



**Community Assets & Opens Spaces Committee
Wednesday 20 May 2026**

Agenda Item 11 – Wichelstowe Sports Hub: Next Steps

Purpose of the Report

Members are required to:

- **NOTE** the ongoing work to build the Wichelstowe Sports Hub
- **NOTE** a request from the Joint Venture Team (JVT) for Wroughton and Wichelstowe Parish Council to contribute funding towards some elements of the sports hub and its surrounding assets (**Appendix A**)
- **AGREE** if, and how much, funding should be given to the sports hub project from the parish council's earmarked reserves and CIL funds (**Appendix B**)

Introduction

Located between Middle and East Wichel, the Wichelstowe Sports Hub will include formal sports provision as well as provision for play and informal sports activities. The state-of-the-art facility received planning approval in February 2026 and, once completed, will be operated by the Wiltshire FA.

The full consultation documents and drawings can be [viewed here](#).

The works will be funded by Section 106 contributions, which is money paid by the Wichelstowe developers to Swindon Borough Council to deliver local infrastructure improvements and community facilities.

Background

On 12 January 2026, the Wichelstowe Joint Venture Team contacted the parish council to see if it would be able to provide any upfront capital funding to support the delivery of the sports hub and its surroundings and/or whether it would be able to commit any resources to ongoing maintenance.

At its meeting on 11 February 2026, the Community Assets and Open Spaces Committee considered this request and **RESOLVED** to:

- Ask the Clerk to communicate with the JVT and investigate timescales for completion of capital projects and consider the projects in line with the 2027/2028 budget setting process.

The Chair also reminded the committee that should CIL funds be agreed, the matter would need to go back to the Full Council for consideration and approval.

On 20 February, the Clerk contacted the JVT team to request a schedule of building works that require capital funding, the total estimated project cost, any current funding shortfalls, as well as any other information in order to help the parish council understand the scheme's financial profile.

The Clerk also reiterated the parish council's desire to support the sports hub in non-financial ways, through the provision of grounds maintenance services, play area inspections, administrative support and other similar contributions.

On 5 March 2026, the JVT responded to the parish council and confirmed that:

- A capital funding budget gap exists and the JVT is in the process of exploring ways to fill it.
- It may not be possible to deliver the whole scheme in one phase and so additional elements may be added in as a second phase once additional funding is secured.
- Phase 1 of the development will include the car park, pavilion, all-weather pitch and an element of play provision, which will be funded by a combination of S106 funding from Wichelstowe, Football Foundation Funding, a contribution from the Wiltshire FA and Trees for Climate Funding. Other ways of funding Phase 1 are being explored and the discussions with the parish council are an part of that.

With the project costs not yet being fixed, and with further value engineering needed, the JVT asked the parish council to provide a ballpark figure that it would be happy to put towards the development. The JVT could then identify where this funding could be directed.

To assist, the JVT suggested the following potential funding options for the parish council to consider:

- Play area elements (at a cost of around £45k).
- The meeting place to the north of the site with information boards displaying walking and cycling opportunities.
- Footpaths through the site (e.g. the path connecting to the towpath c.£100k).
- A contribution towards improving the condition of the grass playing pitches to the south.
- A contribution towards fit-out of the pavilion.

Update – May 2026

On 17 March, the JVT contacted the parish council to say that any funding that the parish council contributed would be added to the overall funding pot for Phase 1.

The JVT identified the proposed play areas as being suitable to receive parish council funding. The play area equipment is currently estimated at around £50,000 for each area, though the JVT estimated that the costs of the spaces will be higher once other factors such as fencing, surfacing and access paths have been included. The team is still in the process of value engineering these spaces and will not have certainty over the full costs until the works are tendered.

The majority of these works are likely to take place in the 2027/28 financial year.

Operation of the site/facilities

All parties agree that Wiltshire FA is the preferred organisation to manage the new Sports Hub, along with bookings and maintenance, once it has been completed.

At the moment, the JVT is assuming that the Wiltshire FA will inspect and manage the play facilities, though this is yet to be confirmed. They do, however, think that the responsibility for the informal green space to the east of the site could be potentially be managed by the parish council.

Future discussions with all stakeholders

A key issue raised during previous update meetings has been the need for clarity around governance arrangements should the site be managed by Wiltshire FA, and specifically how the parish council would be represented within that structure.

As a formally constituted and democratically elected body, the parish council represents the interests of all residents and therefore must be involved in governance and decision-making processes, rather than being treated as just another consultee organisation. Ensuring meaningful involvement is essential, particularly as the council may not be in a position to contribute significant financial resources but nonetheless carries statutory responsibilities on behalf of the community.

With Wiltshire FA, the JVT and parish council now beginning discussions with local groups regarding their potential roles, it would be helpful to understand who will be responsible for drafting the governance documents, terms of reference, and related frameworks and when would the roles become formalised.

Recommendations

1. To **NOTE** this report and the request from the Joint Venture Team.
2. To **AGREE** how funding should be given to the sports hub from the parish council's earmarked reserves and/or CIL funds.
3. To **NOTE** that the parish council is meeting with the JVT on Tuesday 9 June to feedback information from this meeting and that a further meeting with the Wiltshire FA is still to be arranged.

Report Author: Thomas Haworth, Deputy Clerk