

4TH AUGUST 2026

KEY DECISION YES

WAVELL 3G PITCH – FOOTBALL FOUNDATION APPLICATION

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval for the Council to provide partnership funding towards a third generation (3G) artificial grass pitch at Wavell School. Wavell is seeking a main grant from the Football Foundation, and the Council's contribution will form part of the required local partnership funding.

This report recommends that Cabinet approve a Council contribution of £150,000 towards Wavell School's 3G pitch project.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to note the findings of this report and approve:

- A Council contribution of £150,000 subject to the project securing Football Foundation funding and confirmation of a minimum of £100k direct partnership funding from Wavell School.
- The use of the balance of the Council's Community Recovery Fund (£85k) and a further £65,000 from the Council's Capital Receipts.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This report seeks Cabinet approval for a £150,000 funding contribution towards Wavell School's application to the Football Foundation for a new third generation (3G) pitch.
- 1.2. Wavell School is applying to the Football Foundation (FF) for funding to construct a 3G artificial grass pitch. Wavell is contributing a minimum of £100k and seeking a partnership contribution of £150K from the Council to support the Football Foundation application.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Provision of a 3G artificial grass pitch at Wavell School is listed as a priority in the Rushmoor Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) - 2025 [ADOPTION OF A NEW PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY.pdf](#) and Rushmoor Local Football Facilities Plan (LFFP) (updated in 2025).

- 2.2. Rushmoor's LFFP, developed in partnership with Hampshire FA and Football Foundation (FF), highlights potential priority projects for FF investment.
- 2.3. The LFFP highlights the need for more 3G pitches and confirms the findings of the PPS that there is a huge demand for 3G pitches in Rushmoor, which far exceeds the supply for clubs and community groups.
- 2.4. The proposal directly supports the Council's ambitions to improve health and wellbeing, increase participation in sport and physical activity, and strengthen community resilience through sport.

3. MAIN SUBJECT

General

- 3.1. The project represents a significant investment in community sport and health and directly supports the priorities identified within the Rushmoor Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS). The facility will substantially increase the availability of accessible sports provision across the borough and help address the identified shortfall in playing pitch capacity.
- 3.2. The Football Foundation's investment in grassroots facilities is based on a funding model of a 65 -70% grant from the Foundation paired with 30-35% contributions from local partners. The Council's proposed contribution could unlock substantial external investment and provide a much-needed community sports facility.
- 3.3. The proposal directly supports the Council's priorities for Community and Wellbeing and its ambitions to help residents lead healthy and active lives by providing access to opportunities to exercise and be active. The proposal will provide an additional leisure facility and further enhance health and wellbeing, and participation in sport and physical activity, whilst strengthening community resilience.
- 3.4. Wavell School is well located in the centre of Rushmoor and accessible to communities across the borough. The proposed £150k Council contribution reflects the school's positive approach to community access and its successful track record of supporting local clubs and community groups.
- 3.5. The project has been developed in conjunction with Community partners including Rushmoor Community Football Club, the Shots Foundation and other community groups. As part of the application to the Foundation the school will develop a community usage programme which will include opportunities for local clubs and community organisations and maximise project outcomes.
- 3.6. Wavell has launched 'Pitch In' [The Wavell School - Pitch In -3G Pitch Fundraising](#) - a campaign to fundraise towards the Pitch. The 'Pitch In'

campaign also incorporates community engagement events to include and empower the local community to be part of the project.

- 3.7. The application to the Foundation will be subject to a stringent community usage agreement to ensure the facility is available to local clubs, community organisations and residents during evenings, weekends and school holidays.

Timescales

- 3.8. A Planning application to Rushmoor was validated on 8th May and a decision is expected in the summer of 2026. [26/00225/FULPP | Replacement of existing natural grass pitch with a floodlit 3G artificial grass pitch \(AGP\) with perimeter fencing, floodlighting, access pathways and associated ancillary works including relocation of existing sports facilities | The Wavell School Lynchford Road Farnborough Hampshire GU14 6BH](#)
- 3.9. It is expected that Wavell will submit the funding application to the Football Foundation in October. At this stage, the application will need to demonstrate confirmed partnership funding and community usage.
- 3.10. The Football Foundation Grant Panel is expected to consider the application in early 2027. If the application is successful, work will commence in summer 2027 with the aim of the 3G being available for use from September 2027.

4. IMPLICATIONS

Risks

- 4.1. The Project is dependent on a successful grant approval from the Foundation. The Council's proposed investment is a partnership funding contribution intended to support the wider application to the Football Foundation. However, without the Council support, the project is highly unlikely to secure Football Foundation funding.
- 4.2. There is a risk that supporting Wavell's project could set expectations for the Council to provide similar levels of funding for future projects. The case to support this project is particularly strong given it will deliver a community facility in a central location and leverage significant investment. Wavell's established partnership working, commitment to community access and level of funding contributed by the school provide further justification for Council support.
- 4.3. The final project costs are to be confirmed and so there is a risk that the project could require further financial support if total project costs are higher than expected. There is also a potential risk around maintenance and replacement liabilities. However, this will be mitigated through clear funding conditions including confirmation of partnership funding and agreement that the Council's £150,000 contribution is the maximum available. The Football Foundation's grant conditions include the requirement for a Pitch

Replacement Fund (PRF) which will cover the replacement costs and safeguard against further requests for Council funding.

- 4.4. The Football Foundation grant terms and conditions apply for a 21-year period from date of grant award. This includes the standard grant condition that would require Wavell to pay into a PRF on a quarterly basis, using income from the 3G pitch. This will ensure that funds will be in place for any future carpet replacement negating the need to seek further financial support from the Council in future years. The PRF is monitored by the Football Foundation's Post Award Team.

Legal Implications

- 4.5. The Council's contribution is subject to confirmation of funding from the Football Foundation and the partnership contribution from Wavell School.
- 4.6. As the grant applicant, Wavell are fully responsible for maintaining the community usage programme. This will be closely monitored by the Foundation post award team who will ensure the project is meeting its targets including commitments to community usage.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 4.7. The Project is based on Wavell securing funding from the Football Foundation.
- 4.8. It is proposed that the Council contributes funding as follows:
- The remaining balance of the Community Recovery Fund - £85K
 - The balance through the Council's Capital Receipts- £65k
- 4.9. The Community Recovery Fund was established to support projects that strengthen communities, improve wellbeing and create lasting benefits following the impacts experienced by local communities in recent years. The proposed investment is fully aligned with these objectives, creating a long-term community asset that promotes health, social inclusion and community participation.
- 4.10. The Council's contribution would be subject to Wavell securing a minimum of £100k partnership funding. The £150k is the Council's maximum contribution and further requests for funding will not be considered.
- 4.11. Current Capital Receipt balances stand at £3.7m as at 31st March 2026.

Equalities Impact Implications

- 4.12. The 3G will have a positive impact by increasing community access to a high-quality sports facility. The facility will support participation by children and young people, women and girls, diverse communities, low socio-

economic groups, people with a disability and or long-term health condition and other groups who may experience barriers to participation.

Climate Impact Implications

- 4.13. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) will be successfully delivered within the site boundary. To achieve the required 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, the project will enhance modified grassland to neutral grassland and mixed scrub and improve woodland areas to moderate condition. Additionally, 21 new trees will be planted to support biodiversity objectives, alongside long-term habitat management and monitoring.
- 4.14. Energy-efficient LED floodlighting with appropriate controls will minimise electricity consumption, reduce carbon emissions and limit unnecessary light usage.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1. The project will secure a significant investment into Rushmoor and provide a much-needed additional leisure facility for wider community use helping to support the Council's priorities for Community & Wellbeing: Active lives, Healthier and stronger communities.
- 5.2. Cabinet is recommended to approve a maximum Council contribution of £150,000 towards Wavell's 3G pitch subject to Football Foundation funding and Wavell partnership funding.
- 5.3. Cabinet is asked to approve the use of £85k from Community Recovery Fund and £65k from the Council's Capital Receipts to support the project.

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