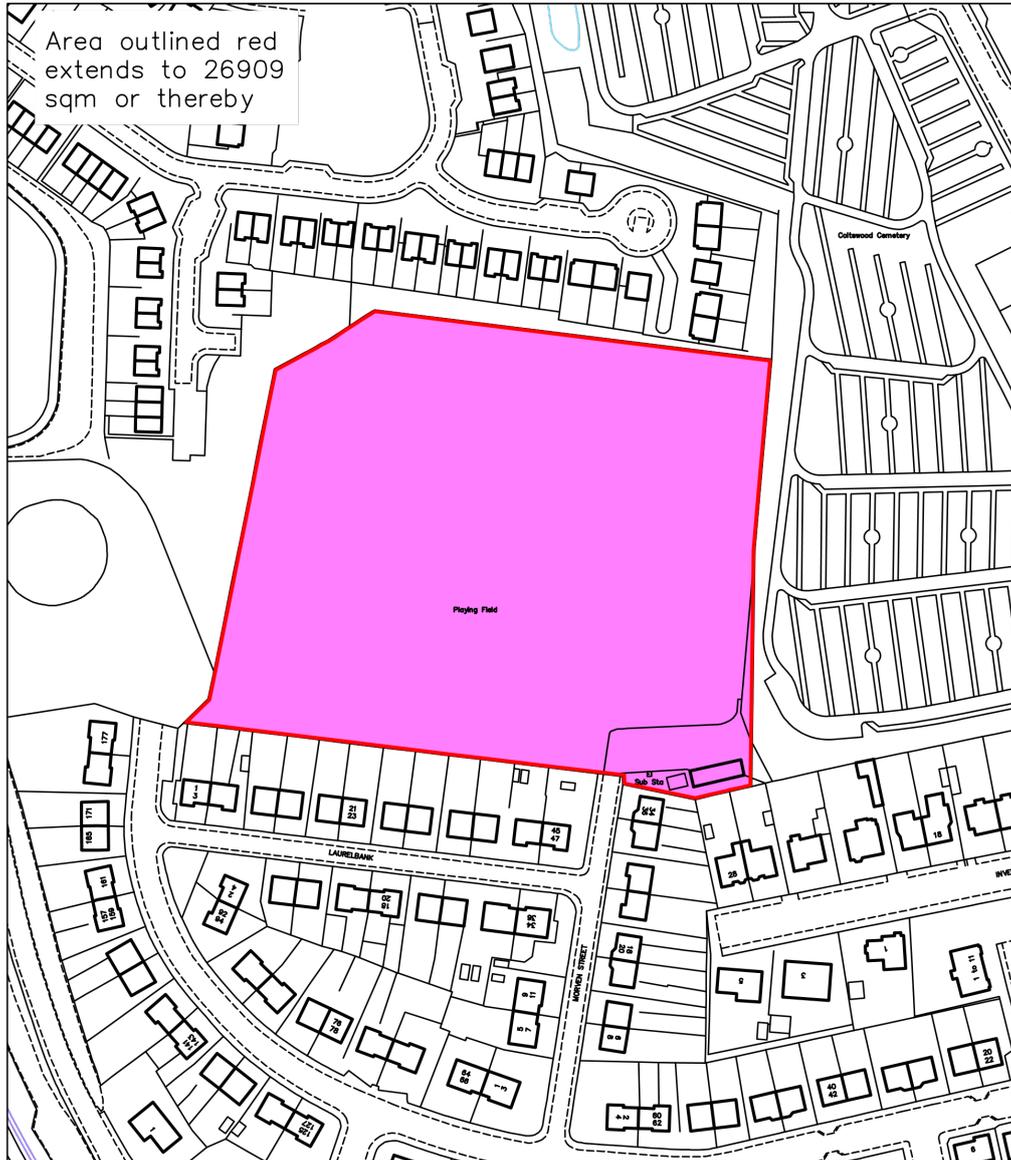
Scale 1:NTS



Town: Coatbridge

Date: 14/03/2019

ENTERPRISE & COMMUNITIES



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