



*Neuadd y Sir / County Hall, Llandrindod, Powys, LD1 5LG*

## **QUESTIONS AT ANY TIME TO CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS**

Response by the Portfolio Holder:

All existing outdoor Leisure pitches are coming to, or are beyond, the end of their life cycle. A strategic exercise has been undertaken to assess the condition of the pitches belonging to Leisure Services in all areas of Powys to inform the necessary decision making and allocation of funding. Upon conclusion of the exercise, it was agreed that Leisure Services would bid for capital funding to replace the existing (leisure) pitch surfaces, including the significant improvement of those that were 40+ years old, i.e. Llanidloes, Llanfair & Llanfyllin.

These existing (leisure) pitches are predominantly for community use, which means that they need to provide a suitable surface that will enable and allow multiple sports to be played on them.

In addition to the strategic exercise, an assessment was also made of local sports clubs and users of the existing pitches, and potential use if the surfaces were improved. The decision was taken to replace the Astroturf pitch at the Flash Leisure Centre, Welshpool with the same surface, due to the number of hockey clubs, plus football training, tag rugby and other sports able to be played on the surface. To note this is a full-size pitch and will allow competitions.

The pitch at Llanidloes is being replaced with a short pile 40mm (3G) surface which will enable school hockey, football training, junior matches, rugby training and other sports. This pitch is receiving third party investment from the local Wind Farm development which supports community facilities. To note this is not a full-size pitch.

Furthermore, as part of the capital programme, Leisure Services will be replacing Astroturf surfaces at Llandrindod Wells, Brecon and Ystradgynlais with the same surface due to existing and potential further use, which would be similar to the Flash Leisure Centre, Welshpool. To note these are full size pitches.

More recently, Leisure Services have been working closely with the 21st Century Schools Programme and team, which is enabling better collaborative arrangements and planning for facilities, which will benefit whole communities and not just specific service sectors.

Although the new school development on Salop Road in Welshpool has been built over what were grass pitches, another pitch on that site has been reinstated and is available for community use. Powys County Council has also invested £1.7m in new pitches at Welshpool High School, which should be available for use by the community at weekends and out of school hours in the spring and summer, but there needs to be discussion between the community and the school to make arrangements. There are also pitches at Maesydre that can be used.

Welshpool has a new Astroturf playing surface next to the Flash Leisure Centre, and about eight other pitches (football / rugby clubs, High School and Primary Schools), which are a mixture of grass and hardstanding. All of these pitches in Welshpool can be used by the communities and clubs for training and competition purposes. For information, the cost of installing a new full size 3G pitch, with floodlights, groundworks, fencing, drainage and changing facilities would be in the region of £900k - £1m, with annual maintenance costs of approximately £20,000 per year.

It is extremely positive that the community have raised and secured additional funds, which is what other communities in Powys have also done to provide facilities for more specific sports subject to local demand.