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## Report of the Chief Executive of Education Leeds

### Inner North East Area Committee

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> October 2010

Subject: Future use of Allerton Grange Playing Fields (off Lidgett Lane / Talbot Avenue)

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**  
Roundhay  
Moortown

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Council  
Function

Delegated Executive  
Function available  
for Call In

Delegated Executive  
Function not available for  
Call In Details set out in the  
report

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### Executive Summary

In September 2009, the new Allerton Grange School was completed as part of the Leeds BSF project. The project released part of the former School site (former pitches off Lidgett Lane / Talbot Avenue) that was no longer required for secondary school purposes. The intention was that once this area had been reinstated by the contractor it would be declared surplus to school requirements. 'The Friends of Allerton Grange' Group made it known that they would like the Council to consider how these pitches could be used for future community purposes.

Due to the rising trend in birth rate, Education Leeds has reconsidered its need for the land and intend to retain the site for future educational need in the area. However, discussions need to be developed further with the 'The Friends of Allerton Grange' Group and Leeds City Council colleagues as to how the Group's aspirations for community use in the area can be achieved, in particular in relation to this site and through the use of the neighbouring Allerton Grange School.

This report is an interim update for Area Committee, as further discussions need to take place with Sport England around the potential development of protected (N6) green space and also with colleagues within Leeds City Council's Departments (Parks & Countryside and Asset Management) to realise community use opportunities for the Group.

## **1.0 Purpose Of This Report**

As members of Area Committee are aware, 'The Friends of Allerton Grange' residents submitted a report proposing future community use of the Allerton Grange fields, located on Lidgett Lane / Talbot Avenue. Following that meeting Area Committee have asked Education Leeds for a formal response regarding intentions for the site and this report aims to provide Inner North East Area Committee with an interim update

## **2.0 Background Information**

The new Allerton Grange School opened in September 2009 and was delivered through the Government Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Initiative. Whilst the first phase provided the new building and external sporting provision including multi-use games areas, a second phase of works included provision of a new access road and drainage works to the Allerton Grange playing fields which was only completed prior to the start of the new school year in September 2010. As members of the Inner North East Committee will be aware the new Allerton Grange School was built within the confines of the former site, however some of the former fields were left outside the new school site, but vested with Education. The original intention was to declare this area surplus to secondary school requirements. This has been reconsidered in light of the rising numbers in the primary sector and the basic need for more school places.

## **3.0 Main Issues**

In September 2009 the new Allerton Grange School was delivered as part of the Leeds BSF Project. Upon completion of the Allerton Grange Project it was the intention that the former school pitches off Lidgett Lane / Talbot Avenue (now fenced out the school site), were to be declared surplus to educational need and discussions at the time ensued with 'The Friends of Allerton Grange' and other arms of the Council around their future use. However, the birth rate continues to rise at a rapid rate across the city and in particular, the area that this school resides. As expected there is a need city-wide for additional primary accommodation and this problem is being experienced within the Roundhay Ward. This has been the subject of a separate briefing for Roundhay Ward Councillors. Education Leeds have and are continuing to investigate creative site opportunities for expansion in the area, on existing schools and land owned by the Council. Consequently at this time Education Leeds do not intend to declare the land surplus to education requirements, however will work with 'The Friends of Allerton Grange' to see if their aspirations for community activities can be realized through a letting arrangement on an interim basis.

As 'The Friends of Allerton Grange' have correctly identified in their report to Area Committee, the Allerton Grange playing fields are protected by Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, and are classified as (N6) green space. However, whilst the total site area is indeed 2.5 hectares, within that area 6,050m<sup>2</sup> is identified as an area of former building hardstanding. It is this area that Education Leeds would like to investigate further to develop future educational provision for the area, whilst working with colleagues with the Council to consider the wider implications and uses of the site.

#### **4.0 Implications For Council Policy and Governance**

The provision of additional educational facilities on the Allerton Grange site would ensure the Council contributes towards their legal duty to provide sufficient school places in the area and help contribute to the raising of educational attainment amongst school pupils within Leeds.

#### **5.0 Legal and Resource Implications**

This report is deemed to be exempt from the call in of decisions. The costs of any future development on the Allerton Grange site will be the subject of a separate report which will include details of any financial implications.

#### **6.0 Conclusions**

As the 'The Friends of Allerton Grange' have correctly outlined in their report the area identified as Allerton Grange playing fields is indeed classified as (N6) green space and Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act. However, within the 2.5 hectare site there is an area of 6,050m<sup>2</sup> of former hardstanding that accommodated part of the building and the playground of the pre-BSF Allerton Grange High School. Whilst discussions are still in early stages with primary and secondary governing bodies in the area, as to how this space may be used to develop new education accommodation, further discussions need to be developed with other colleagues within the Council around any intentions for the remainder of the site.

#### **7.0 Recommendations**

The North East Inner Area Committee to:

- i. Note the content of this report.
- ii. Endorse continued discussions between Education Leeds, Leeds City Council and 'The Friends of Allerton Grange' representatives.
- iii. Note the need for further discussions between Education Leeds and Sport England representatives regarding the development of an area of the Allerton Grange playing fields.