

## **To consider installing artificial grass to football goalmouth areas**

### **Background**

Earlier this year, the new football pitch with lines and smaller goals with nets was installed as part of the Recreation Ground Improvements Project.

The football pitch has proved very popular and the grass in the goalmouth areas have already been worn away and these areas need to be refurbished.

### **Options**

#### **1. Do nothing**

Let the goal mouths continue to deteriorate. This is clearly the most economic option but it is already seriously affecting the amenity and enjoyment of the new pitch and is a potential health and safety issue.

#### **2. Replace with grass**

This would restore the pitch to its previous condition but would need to be re-done three times a year, at each time the goals would be out of commission for 4-6 weeks.

Heras fencing or the like would need to be left for 4-6 weeks after installation of turf, longer if possible. However, long term fencing hire is not ideal as large costs can be incurred if the fencing is vandalised. Based on previous experience, any fenced off area is likely to be broken into and the turf will be damaged during the 4-6 week period. The new turf will also need to be watered, similar to the new trees.

#### **3. Replace with artificial grass**

This is the most expensive initial cost but most cost effective in the long term.

Care will need to be taken when grass cutting as to avoid damaging the artificial grass.

Artificial grass offers a much more durable surface than natural grass. It will not suffer from wear and tear like natural grass, so the Council need not worry about any bald patches or muddied areas or stones at the surface that could be dangerous when playing football. Quality artificial grass also provides excellent cushioning underfoot.

Quality artificial grass is designed to withstand heavy usage and maintain its performance over time. The robustness of artificial grass also helps to ensure a long lifespan.

Nowadays, there are numerous artificial grass systems on the market. So, if this is agreed to be the way forward, the crucial question has to be which artificial grass is most suitable.

### **Lifespan of options**

Based on experience to date, it is anticipated that replacement with grass turf would be required 3 times a year, with the consequential disruption.

Artificial grass is much more robust and guarantees of up to 10 years are anticipated (subject to the quality of the artificial grass).

## **Recommendation**

Quotations including options to be requested from Infinity Playgrounds and Grass and Grounds to replace the badly worn grass areas in the goalmouths.