

Cabinet	
Meeting Date	25 September 2019
Report Title	The Lodge Faversham Recreation Ground – Lease to Faversham Rugby Club
Cabinet Member	Cllr Tim Valentine, Cabinet Member for Environment
SMT Lead	Martyn Cassell, Head of Commissioning, Environment and Leisure
Head of Service	Martyn Cassell, Head of Commissioning, Environment and Leisure
Lead Officer	Graeme Tuff, Greenspaces Manager
Key Decision	No
Classification	Open
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Cabinet agrees to enter a new lease with Faversham Rugby Club. 2. That delegated authority be given to the Head of Property Services to agree final terms in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Environment and Cabinet Member for Economy and Property. 3. The Head of Mid Kent Legal Services be authorised to complete the necessary legal formalities in due course.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposals for a new lease of The Lodge at Faversham Recreation Ground, Faversham (as shown on the attached location plan at Appendix I) to Faversham Rugby Club.

2 Background

- 2.1 Faversham Recreation Ground is owned by Faversham Municipal Charities and leased by the Council under a 50-year lease dated August 2010. As such the Council is responsible for the management and maintenance of this important town centre site. There are two other sports clubs located on the Recreation Ground in addition to the Rugby Club. Faversham Tennis club have a lease dated 2017 and have invested heavily in facilities which they fully maintain and Faversham Recreation Bowls Club who have a management agreement dated 1997, have invested in the pavilion and fully maintain the bowling green and internal pavilion.
- 2.2 The Lodge at Faversham Recreation Ground was built in the 1860's and for many years was gardeners and staff accommodation before an agreement was made in 1994 with Faversham Rugby Club to use the building as their "home" and social

premises. The club's current agreement essentially enables them to undertake management and control of the premises at no cost but paying all the utilities/outgoings and maintaining the interior of the building. The Council retained responsibility for the exterior of the building. Like much of the Recreation Ground the Lodge has become a little "tired" over the last 25 years.

- 2.3 The Lodge is a significant Grade II listed building over two storeys with a bar, kitchen and social facilities downstairs and living accommodation above. Its refurbishment forms part of the current Faversham Recreation Ground Heritage Lottery Improvement Project. This work involves not only refurbishing the current structure and putting back some of the lost heritage features such as bricked up windows, but also reconfigures part of the building to provide a café/kiosk and public toilet to increase facilities for users of the recreation ground. The improvement project also seeks to ensure that the recreation ground is more sustainable into the future, meeting the needs of the community, but with additional streams of income to help fund maintenance. A business plan was included within the successful Heritage Fund application and this includes additional income in order to maintain the Heritage Fund investment.
- 2.4 Given the changes to the building it was felt that this was the right time to modernise the legal agreement with the Rugby Club and offer a new lease. Twelve months' notice on the old agreement was served in January 2018 leading into the improvement project delivery with enough time to discuss and negotiate new terms. Discussions with the club have been ongoing with the aim of securing similar terms to the original document and the club have recently indicated their agreement in principal to the latest heads of terms.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The proposal would see the future use and security of the Lodge maintained and the Rugby Clubs continued presence and use of the wider recreation ground facilities.
- 3.2 The terms of the proposed lease are similar to those of the original management agreement, with the club being responsible for maintaining the interior and all utilities and outgoings. The Council retain responsibility for the exterior given its importance as a heritage asset and the investment committed to the building as part of the improvement project.
- 3.3 The proposed lease is for 10 years and there will be a rent review after five years. Details of the rent are included as Appendix II. Both parties will have an option to break on serving twelve months' notice.
- 3.4 The lease will exclude the new café/kiosk and public convenience but will include additional storage in part of the former public convenience building.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 The alternative option would be to find an alternative tenant for the building, however with a successful rugby club and their desire to continue playing and socialising at the recreation ground this option has been discounted.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The Council and its consultants have undertaken considerable consultation on the Recreation Ground Improvement Project and there is significant public support for the activities and sport that takes place. As part of this work the club have also been involved in stakeholder groups and Officers have worked with the club on interior design/fitting out, in addition to discussing and negotiating the terms of a new agreement.
- 5.2 The Council's Faversham Recreation Ground Improvement Project Board have been kept up to date throughout the process.
- 5.3 Faversham Municipal Charities agreement to a sub-lease is required under the terms of the Council's lease. As such their General Purposes Meeting will discuss the proposal on the 18 September 2019.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The letting of the building is being proposed and supports the priorities of the Corporate Plan
Financial, Resource and Property	The proposed lease will result in a rental income for the Council as identified in Appendix II
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	Legal Services will be required to prepare a new lease.
Crime and Disorder	None anticipated.
Environment and Sustainability	None anticipated
Health and Wellbeing	Continued physical activity within the recreation ground.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None anticipated.
Equality and Diversity	The club continue to grow with recent success and stability. Junior and lady's rugby is a key aim following the wider Faversham

	Recreation Ground project and facility improvement/refurbishment.
Privacy and Data Protection	None anticipated.

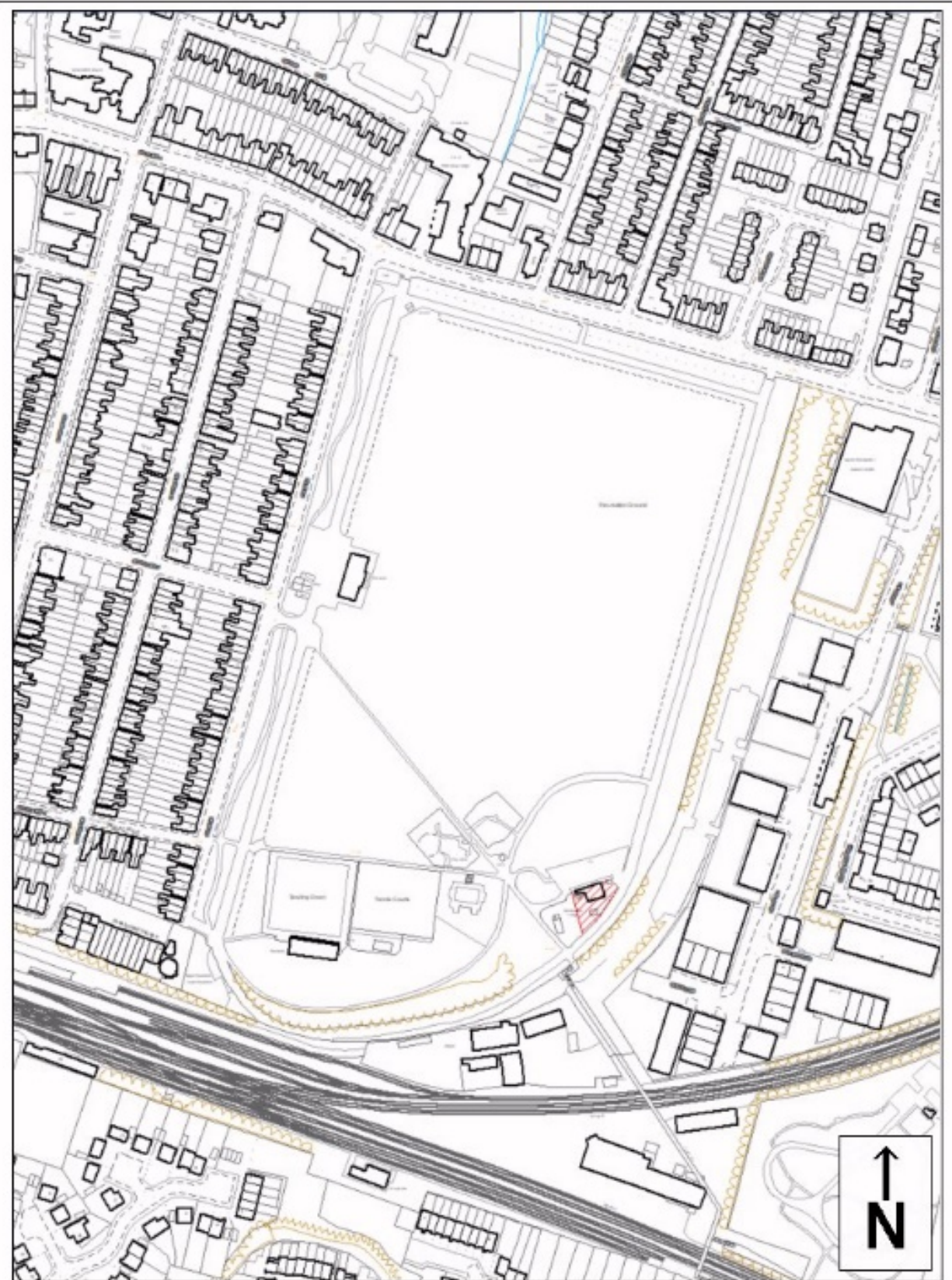
7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: The Lodge, Faversham Recreation Ground Location Plan
- Appendix II (restricted): The Lodge, Faversham Recreation Ground – Rent

8 Background Papers

None



Appendix 1- The Lodge, Faversham Recreation Ground Location Plan
Scale 1:2500