

To consider remedial works to football goalmouth areas

Background

Earlier this year, the new football pitch was installed as part of the Recreation Ground Improvements Project. This has proved very popular and the grass in the goalmouth areas have already been worn away and these areas need to be refurbished.

At the September Meeting, the options were noted and it was resolved to ask for a quotes and suggestions from Infinity Playgrounds and Grass and Grounds Ltd to replace the badly worn grass areas in the goalmouths.

Investigation

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

Grass and Grounds responded by saying they struggled to find a suitable product which would not incur exceptionally high costs due to specialisation.

Infinity Playgrounds provided a cost and specification and identified an example at that had been installed on behalf of Compton and Shawford PC.

Cllr Kirkby visited the football pitch in Compton Street playground with one of the contractors, Infinity Playgrounds, to look at the goal areas which Compton and Shawford PC had arranged to be refurbished with artificial grass. This work took place in 2017 and is guaranteed for 10 years.

See photo below of goal area, which as you can see is still in good condition after 7 years.



The contractor advised that some of the components, for example a synthetic rubber base is installed rather than sand, which is a significant improvement since the Compton project was installed.

It was noted that the artificial grass was extended a little into the goals themselves. This is considered an excellent idea.

Cllr Kirkby has spoken to the Compton and Shawford PC Clerk, who advised that there had been no problems with the artificial grass.

A recent visit to the Recreation Ground confirmed the damaged area was getting bigger, so Cllr Kirkby has asked for a quotation for a larger area. This price will be available before the meeting.

Options

Options	Infinity Playgrounds	Grass and Grounds
Replace with grass	2,500.00 ¹	2,343.84 ²
Replace with artificial grass	TBC	Not priced

¹ Heras fencing hire and erection/dismantling will be **additional**.

² Fencing included is orange barrier fencing and metal pins (not suitable for protection over several weeks)

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

Heras fencing or the like would need to be left for 4-6 weeks after installation of turf, longer if possible. However, the contractor advises that 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 is likely be damaged during the 4-6 week period. The new turf will also need to be watered, similar to the new trees.

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

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.

The use of artificial grass for football is widespread and increasing. All four of Hampshire FA facilities (King George V Football Complex, Winklebury Football Complex, Stoneham Lane Football Complex and Front Lawn Community Hub) have artificial grass pitches. Winchester City Football Club have also started to play on a new artificial grass pitch.

Cost and Other Implications

	Initial Cost	10 Year Cost	Other Implications
Grass Turf	£2,500	£75,000	Pitch out of use 25% to 35% pa
Artificial Grass	TBC	TBC	10 year guarantee

Recommendation

The artificial grass solution is clearly the best long term financial option and means no time where the football pitch is closed (between 25% to 35% of the year for grass).

The Clerk places an order with Infinity Playgrounds based on their latest quotation.