

Agenda Item 10



Author/Lead Officer of Report: Lisa Firth

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Report of: Executive Director, Operational Services

Report to: Co-Operative Executive

Date of Decision: 20 April 2022

Subject: **Sheffield's Parks Tennis Investment Model**

Is this a Key Decision? If Yes, reason Key Decision:- Yes Y No

- Expenditure and/or savings over £500,000 Y
- Affects 2 or more Wards Y

Which Executive Member Portfolio does this relate to? **Place**

Which Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee does this relate to? **The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee**

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken? Yes Y No

If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? **1176**

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No N

If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-

"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."

Purpose of Report:

The Parks and Countryside Service are seeking approval to progress with a procurement strategy to appoint a Partner to manage Sheffield's parks tennis programme. In addition to the existing tennis court management, the proposal is to add an Activity Hub to the model, to provide additional financial security to the city-wide programme.

The aim is to further develop the tennis court programme across the city with two new park sites and develop the Activity Hub at Hillsborough Park in partnership with the Lawn Tennis Association.

Sheffield's park tennis programme, which was procured in 2017 has developed significantly since its inception with considerable improvements to the quality of tennis court provision across the city as well as a significant increase in the numbers of people accessing tennis in the city.

Coming out of the pandemic we are looking at ways to sustain services across the Leisure portfolio and one of those aspects is tennis and multi-activity provision.

The intention is that the opportunity will be advertised, subject to open competition, and (subject to the final procurement strategy) that the partner selected will be granted a lease to operate the welfare/catering facilities and a concession for the parks tennis programme and multi-use games area elements of the site at Hillsborough and a concession arrangement for the other parks tennis courts.

A solution is needed to sustain tennis provision into the future and together with the Lawn Tennis Association and Courtside CIC (the current Parks tennis programme Partner) we have undertaken significant due diligence and business planning to find a sustainable and quality solution for outdoor tennis provision.

Recommendations:

That the Co-Operative Executive:

1. Note the report, including the contribution of the Lawn Tennis Association.
2. Approve the proposed commissioning of a partner to further develop, manage and sustain the parks tennis programme Hub and Spoke Model, as outlined in this report.
3. Delegate authority to the Director of Culture and Environment, in consultation with the Director of Legal and Governance and the Director of Finance and Commercial Services, to approve the procurement strategy.
4. Require the Director of Culture and Environment to undertake the procurement, and to report back, at the conclusion of the procurement, with recommendations on:
 - a. the award of the contract; and
 - b. any associated disposal of land which may be necessary, and any consents or approvals required.
5. Approve:
 - a. the proposed City Council funding contribution of up to £180,000 (of prudential borrowing) towards the development of the Activity Hub at Hillsborough Park; and
 - b. the allocation of Section 106 funds of up to £183,000 for the development of the facilities at Hillsborough Park;as described in the report.

Background Papers:

Green and Open Spaces Strategy
Building Better Parks Strategy 2018
Sheffield Sport and Leisure Strategy Consultation
Move More Physical Activity Plan 2021
Sheffield's Outdoor City Strategy

Lead Officer to complete:-

1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Kerry Darlow
		Legal: Richard Gibbons and David Cutting/Tim Hoskin
		Equalities: Annemarie Johnson
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	EMT member who approved submission:	Adjman Ali
3	Executive Member consulted:	Cllr Alison Teal
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Decision Maker by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: Lisa Firth	Job Title: Director of Culture, Parks and Leisure
	Date: 7 April 2022	

1. PROPOSAL

1.1 Background

We are seeking a partner to develop an Activity Hub on the site of the current tennis courts and multi-use games area of Hillsborough Park. This Activity Hub will include key recreational facilities, renewed tennis courts and multi-use games area, plus additional recreational and welfare services that will help sustain these and further outdoor tennis courts across the city.

Sheffield City Council's Parks and Countryside Service have been developing the concept of an Active Park for several years. This is about providing toilets, catering, and high-quality green spaces with recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities. This has become more focused since 2017 during Sheffield's application to become a Local Delivery Pilot for Sport England. Through this process, together with partners across the Move More network, a series of key city priorities were developed of which Active Parks was one of those, under the theme Active Environments. The ambition is that 'everyone in Sheffield can enjoy being active in local places and spaces regardless of their ability or location in the city' (Move More 2021)

This concept fits well with Sport England's 10 Principles of Active Design, Sheffield's Outdoor City Strategy, and the University of Sheffield's Improving Wellbeing through Urban Nature¹ project.

In line with the Active Parks approach, in 2017 Sheffield City Council together with the Lawn Tennis Association, launched the parks tennis programme with Courtside CIC². This has led to significant investment and improvements to our tennis offer across the city, supporting the revival of parks tennis and taking the sport into parts of the city where it has not previously been accessible.

Following significant investment and improvements to tennis courts across the city, the current programme consists of a high-quality tennis court offer, community activation and coaching and an online booking and gate entry system at sites across Sheffield. This was the Lawn Tennis Associations biggest investment to outdoor tennis provision in the country and was the first parks tennis programme approach of its kind, leading to significant health and personal wellbeing outcomes³ (see appendix A for further demographic information on the current programme).

Now, to build on these high-quality developments, we are looking to add a 'Hub' to the 'Spokes' (existing tennis courts), to act as an anchor and to further sustain the future provision of parks tennis in Sheffield. This concept has been in development for several years together with the Lawn Tennis Association and our existing partner Courtside CIC.

The proposed Activity Hub will serve as a base for a team of coaches and activators to stay in the sport, develop their skills and provide greater exposure to tennis across the city. Therefore, we want to secure a delivery model where the Activity Hub ensures that a city-wide parks tennis programme is more sustainable, resulting in greater provision of tennis across the city, supporting a reduction in health inequalities for targeted communities.

The current model, despite increasing participation levels (which have significantly increased during and coming out of the pandemic), will not alone provide sufficient income to maintain and manage the courts and associated outreach engagement programmes. The proposed approach will allow us the

¹ Improving Wellbeing through Urban Nature (IWUN) was a three-year £1.3m research project awarded. Its aim was to find out more about how Sheffield's natural environment can improve the health and wellbeing of the city's residents, especially those with disproportionately high levels of poor health

² Courtside CIC were previously known as Parks Tennis CIC. The current contract commenced on 1 April 2017 for a 5 year period and SCC reserved the right to extend by a further period of not more than 5 years. SCC are requesting to extend for a 12 month period to carry out this procurement exercise.

³ Sheffield Hallam University were commissioned by Sport England to conduct social value modelling on the Parks tennis programme – Sheffield's parks programme accounts for over £190k of total social value generated

opportunity to generate income through the programme, which will (subject to the procurement strategy and the tenders received) cover the annual maintenance costs as well as a sinking fund for Sheffield's public tennis courts into the future. The Active Parks approach to widen participation means we are seeking an enhanced sports and recreational offer, not just tennis.

As part of our Better Parks initiative for Parks and Countryside and with the financial challenges that the Council is facing, we are needing to look at alternative ways of continuing to provide high quality services to the people of Sheffield. Therefore, we feel that this further strengthening of the parks tennis programme model in the city will lead to a continued high quality community sports offer for people across Sheffield, as well as responds to the financial challenges we as a service and Council are facing.

1.2 What would the Hub and Spoke Model would look like?

1.2.1 Existing Tennis Courts

For the existing tennis courts, we are looking for a Partner to continue with the successful operational management and developmental activity we have seen over the last 5 years, this includes;

- Online booking system
- Secure gate entry system
- Marketing and Comms
- Customer Services
- Management of existing park sites
- Coaching/activation programme across the sites
- Membership schemes and incentivised programmes
- Targeted programming and engagement for/of key under-represented audiences
- Affordable pricing (in line with current agreement)
- Data and performance information
- Sinking fund costs
- Partnership working with other stakeholders on the sites

In addition to the 7 existing Parks there are 2 further Parks (Hollinsend and Ecclesfield Park) which will be added to the programme for this agreement which weren't part of the original procurement. This relates to the Lawn Tennis Associations' recently announced capital investment programme⁴, into park tennis courts. The aim of this investment programme is to ensure tennis courts in poor or unplayable conditions are brought back to life for the benefit of their local community. See Map in Appendix B of the sites.

Ecclesfield and Hollinsend have been identified as priorities for the Council and the Lawn Tennis Association as they are classified as being in a poor and unplayable condition.

The outcome of these improvements will be two resurfaced and restored tennis courts at each site, developed in compliance with the Lawn Tennis Associations' guidance.

1.2.2 Hillsborough Activity Hub

We would like to see the Activity Hub developed on the existing footprint of the multi-use games area and tennis courts, that are currently managed by Courtside CIC and part of the parks tennis programme.

The specification for the Activity Hub is proposed to include:

- Improvements to the tennis facilities, with tennis court improvements on (a minimum of) 3 courts with LED lighting

⁴ A £30m package from the LTA in partnership with the DCMS to refurbish 4500 public tennis courts

- Introduction of a minimum of 2 covered Padel Tennis Courts⁵
- A full upgrade to the multi-use games area⁶, resurfaced and redesigned for football, basketball, tennis, netball and other activities, designed within Lawn Tennis Association, Sport England and Football Foundation guidelines
- Welfare facilities including an accessible toilet and catering facilities
- A balance of both paid for and free to use activities
- As there could be space within the red line boundary that may not be occupied by a multi-use games area or tennis courts, we are keen to see ideas for how this could be used, providing a balance of both charged for and free activities. Benchmarking and consultation have shown that there is interest in space for activities such as netball, basketball, table tennis, bowls, mini golf and informal activity space
- Proposals for indoor or covered outdoor activity space to support year-round activity and widen the reach of the facilities
- A design which connects with and is complementary to the currently in development All Wheels Bike Track which is located adjacent to the existing tennis courts and multi-use games area
- An operation that offers provision in evenings and during weekends⁷
- An affordable pricing scheme as well as a range of targeted community engagement programmes to engage with groups within our local communities who may not find it as easy to access the offer as others. Examples could be school outreach programmes and taster activities tying in for example with healthy holiday/food poverty programmes
- Partnership engagement with several key local stakeholders also delivering a range of activities/services within or close to Hillsborough Park, including Cycling for All, Age UK, Tramlines, Hillsborough Sports Arena and the Friends of Hillsborough Park. Specifically relating to;
 - the Cycling for All group, we would like to see that the group are accommodated with dedicated use of the multi-use games area at agreed times
 - the Tramlines Music Festival, we would like to see a positive and open approach to partnership working, to identify complementary solutions to the delivery of both the festival and activity hub programmes
 - Age UK, we would like to see a positive and open approach to partnership working particularly around activity programmes and engagement as well as complimentary catering offers

1.3 Investment and Financial Approach

We are looking to work with a partner who will develop and manage this facility in line with the specification outlined in point 1.2.2 and within the Procurement Strategy, bringing significant investment to achieve this.

We have identified capital investment available to contribute towards the development at Hillsborough Park as well as for Sheffield City Council to make court improvements at Hollinsend and Ecclesfield Parks. This investment is outlined in the table below;

Funding Source	Funding Amounts	Location	Conditions
S106	£183,000	For multi-use games area improvements at Hillsborough Park	Funding to be passported to the awarded partner for improvements to the multi-use games area and tennis courts

⁵ Padel Tennis is one of the fastest growing sports in the world and there are currently no courts in Sheffield. Therefore, it is a priority for SCC together with the LTA and a partner, to build, grow and accelerate this sport in Sheffield (www.lta.org.uk/play-compete/getting-started/padel/)

⁶ The current MUGA is not appropriate for many ball games as it is too large and open for games such as basketball or 5-aside football

⁷ We know from partners locally that having something which supports perceptions of community safety, by providing site presence during evenings particularly for women is important.

SCC prudential borrowing	£180,000	Hillsborough Park	To be passported to the awarded partner for improvements to the multi-use games area.
			Prudential borrowing will be paid off with annual payments paid by the partner to SCC. The term of the loan will be aligned to the agreement and will incur interest at 5% (e.g. £180K repaid over 15 years, total repayable £252K)
LTA Grant	£87,000	For court improvements at Hollinsend and Ecclesfield Parks	These court improvements are being managed through a separate Capital Gateway decision process and we are looking for a partner to manage the site, not make the improvements.

1.4 Hillsborough Park – Further Background

Hillsborough Park has recently undergone a master planning exercise with the development of the Hillsborough Park Forward Plan. The plan aims to provide a strategic overview for the development of the park as an excellent city heritage park aspiring to Green Flag status. The development of an Activity Hub has been considered as part of this process.

As well as supporting the aspirations to gain Green Flag status for the site, Hillsborough Park has been identified as a suitable Park for the Activity Hub due to:

- The site being located within an area identified as within the lowest 30% IMD in the city. With 48% of adults classed as inactive and 1 in 5 children in the Hillsborough Ward are classed as obese, the situation is only worsening, therefore the provision of quality sport and recreational facilities will have a real benefit to communities with identified health inequalities
- The park is a city destination site with good transportation and access links
- The park already has a sports area, and this sports area is in need of reinvestment due to the deteriorating conditions of the existing tennis and multi-use games area provision
- From a Tennis perspective, the Lawn Tennis Association have ranked Hillsborough Park in the top 20 park sites (out of 1500 nationally) – top in Sheffield, in terms of potential reach and agree it will support the growth of tennis in an under-served area of Sheffield
- There are a range of complimentary developments that are currently progressing within the park including the recent opening of the Age UK Coach House and Cafe, the All-Wheels Track, improvements to the pathway and drainage, Tramlines Festival, expansion of the Cycling for All activities, reconfiguration and development of the Library, developments at Hillsborough Sports Arena and playground improvements
- The provision of an exciting and high-quality facility of this nature will raise the standard of the park and increase its attractiveness as a destination and supporting its standing as an 'Active Park'
- Consultation through the Forward Plan reiterated how important improvements to the recreational facilities in Hillsborough Park were to local people as well as improved access to toilets and welfare facilities.

1.5 Strategic Context

Please see appendix C for the strategic context to this project, this includes reference to;

- Better Parks Initiative 2018
- Sheffield's Leisure, Physical Activity and Sport Strategy
- Sheffield's Move More Physical Activity Plan
- What is an Active Park - background to approach
- Sheffield's Green and Open Spaces Strategy 2010-2023

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

2.1

Investment in the parks tennis programme will improve financial viability and long-term sustainability of the services provided across our parks.

This proposal aligns with the One Year Plan; Communities and Neighbourhoods theme:

Every community in Sheffield should be a great place to live, with excellent local services, access to high quality green spaces, and a great local centre; where everyone has a home they are proud of, that suits their needs, and that supports their health; where everyone feels safe and is able to live without fear of prejudice or discrimination; where people get along and everyone can play a full part in the life of their local area, and have an expectation of health, wellbeing and happiness.

This proposal will support Parks and Countryside's aspiration for Hillsborough Park to achieve Green Flag status and will further strengthen the quality and offer for local people and other visitors.

This proposal will contribute to a reduction in health inequalities and support wider public health outcomes.

This proposal will contribute to the Sheffield Sport and Leisure Strategy which is currently in development, and recent consultation (see point 3.1) has highlighted the importance of improvements to multi-use recreational spaces in the outdoors.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

3.1 Sheffield Sport and Leisure Strategy Consultation

A consultation was recently carried out by Sheffield Council to better understand how our sport and leisure assets and services can be re-shaped to help deliver the outcomes in the Move More Plan and the City's wider strategic priorities. We know for example, that many of our sport and leisure facilities require investment and modernisation to better meet the needs of our communities and that it is easier to be active in some communities in Sheffield than in others.

We want to address this inequality and ensure our indoor and outdoor facilities are modern, welcoming and inclusive and that our services create opportunities and encourage more people to be more active, more often in an equitable way.

The key points from the consultation with relevance to this parks tennis proposal include;

- appetite for investment in facilities and services which support the delivery of sport and physical activity
- desire for additional investment in outdoor activity spaces which provide opportunities for low-cost activities on the doorstep
- recognition that indoor and outdoor spaces should be places that people want to visit for multiple reasons. Investment should support the development of facilities as activity hubs by creating spaces which are multi-purpose destinations in their own right
- the notable shifts in participation patterns observed during the Covid-19 pandemic and people's appetite for exercising in the outdoors
- Small scale investment which would reinstate derelict or disused facilities would be welcomed

3.2 Better Parks Consultation

In 2018 the Parks and Countryside Service carried out an online citizen space consultation, framed around the Better Parks initiative. The key themes that came through this consultation, which confirmed previous research highlighted within the Outdoor City Strategy, were the need for toilets and café facilities to really enhance and support people to access and enjoy our Parks, Woodlands and Green Spaces.

This consultation has driven the approach taken for the Better Parks initiative, meaning that we continue to look for opportunities to create or enhance these types of facilities, whilst in a financially sustainable way, in partnership with others. For the Activity Hub at Hillsborough, we can see that the tennis courts and multi-use games area alone, won't create that hub of provision required, whereas with the introduction of toilets and other welfare facilities, this will make the opportunity more appealing and accessible to a range of audiences.

3.3 The Hillsborough Park Forward Plan

Consultation was carried out between April and September 2021 and included both an online survey and a virtual stakeholder session which has resulted in a rich seam of information to support the development of a Forward Plan for Hillsborough Park and underpin an application for Green Flag status during 2022.

The online questionnaire was targeted to regular visitors to get a better understanding of what Hillsborough Park means to them, what they like, don't like, think we could do better as a Parks Service and to get a sense of priorities for future investment.

Overall, the results showed a long-standing affection for and sense of connection to Hillsborough Park as a community resource. Over 80% of respondents were regular users and almost all came from the S6 area. However, the results also showed that there is considerable room for improvement, with a sense of "has great potential but could (and should) do better" and unfavourable comparisons to similarly sized parks in other part of the city and beyond e.g. Millhouses or Clifton Park in Rotherham.

Of the things that universally scored as poor, was underinvestment in the sports facilities and a lack of visitor facilities. This insight has supported the thinking around the Activity Hub concept at Hillsborough Park as will provide the opportunity to improve the recreational facilities, whilst enhancing the welfare provision at this part of the park.

3.4 Local Stakeholder Feedback

Hillsborough Park is on its way to becoming one of Sheffield's key destination parks within the city. There is an assortment of key developments about to open or in planning which will create a step change in the offer and quality of this park.

There are several key stakeholders involved with Hillsborough Park including the Friends of Hillsborough Park, local Councillors, Cycling for All, Age UK, Access Sports, Hillsborough Library, Hillsborough Arena and Tramlines, as well as park users.

We have been in discussions with a range of stakeholders over several years regarding this development including SWFC, Sheffield City Trust, Disability Sheffield, Age UK and Tramlines. However, have undertaken more focused discussions in the last year, this has included 1:1 sessions with local Councillors, Cycling for All and the Friends of Hillsborough Park in addition to broader consultation as part of the Hillsborough Park Forward Plan with park users.

There is mixed support to the proposal from local Councillors, with some Councillors highlighting the benefits including improvements to the recreational offer on site, presence in evenings to support improved community safety, a reduction in anti-social behaviour and a sustainable model which will support sport/health provision into the future.

Concerns flagged by Councillors have been around the following:

- Ensuring there is a balance of paid for and free opportunities
- Displacement of the Cycling for All activity, which currently operates from the large multi-use game area
- Whether there is the need for more café facilities within the park with the opening of the Age UK Coach House Café
- Whether the repurposing of the existing Gate House could have been considered for this proposal⁸

The Friends of Hillsborough Park have raised concerns relating to:

- the reduction in size of free multi-use games space
- the erection of new buildings within the park
- the balance of paid for and free to use activity space
- displacement of the Cycling for All activity on the existing large open multi-use games area
- whether there is the need for two⁹ cafes on the site

Ideas discussed together to date, to address some of these concerns include;

- to outline within the procurement specification that the multi-use games area must be free to use
- to consider options for increased ‘free space’ and potential reduction in the scale of any ‘new buildings’
- options for providing additional space for Cycling for All including cordoned off car parking spaces, path widening and dedicated use of Cycling for All within the Activity Hub

As highlighted above, The Friends of Hillsborough Park flagged a wider concern around whether there is a need for two cafes on the site and additional indoor activity space as there is an existing community space within the Pavilion at the top of the park. We believe that with the additional activity and facilities being developed on the site, this will create a significant uplift in the visitor numbers. Therefore, there is scope for having visitor facilities at both the top and bottom of the park. We have benchmarked this with other parks in both Sheffield and other Core Cities. We continue to have discussions with Age UK about their café in the park and how the addition of further catering facilities can be complimentary to this.

With regards to the indoor activity space, within the procurement specification, it is proposed that indoor activity space wouldn’t be a requirement and covered outdoor activity space would be sufficient. However, there is the need for covered space for users having a break, refreshments or spectating therefore proposals for some indoor space linked with the welfare/catering facility would be considered.

After recent discussions with the Friends of Hillsborough Park we agreed to launch a specific online consultation to capture the feedback locally on potential site plans and the overall concept. The survey will run beyond the Co-Operative Executive Board on 20 April 2022, however initial feedback will be fed back verbally at this point.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality of Opportunity Implications

Hillsborough, Hollinsend and Ecclesfield where the most significant facility improvements will be seen, are all in the top 30% Indices of Multiple Deprivation across Sheffield with high levels of inactivity and obesity in children and adults. This proposal will help to improve the health and wellbeing of groups within these areas who are experiencing poorer outcomes.

⁸ The location, footprint and costs required to bring the Gatehouse back into use, make this unviable for this proposal, however we are in discussions with another partner about the potential redevelopment of the building

⁹ The Depot Bakery within the new Age UK Coach House development has opened in March 2022 and there is a café facility within the Hillsborough Sports Arena facility, adjacent to Hillsborough Park.

The introduction of accessible welfare facilities will provide greater access for disabled people.

The range of improved facilities alongside targeted community engagement programmes, will support a reduction in health inequalities with focus on key groups such as; women and girls, people on lower incomes, children and older people, disabled people and people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

Sheffield City Council's direct financial contribution to the project includes:

- £183,000 of Section 106 funding
- Up to £180,000 funding from prudential borrowing

The partner is expected to fund all remaining capital investment and generate a sufficient return to:

- Repay the prudential borrowing including interest
- Contribute to project lifecycle costs via a sinking fund
- Pay a revenue contribution to Sheffield City Council

The Activity Hub is also expected to increase the usage of the adjacent car park, which will generate a further revenue benefit to Sheffield City Council.

Financial due diligence will include background checks on the financial health of the Partner and detailed analysis of the robustness of capital and revenue budget assumptions, contained in the bid, to assess whether the proposal can deliver the expectations detailed above.

Failure of the partner to deliver the development within budget or the inability to generate the expected revenue returns may result in cost implications to Sheffield City Council which, if not mitigated, would worsen the Councils' overall financial position.

4.3 Legal Implications

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 permits the Council to provide such recreational facilities as it thinks fit which includes tennis courts and a wide variety of outdoor and indoor facilities and associated provision. The power is broad and sufficient for the purpose of this proposal.

However, if it were necessary the Council could use its ancillary powers under s111 Local Government Act 1972 or its 'General Power of Competence' under s.1 of Localism Act 2011.

The procurement must comply with domestic procurement law, including the relevant contracts regulations, and the Council's own standing orders and the Council must also ensure that the proposals are Subsidy Control compliant.

Each of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Concession Contracts Regulations 2016 would require the Council to treat providers equally and without discrimination, to act in a transparent and proportionate manner, and to prevent or eliminate conflicts of interest. Care will need to be taken to adhere to these requirements in circumstances such as the current ones, where there is a sitting provider. While it is unavoidable that a sitting provider will be well-placed from a competitive perspective, consideration should be given to steps within the Council's control that would 'level the playing field'.

There is a restriction on Hillsborough Park's title meaning that it can only be used for purposes which are in accordance with the terms of a charitable trust and any lease to be granted would be conditional on the Council obtaining the necessary approval from the trustees of that charitable trust.

The lease term will be addressed as part of the procurement strategy, taking into consideration the minimum term required for the relevant funder (i.e. The Lawn Tennis Association) whilst also ensuring a

sufficient length of term for the partner to secure its required return on investment.

4.4 Other Implications

There is no additional parking planned in association with this project, although Hillsborough Park car park is large and at times underused there could be issues raised by local residents with any increases.

The proposal is subject to planning which the partner will be responsible for submitting after contract award.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Do nothing

Parks and Countryside's have reviewed the option of continuing as is, with the existing parks tennis programme model exclusive of an Activity Hub. It has been concluded that continuing in this way, now with the added pressures that the Council is facing as a result of the pandemic, would make the model financially challenging for the future.

5.2 Develop a partial model

Parks and Countryside's have considered developing only the tennis and multi-use games area facilities, without the introduction of the Activity Hub, however together with the Lawn Tennis Association and the current partner Courtside CIC, recognise that this alone, won't bring in the investment needed to provide a sustainable parks tennis programme model for the future.

5.3 Consider an in-house delivery model

The current approach with a third-party provider is working sufficiently, although could be strengthened. The financial and operational risks are reduced to Sheffield City Council with this approach. Several years ago, the Council's 'in house' activity delivery services 'Activity Sheffield' was cut, therefore at this point, exploring an in-house delivery option has not been considered. However, in exploring the market potential, this will allow us to assess whether there is a more feasible method of delivery, so this could be explored at a later date.

5.4 Procure the Hub and Spoke model

Parks and Countryside's and the Lawn Tennis Association believe that to future-proof the parks tennis programme and broaden the reach and impact from a health inequalities perspective, procuring an Activity Hub alongside the existing parks tennis courts programme, is the most viable and sustainable option.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 As highlighted in point 1.4 Hillsborough Park has been identified as the location for the Activity Hub for a multitude of reasons. Continued management of Sheffield's parks tennis programme, alongside a sustainable business model, providing appropriate opportunities to generate income, provides financial security to parks tennis programme into the future. Without this, the programme faces a financially challenging future.

Hillsborough Park is a site which lies within an area identified as within the top 30% IMD, and therefore

the provision of quality sport and recreational facilities will have a real benefit to communities with identified health inequalities. It is designated as a ‘City Park’ which reflects the fact that residents travel to the park from across the city and further afield; and hence the benefits will also have city wide reach.

The deteriorating conditions of the existing tennis and multi-use games area provision are not ‘city’ standard. Improvements to these recreational facilities will support the parks Green Flag aspirations. The provision of an exciting and high-quality facility of this nature will raise the standard of the park, increase its attractiveness as a destination site and encourage and attract users of all ages and abilities from various communities to engage in sport and physical activities.

Data and evaluation will form an important component of this project to capture benefits, outputs and outcomes particularly focused around a reduction in health inequalities.

The social return on investment of the current parks tennis programme was recently valued by Sheffield Hallam University at over £191,000, this includes;

- £51,000 Health Outcomes
- £95,000 personal wellbeing
- £45,000 community development

We would expect this value and therefore benefits gained, to increase considerably with the introduction of the Activity Hub at Hillsborough Park and additional courts at Hollinsend and Ecclesfield Parks.

The council recognises that leisure provision both indoors and outdoors will be critical post COVID-19, with many people requiring rehabilitation after suffering long-COVID, or diminished mental health caused by lockdown.

The health and wellbeing of residents is a priority, and it is clear the services delivered by facilities such as this play a vital role both now and in the future. It is therefore critical that long term sustainable plans are put in place to maintain and grow these facilities.
