



## Report to Policy Committee

**Author/Lead Officer of Report: Lisa Firth**

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**Report of:** Kate Martin, Executive Director of City Futures

**Report to:** Briefing to Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee

**Date of Decision:** 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023

**Subject:** Tramlines Festival

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes		No	x	
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given?					
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes		No	x	
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes		No	x	
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>x</b>	No		
<p>If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-</p> <p><b>The Appendix to this report is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended): information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).</b></p>					
<p><b>Purpose of Report:</b></p> <p>To provide a briefing to the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee regarding the Tramlines Festival, the issues encountered in 2023 at Hillsborough Park, a summary of the debrief and learnings so far from Tramlines 2023 and confirmation of arrangements for Tramlines 2024.</p>					

<p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <p>The Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note the contents of the report.</li> <li>2. Note that further updates and decisions (where required) on events and</li> </ol>
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the Tramlines Festival will be taken to the appropriate Committee as required.

**Background Papers:**

*(Insert details of any background papers used in the compilation of the report.)*

**None**

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: None – briefing report
		Legal: Robert Parkin, Assistant Director Legal Services
		Equalities & Consultation: None – briefing report
		Climate: None – briefing report
<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	<b>SLB member who approved submission:</b>	Kate Martin
3	<b>Committee Chair consulted:</b>	Martin Smith
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 Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	<b>Lead Officer Name:</b> Lisa Firth	<b>Job Title:</b> Director of Parks, Leisure and Libraries
<b>Date:</b> 13 <sup>th</sup> September 2023		

## 1. BACKGROUND

### 1.1 EVENTS IN SHEFFIELD

Tramlines sits in a year-round programme of strategic events that cater for a variety of interests and audiences and includes World Snooker, DocFest, Off the Shelf, Cliffhanger, Festival of the Outdoors, Sheffield Food Festival, significant conferences, and major sporting events such as (for 2023) British Swimming and World Para Table Tennis. These events are strategically supported by Sheffield City Council.

In addition to these events, there are many others that we support in communities, with partners and respond to through the year.

The events programme is a huge asset for the city; events are fundamental to our visitor economy. We have an outstanding asset base for, and a strong track record of, hosting sports events. We have a cultural events and music offer that is synonymous with Sheffield. Our event venues for both sport and culture are a real strength and, in some cases, nationally unique.

These events provide economic impact (pounds) into the local economy, they drive business into our hotels and wider hospitality businesses, they help build the reputation of Sheffield. They create a sense of pride in our local communities, and they are integral to strategies such as our emerging Destination Management Plan and our Culture strategy.

Events bring several benefits to Sheffield:

#### **1.1.1 Economic impact of events.**

In the UK the events sector was worth £42.3 billion in 2022.

In 2021, a report prepared for SCC by IPW considered the economic impact of the Sheffield Leisure and Entertainment venues (Arena, City Hall, EISS, Ponds Forge, Ice Sheffield) throughout 2019. The venues saw 1.29m event attendees with 902,000 from outside of the city and 360,000 from Outside the city region. In addition, the three sports venues provided circa 2.25m of local leisure admissions. At the net additional level, the combined activity of the venues generated £32m of Gross Value Added (GVA) and supported over 1,000 jobs.

In 2019, there was an estimated 21,600 conferences in Sheffield. These were attended by over 1.2 million business event visitors. Delegates (and accompanying partners) accounted for an estimated spend of £141.8m at venues and in the local destination.

### **1.1.2 Brand and reputation**

Events are important for building a city's brand and reputation. They enhance the city's image, show the world what Sheffield does well and bring in audiences that might not otherwise experience Sheffield. Events are animators of destination attractiveness but more fundamentally they are key marketing propositions in the promotion of places e.g., for our city break campaigns. They provide much needed positive media profile, not just as a place to visit but also as a place to move to, work in, invest in, or study- ensuring the Sheffield is profiled in the national and international media.

### **1.1.3 Support for our hospitality sector, nighttime, and visitor economy businesses.**

It is a critical time for some of Sheffield's hospitality sector with some businesses still not recovered from the pandemic and now struggling with pressures due to the cost of fuel and inflation. Events support a range of businesses (from micro to multi-national) including supply chain, jobs with different skills and create entry level employment. Participants and organisers in events and conferences fill our hotel bedrooms and restaurant tables. Attendees to cultural and music events contribute massively to business levels across the city.

### **1.1.4 Leverage of our other strategic aims.**

We have two strategies in development: Firstly, the Destination Management Plan (DMP), which provides a galvanising framework and the opportunity to build a better and more productive visitor economy sector for Sheffield, with events as a key part of this plan. Secondly, The Cultural strategy, which is being co-created with the culture sector over the next 6 months. We know that events have an important role to play in our cultural offer, specifically to engage our communities and develop a truly inclusive and diverse cultural programme. The DMP is scheduled for discussion at the November 2023 meeting of this committee.

### **1.1.5 A sense of place and pride among our communities and residents.**

Events enhance the wellbeing of our communities. Festivals and events, including specialist markets, can celebrate local culture and provide benefits for the local community and economy. The joint LGA and Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association publication on the role of culture in placemaking<sup>1</sup> puts a strong emphasis on the community benefits of events. By creating vibrant events and experiences, areas can boost wellbeing, improve mental health, and tackle isolation.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/people-culture-place-role-culture-placemaking>

## 1.2 TRAMLINES

Tramlines is one of the UK's longest running, city-based music festivals and a highlight in Sheffield's year-round calendar of events and festivals. Founded in 2009, Tramlines first existed as a free multi-venue festival, mixing outdoor stages and city centre venues.

Tramlines was a huge success and the festival continued to grow in popularity for several years, before needing to expand beyond this original format. In 2015, the festival made a move from the city centre to Sheffield's Ponderosa Park, where it stayed for three years, before moving to its current home at Hillsborough Park in 2018.

While Tramlines has grown to become a ticketed event, much in the spirit of where the festival started, The Fringe at Tramlines is a free programme of music and activities which takes place over the same weekend as the main festival. With live stages in outdoor spaces across Sheffield City Centre and performances in many of the pubs, bars and music venues, it continues the festival atmosphere beyond the main event in Hillsborough Park. In 2023 over 40 venues in the city took part in The Fringe at Tramlines with 40,000 plus attendees.

Tramlines has been held successfully in Hillsborough Park 5 times since 2018 (except for 2020 during the coronavirus pandemic). In 2021, it was part of the Government's Events Research Programme, allowing a full capacity audience to attend the event in Hillsborough Park and contribute to research which helped other events to go ahead safely across the UK.

Following the event in 2022, Tramlines commissioned an evaluation of the 2022 festival to consider the economic impacts which the festival brings to Sheffield, including the audience profile, how well the event was received by festival goers, and to explore awareness and perceptions of festival partner brands.

There was a total of 48,358 unique visitors over the three days and the post-event online survey was sent out to all ticket purchasers and generated 4299 responses.

The key headlines from this survey are:

- 48,358 Unique visitors.
- 58% Sheffield resident.
- 42% Resident outside Sheffield.
- 45% Had under 16-year-olds in the group.
- 73% Been to Tramlines before
- 92% Rated the festival positively.
- 95% Likely to return.

This evaluation report was used to inform SCC's economic impact evaluation, which estimates the Tramlines event is worth £3.8m to the local Sheffield economy. This considers the number of people attending the event and the city of Sheffield, local contracts, accommodation, expenditure outside of the event, attendees from outside of Sheffield, the local talent playing at the event and the number of local suppliers and staff involved in delivering the festival.

As a council we use a UK Sport & DCMS event impacts modelling tool across our events programme. This allows us to compare events throughout the city in a consistent manner. This methodology is different to the one used in Tramlines own evaluation report which we do know reports a higher evaluation figure.

Therefore, we cannot draw direct comparisons between events because for instance, the Victorious Festival in Portsmouth is approximately 50% larger than Tramlines, with significantly more unique or day visitors to their festival. Well over 80% of Tramlines guests are weekend ticket holders which also reduces the economic impact. Our economic assessment also excludes voluntary donations by the organisers, for example free and discounted tickets for Hillsborough residents and charitable donations.

In addition, the Tramlines Local Resident Ticket Scheme was open to 3900 households in 2022, up from 1500 in 2021. 1614 free or discounted tickets were distributed in 2023, an increase of 16% from 2022, at a cost of £171,440 to the festival. Since it's move to Hillsborough Tramlines has donated over £560,000 worth of tickets to the Hillsborough residents.

Since 2018 Tramlines has made a conscious effort to ensure the festival adds benefit to the wider Sheffield community, including:

- Fundraised over £200,000 for local Sheffield charities.
- Donated over 500 free tickets to key workers, charities and carers.
- Hosted 68 work placements for local university students.
- Offered 226 paid local emerging artists slots.

The introduction of the Tramlines Trust in 2022 has allowed smaller, grass roots organisations to receive funding from the festival. Last year the trust awarded grants of over £10,500 to a total of 42 Sheffield and South Yorkshire organisations.

### **1.3 EVENTS IN PARKS**

Holding events in parks is a topic that generates a range of views. Often parks are used to hold smaller scale community events that interest and attract local residents. These events are hugely important to local areas and can be a way of generating interest in the green space.

Due to size and scale, larger events are not possible in many of our parks. Where they do happen, they sometimes require part or whole park closures and are a combination of pay to enter and free to enter events. They attract visitors from both the wider city and outside of Sheffield and are also an important source of income for Sheffield's parks and woodlands. These events include Art in the Gardens and Illuminate the Gardens in the Botanical Gardens, Sheffield Fake Festival in Endcliffe Park, the Sheffield Fayre in Norfolk Heritage Park and Graves Park Country Show (formerly Highland Fling).

#### **1.4 BUDGETS AND INCOME**

Maintaining parks is not a statutory duty which means local government funding for management and maintenance of green spaces is optional. As the sole funder of the day-to-day running costs of our parks, despite the brilliant work of volunteers and Friends' groups across the city, the council's resources are vital to the future upkeep and development of the city's green spaces. The council's budget has faced unprecedented cuts over recent years of austerity, with continuing and growing pressures anticipated in the years to come.

Income is therefore playing an ever more significant role within budgets. Any increase in income plays a dual role; it has the potential to support improvements within a park that might otherwise have been unaffordable and allows the council's revenue contribution to be decreased without a subsequent reduction in service. Sometimes income can be directed to the parks where it is most needed, such as in areas of the city where generating income is more difficult. Where parks can achieve levels of income, this income can be used to offset some of the funding reductions that might otherwise be felt within that green space.

Sheffield has more than 800 green spaces including 83 parks, more than 150 children's playgrounds, 181 woodlands, and 262 Nature Conservation sites. Most of our money pays for our staff or contractors who look after these green spaces for the community, and the running costs of buildings, offices, vehicles and other facilities. Income from events helps to offset these costs and support the council to deliver our services with support from Friends' groups and volunteers.

#### **1.5 CHARITABLE PARKS**

At charitable parks across the city, any income received (from events or other activities) must be accounted for within the charity accounts. The charity accounts are produced each year and independently audited before being submitted to the charity commission for publication. For each charitable park in Sheffield, Sheffield City Council is the sole Trustee of the charity, acting through the Charity Trustee Sub Committee. The Trustees present their report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year end and the financial statements are prepared in accordance with the accounting policies that comply with the charity's trust deed, the Charities Act

2011 and the requirements of the Statement of Recommended Practice, 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland. The law requires the council to prepare financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the income and expenditure for the year.

The aim of the Parks and Countryside Service is to deliver good quality green spaces and make sure we have facilities that people expect from a city like Sheffield. The costs of doing this continue to increase more than ever since the Covid pandemic with the number of people using our green spaces being at an all-time high. To ensure we can deliver the right service in the right place (in a city that experiences health and wellbeing inequalities) we endeavor to raise income where it is possible to add to our funding streams. As a very large number of our sites do not have the opportunity to raise income, we apply our revenue funding where it is most needed and use income to top this up. On charitable sites income must stay for use within the charitable park so revenue funding may be reduced.

If we didn't reduce the revenue grant to parks that receive income, like Hillsborough Park, we would have to reduce the amount of money we spend on other parks that can't generate as much income, such as High Hazels Park in Darnall or other non-charity parks, like Parson Cross or Handsworth.

Therefore, we must look to allocate the revenue grant appropriately and proportionately to make sure we have parks of a high quality across the city for everyone to enjoy.

## **1.6 TRAMLINES INCOME**

The last published fee paid by Tramlines for hire of Hillsborough Park was £33,500 in 2021. This income helped offset the additional repairs & maintenance of £27,652 drainage and path repairs work in this year.

The fee is negotiated on a commercial basis and in consideration of other similar events. The council cannot disclose the current fee paid by Tramlines to the Hillsborough Park Charity because this is deemed commercially sensitive information, as confirmed by the Information Commissioners Office at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023. Tramlines regard their fee as commercially sensitive because the summer festival market is very competitive, and the pricing of their tickets incorporates their costs and expertise.

The confidential fee information is set out for the exempt from publication Appendix to this report.



## 1.7 WHY HILLSBOROUGH PARK?

The question of why the festival can't be held in another park, or at least rotated has been asked by some of the city's residents in response to the issues experienced this year.

Hillsborough Park is the only city park with the capacity to host an event of this size and nature. This is for two reasons; a) the main field can host an audience of around 35,000 and b) the park's proximity to both the Supertram network and several bus routes and spectators can walk into the city centre (3 miles) at the end of each show day.

In addition, Hillsborough Park's proximity to wrap around facilities such as Hillsborough Arena (which is now used to support a festival stage) and Sheffield Wednesday Football Club; which plays a key part in the viability of Tramlines and access to emergency facilities.

In considering possible locations for Tramlines, the council has explored the following alternatives:

- Graves Park is larger in terms of area compared to Hillsborough Park; however, it has large sections designated as grazing and woodland. Transport links and entrances and egress restrictions make Graves Park unsuitable for an event of this size.
- Norfolk Park is used regularly to host a wide range of events, including music events, however, the capacity of Norfolk Park is only 8,000 making it unsuitable for Tramlines.
- The Don Valley Bowl is used regularly to host a wide range of events, including music events, however, the capacity of Don Valley Bowl is only 18,000, making it unsuitable for Tramlines.
- A combination of Don Valley Bowl, Arena, and the Arena carpark has been explored. Combining the Arena with an outdoor event isn't possible because of the entrance and exit security measures that need to be in place for the different venues. Using just the Arena carpark (approximate capacity 22,000) alongside Don Valley Bowl wouldn't give sufficient capacity for a main stage which requires a capacity in excess of 35,000. This combination would also prevent the Arena being used for other indoor events throughout the Tramlines weekend and the associated set up and take down periods. From experience of hosting other events on Don Valley Bowl, an event on the scale of Tramlines could render both Ice Sheffield and the English Institute of Sport Sheffield unable to open, with its proximity to the ring road causing severe traffic congestion. However, the feasibility of this option continues to be explored.
- Ponderosa Park isn't large enough to cater for more than 19,000

spectators and this made it difficult for the Tramlines festival to attract artists of a significant enough stature to sell tickets.

## **1.8 TRAMLINES 2023 AND THE WEATHER**

Prior to 2023, rain has fallen every year during the Tramlines festival and Hillsborough Park ground conditions have previously proven robust. Reinstatement works have been required each year to an expected level and completed with little disruption to park users.

In July 2023 rainfall was above average throughout the UK and parts of England also had their respective wettest July on record. Sheffield experienced its second wettest July on record with the Weston Park weather station recording 176mm (7in) of rainfall which is more than double the 65mm average.

The weather forecast was regularly changing and so information was collected via various channels including weather forecasting websites, the met office Talk to a Forecaster service and satellite weather prediction services. Whilst the forecast was constantly changing and heavy rain was expected, the overall rainfall on Saturday and Sunday afternoon was more than the picture built up using the various forecasting services. The Tramlines and SCC teams worked extremely hard to prepare the ground so the event could proceed safely both in advance of the event and during the event weekend.

The decision as to whether an event is to be cancelled, for example in the event of adverse weather, has some complexities. In the context of Tramlines 2023 and the issues with rain, the final decision lies with the event organiser, in full consultation with SCC.

## **1.9 IMPACT ON THE PARK**

The impact on the park has been significant and reparations to the park are taking time. In the areas where festival goers gathered or traversed the park the grass was severely damaged. This has resulted in the main field being fenced off to allow repair works and re-seeding to take place. The use of straw and bark to mitigate some of the rainfall has resulted in those works taking longer than they otherwise might, as these products have had to be removed from the ground before any new seed could be laid. The amount of mud created by the rain has meant that the path network needed significant cleaning before they were usable.

The impact on park users has been felt differently by different users. Thankfully some parts of the park were able to be returned to use very quickly. This included the playground, learn to ride area, pump track and the MUGA. The grassed areas have seen the worst impact with the main field fenced off throughout the school summer holiday period. Fences have started to be removed within the park although the main field is likely to remain fenced until the end of September. Key partners within

the park have returned to the park as soon as they were able to although the position of the fencing delayed this in some areas.

### **1.10 LEARNING FOR FUTURE EVENTS**

We are clear that the situation experienced in Hillsborough Park this summer cannot be repeated in future years. We take the need to learn lessons and make changes for next year's Tramlines and future events very seriously and we are committed to working with Tramlines to learn lessons from this year's festival.

The ground is protected in some places for every event and in anticipation of heavy rain, we had further prepared by protecting some of the most heavily used areas with a special ground sheet covering and used straw and bark in other places but these protections were not adequate for such exceptionally heavy rain.

Having not had such extreme weather on a festival weekend before, we did not anticipate how quickly the ground would deteriorate, especially on the Sunday. The varied weather pattern on the Sunday morning made decisions about the site more complicated. The rain stopped for a time on Sunday morning and with the extra protections put in place, the ground did recover somewhat leading organisers in consultation with SCC to deem it safe and appropriate that the event continue. As the rain started again in the early afternoon, the site was inspected again by the team including health and safety colleagues. The site was deemed safe for the festival to go ahead due to the additional groundwork mitigations.

We continue to work with Tramlines to discuss whether those decisions were a) right and b) made at the right time considering the damage to the grassed area of the park. We have also assessed how much damage had been done by the end of Saturday and whether the park would have been in a significantly better situation with a Sunday cancellation. These conversations and our conclusions will help inform future strategies for events.

We will also consider what additional measures could be put in place to protect the ground at future festivals to ensure we can get the park back open quickly for everyone to enjoy afterwards. We know there will always be some damage or disruption after a major event, but our aim is to minimise the damage as much as possible using sensible, affordable methods (always paid for by the event organiser). We hope that we'd never see another weekend with such heavy rain, but we also know that with changes in the climate, extreme weather is likely to happen more regularly.

This has also led to further consideration regarding the number of large music events that can be held in Hillsborough Park (and other parks) in a relatively short timescale, as we saw in 2023 with the Arctic Monkeys playing two nights in early June. If the weather had been extreme in

June, and whilst we had ensured there was a substantive break between the two events, the grassed area may not have recovered sufficiently in time to hold Tramlines. We are clear that this cannot happen in the future and will therefore factor in the impact of severe weather during the Tramlines weekend this year when making any decisions about large scale events in future.

SCC and Tramlines continue to work closely to make good Hillsborough Park, and large sections of the park are now open, and the park is able to be enjoyed more by local and city residents and the full costs of the repairs have been borne by Tramlines. However, we know the repairs to the main grassed area are going to take far longer than we could have anticipated, and we know this is unacceptable to everyone who wants to use the main field in the park. We must make sure that this doesn't happen again.

### **1.11 TRAMLINES 2024**

Since 2018, Tramlines has a premises licence to hold the event in Hillsborough Park. The term "licence" refers to the legal permission to carry out licensable activity on the land, conferred under the Licensing Act of 2003. The licence is ongoing until it is either revoked by the Council following a formal legal process.

A review of a premises licence is an absolute last resort. The evidence bar is high and the licence holder has a right of appeal through the courts should an unfavourable decision be made by the Council through its Licensing Sub Committee. The Council has not had notification from any of the partner authorities under the Licensing Act that they are considering submitting a licence review request for Tramlines, nor do we believe that such a review is warranted.

Such a licence does not give an automatic right to occupy the land. The permission to occupy the land at Hillsborough Park is covered under an agreement between SCC and Tramlines. This agreement covers standard terms and conditions such as, force majeure, reinstatement of the site, fees and event safety and security.

The agreement also gives each party directions on what to do should a breach of the agreement take place. The current agreement has been in place since 2018 and we review this with Tramlines each year to ensure it remains legally accurate and fit for purpose. This work continues in 2023 and will include the learnings set out above.

Tramlines, as with any major ticketed event, works on an approximate 18-month cycle and need to have some certainty over the coming years' events. We are committed to reviewing the lessons learned and to working with Tramlines as our valued partner to ensure the event will go ahead in Hillsborough Park in 2024 without issue.

## **2. HOW DOES THIS UPDATE CONTRIBUTE?**

The learnings from Tramlines 2023 will continue and will be considered as part of the review of the agreement between Tramlines and SCC for the 2024 event. This will naturally lead to a review of the longer-term future of the event in Hillsborough Park. Any review will include the views of local Hillsborough residents, the Friends of Hillsborough Park, people from across Sheffield, festival goers, strategic partners, and the Hillsborough Park Charitable Trust. Decisions on the use of Hillsborough Park are made by the Council acting as trustee, having regard to the charitable objectives of the trust, including the provision and maintenance of a public park and recreation ground in Sheffield for the use of members of the public resorting thereto with the object of improving their conditions of life (for the city and county borough of Sheffield).

Any required decisions will be taken by the appropriate policy committee (Communities Parks and Leisure, Economic Development and Skills, Strategy and Resources Policy Committee and its sub-committee, the Charity Trustee Sub Committee) with input from ward councillors.

## **3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?**

3.1 There has not been any consultation specifically regarding this report.

## **4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE REPORT**

### 4.1 Equality Implications

4.1.1 There are no equality implications from this report.

### 4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 There are no financial implications from this report.

### 4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 As an update report, there are no direct legal implications from this report.

### 4.4 Other Implications

4.4.1 There are no further implications from this report.

