



Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Lisa Firth,
Director of Parks, Leisure and Libraries

Tel: 07867 758407

Report of: Lisa Firth, Director of Parks, Leisure and Libraries

Report to: Communities, Parks and Leisure Committee

Date of Decision: 12th June 2023

Subject: PlayZones– Updated position of Test & Learn phased approach.

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given: 2127				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i>				

Purpose of Report:

As requested at the November 2022 Community, Parks and Leisure committee, this report will provide an update on progress of the PlayZones Programme and proposes a phased application to the Football Foundation that will use a 'test and learn approach' before wide application .

Phase 1 will develop two PlayZones sites one at Ecclesfield Park and another at Sheffield Wednesday Community Programme facility in Jubilee Sports Ground; outcomes from phase 1 will inform the other phases in this project.

Recommendations:

That the Communities, Parks, and Leisure Committee:

- Notes the work undertaken since November and difficulties implementing the previously agreed approach to site selection.
- Endorses the approach now being proposed including the phased application and the new methodology for site selection.
- Notes Phase 1 will be a 'Test and Learn' process implemented at sites in Ecclesfield Park and Sheffield Wednesday Community Programme facility in Jubilee Sports Ground.
- Notes the findings from the 'Test and Learn' process will be reported to the Communities, Parks and Leisure Committee.

Background Papers:

PlayZones Funding Site Selection and Community Engagement Approach.

PlayZones Options paper April 23

Lead Officer to complete:-							
1	<table border="1"> <tr> <td rowspan="4">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.</td> <td>Finance: Kerry Darlow</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Legal: <i>Marcia McFarlane</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Equalities & Consultation: <i>Louise Nunn</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Climate: <i>Jessica Rick</i></td> </tr> </table>	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: <i>Marcia McFarlane</i>	Equalities & Consultation: <i>Louise Nunn</i>	Climate: <i>Jessica Rick</i>	
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: <i>Marcia McFarlane</i>						
	Equalities & Consultation: <i>Louise Nunn</i>						
	Climate: <i>Jessica Rick</i>						
	<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	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>SLB member who approved submission:</td> <td>Ajman Ali</td> </tr> </table>	SLB member who approved submission:	Ajman Ali				
SLB member who approved submission:	Ajman Ali						
3	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Committee Chair consulted:</td> <td>Richard Williams</td> </tr> </table>	Committee Chair consulted:	Richard Williams				
Committee Chair consulted:	Richard Williams						
4	<table border="1"> <tr> <td colspan="2">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.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lead Officer Name: Lisa Firth</td> <td>Job Title: Director Parks, Leisure and Libraries</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Date: 6 June 2023</td> </tr> </table>	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.		Lead Officer Name: Lisa Firth	Job Title: Director Parks, Leisure and Libraries	Date: 6 June 2023	
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.							
Lead Officer Name: Lisa Firth	Job Title: Director Parks, Leisure and Libraries						
Date: 6 June 2023							

1 PROPOSAL

1.1 Background

PlayZones Funding Programme

- 1.1.1 In 2022 the Football Foundation PlayZones launched a funding stream that provides funding to create safe, inclusive, and accessible outdoor sports facilities that bring communities together through recreational forms of football and a range of other sports and physical activities. Whilst the investment is football-led, PlayZones will be multi-sports courts and the Football Foundation want other sports and activities to benefit from our facilities. Sports included on each PlayZone will be subject to consultation.
- 1.1.2 The funding is to target women and girls, lower socio-economic groups, disabled people, those with long-term health condition and ethnically diverse communities.
- 1.1.3 In June 2022 Sheffield City Council submitted its expression of interest in the PlayZones programme, after which, the council was invited to submit applications within three-years (i.e by June 2025). This application process allows the council to use a 'phased' approach to the application, with the possibility of applying for funding for a total of up to 15-20 sites (the final number will be determined by how many sites meet the suitability criteria). *This could potentially be a significant investment of £1.5-£2 million.*

1.2 Football Foundation Requirements

- 1.2.1 Criteria set out by the Football Foundation to fund a Playzone includes the following:
- Target - The funding is to be targeted at the following groups: women and girls, lower socio-economic groups, disabled people and those with long-term health condition and ethnically diverse communities.
 - Design –PlayZones are to be fully fenced with lighting. They can be used for a range of sports dependent on local demand including football, basketball, cricket, netball, hockey and rugby.
 - Lockable- The facility that is to be built must be lockable and the locking system must be a Smart Access System identified by the Football Federation.
 - Bookable – At least some sessions must be bookable to enable target groups to access the courts. This can be part of a mixed approach with free informal access and some bookable sessions. Method of implementation will depend on local needs and requirements.

- Activation – for each PlayZone, an activation plan (that explains how the public can physically access the facility) will be required and this will be developed with community partners who are able to activate the site.
- Match Funding – across the programme there is a requirement for 25% match funding. S106, Public Health, local Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and other external funding pots allocated to parks and green spaces across the city are available for use towards this. It should be noted that whilst 25% match funding is required across the programme, if a specific site has a shortfall, but scores very highly on other areas of need such as supporting target groups and community feedback and it is possible to meet the 25% across the whole programme, it will still be considered.
- Sustainable Model- all facilities follow an annual maintenance plan as well as a resurfacing after 10 years. We will work with local stakeholder to ensure we are able to create a robust ‘activation plan’ ensuring the facility secures sufficient income to be able to maintain the facility to a high quality.

1.3 Updated Proposal

- 1.3.1 After a successful expression of interest, ‘narrowing the focus’ and site identification process was conducted. Our initial direction, outlined in the report to Committee in November 2022, was to look at refurbishing existing Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) within park settings to improve the standards. We previously gained approval from the committee to undertake a site selection scoring matrix based upon the following criteria: Site suitability (planning requirements), Community Need, Funding availability, supporting target groups, multi-sport model and community engagement feedback (see PlayZones Funding Site Selection and Community Engagement Approach)
- 1.3.2 Unfortunately, this process has proved inconclusive as there are many complexities affecting the many different sites we have considered. In addition, due to the criteria required by the funder (floodlighting/smart access/bookable/lockable) it has now become apparent that PlayZones may require oversight and a level of on-site presence to enable this to work – effectively resulting in the PlayZone being a managed facility. This means the number of sites actually fitting the required criteria are very limited.
- 1.3.3 We have sought guidance/ learning from the Football Foundation and other Local Authority areas, however due to the infancy of the project, there is little evidence of best practice in either the site selection process nor the sustainable activation model. There are currently no PlayZones in operation across the country, thus the requirement for further learning regarding the best site selection and activation model.

1.3.4 During the last 6 months we have undertaken the initial phase of the community engagement process, having discussions with community stakeholders, elected members, and target groups. We have spoken with over 70 different organisations/stakeholders/networks, including Local Area Committees, the PlayZones consortium and local community assets. Feedback has suggested;

- Community residents/members are unsupportive of a lockable and bookable facility. There is a feeling this would take a facility away from residents which would otherwise have free access.
- It has proved difficult to create a sustainable activation model without a community asset willing to take responsibility for the site. It is crucial we create a sustainable model to ensure facilities remain of high quality and annual costs (license for Smart Access, energy costs and general maintenance) are accounted for.
- Many of our existing MUGAs across our Parks and green spaces do not meet the Football Foundation requirements as listed above.

1.3.5 We therefore propose a 'Test and Learn model' trialling two different 'delivery models' to ascertain the best model for future sites over the next three years. These models are:

- SCC parks site with a mixed stakeholder activation plan
- 'Non-Local Authority Land Site' – with community partner leading a mixed stakeholder activation plan.

1.3.6 Sites to be included within Phase 1 test and learn model.

- Ecclesfield Park
- Sheffield Wednesday Community Programme facility at Jubilee Sports Ground.

1.4 Selection of initial sites:

1.4.1 Initial analysis has taken place, identifying priority sites based on; Site suitability (meeting Football Foundation design and funding requirements), ability to support target audiences, ability to provide a multi-sport partnership and initial community engagement feedback. This process helped to identify priority site lists for further investigation. The two selected phase 1 sites have been prioritised due to the following aspects.

1.4.2 Ecclesfield Park: The park has a wider Masterplan for park improvements, and community consultation already undertaken highlights the need/demand for improved sports facilities, with a particular need for improvement of the dis-used tennis courts. Match investment has been secured via Section 106/ Public Health funding connected to the Ecclesfield Park Masterplan. The site satisfies

Football Foundation requirements, and the additional flood lighting will respond to a community need around the feeling of safety on the site. Consultation has shown that the current MUGA is well loved but under-used due to condition, we hope that the PlayZone can support with enhancing the park two-fold in providing the means through funding to maintain two spaces.

1.4.3 Sheffield Wednesday Community Programme at Jubilee Sports Ground: The site has a community partner organisation on site and able to support management of the facility from 09:00- 21:00, seven days a week. A managed facility will enable an Activation Plan which incorporates free open access, sessions for target audiences and community group usage. Sheffield Wednesday Community Programme will provide the required 25% match funding for a new PlayZone facility and will provide ongoing maintenance for the facility to comply with Football Foundation requirements. Due to the infrastructure at the facility, welfare facilities will be available, which has been highlighted as a significant factor to engage several our target audiences (People with a long-term health condition and disabled people).

1.4.4 The benefits of this approach include;

- Reduced financial risk of trialling two sites initially.
- No financial risk of trialling non-local authority land site due to community anchor organisation providing required match fund and will be responsible for ongoing maintenance costs.
- Creates opportunity for city-specific findings which can help influence the national programme as well as our strategic approach thereafter.
- Creation of new facility within Ecclesfield park will not be removing/privatising any existing currently used space, and instead increasing opportunity/space two-fold. The incorporation of the maintenance of the existing MUGA ensures there is a suitable space for community open/free access, which is currently under-utilised due to quality.
- PlayZone model designed to be self-sustainable in terms of maintenance – if successful no added costs.
- The Football Foundation are key funders, this would keep us working closely with them with an aim to influence the model upon review.
- A more managed facility is the general direction of travel from the Football Foundation. Gathering our own data on this type of project will help us understand more about this model.
- Local stakeholders to Ecclesfield Park are supportive of trying this type of development in the park.

- Opportunity to work with researchers to assess the success/flaws of the model.
- 1.4.5 As part of the assessment of the ‘test and learn’ approach we would undertake a full assessment of the project following 6 months of use. This learning will help influence the future development of the PlayZones model and guide us in making future decisions on whether and how we would want to proceed.
- 1.4.6 Initial leaning will review:
- Real build and installation cost
 - Build and site management issues
 - Ease of access for participants
 - Satisfaction survey of participants
 - Whether the model is successful in engaging target audiences
 - Whether there is sufficient support from local stakeholders
 - Analysis of income
 - Maintenance position- number of incidents, sufficient capacity within Parks to manage
- 1.4.7 SCC will work with community organisations, our consortium, activation partners and the Football Foundation to ensure learning is collated. We are also hoping to work alongside the University of Sheffield who may also undertake academic research alongside the learning plan.
- 1.4.8 The finding of the ‘test and learn’ approach will be shared with the Communities Parks and Leisure Committee in order to inform whether and how the Council should proceed with future Phases of the PlayZones Programme.

2 HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 2.1 This decision contributes to Our Sheffield Delivery Plan priorities including the strategic goal ‘Healthy lives and wellbeing for all’ in particular the area of focus around ‘Redesigning the sport and leisure offer in the City’.
- 2.2 Sheffield City Council’s new Sport and Leisure Strategy is due to be launched in 2023 following a public consultation and development in 2022. The Strategy sets out six themes which the PlayZones programme will contribute to:
- Investing in an Active Sheffield:

- Inspiring Sport Achievement
- Active Communities
- Active Children and Young People
- Active Environments
- Connecting to Health and Wellbeing

2.3 The refurbishment of multi-use games areas across the City will contribute to the above themes in the following ways.

- Enable investment in our outdoor sport and leisure facilities to improve their quality.
- Provide opportunities for the development of sporting talent working with national governing bodies, clubs and community partners to activate the PlayZones.
- Ensure local provision in areas in most need of quality facilities.
- Focus on the PlayZones priority groups women and girls, lower socio-economic groups, disabled people, those with long-term health condition and ethnically diverse communities.
- Provide facilities which will benefit children and young people across the City.
- Improve the quality of our parks and open spaces and contribute to creating 'Active Parks' across the City
- Provide facilities and activities to encourage more people to be more active more often.

3 HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?






3.1 Sheffield City Council carried out a city-wide consultation exercise in early 2022 to help inform a new Sport and Leisure Strategy which will be launched in 2023. The consultation focused on people's current views about sport, leisure and physical activity, the impact of the pandemic, what would help them be more active, priorities in their local areas and where they would like to see investment.

3.2 Feedback from the citywide questionnaire supported improving facilities to enable people to be more active outdoors and support for creating community hubs in each area which links closely to Parks and Countryside ambition to create Active Parks across the City.

3.3 There were some key feedback from target group consultees around improving multi use games areas in parks and green spaces with feedback from young people supporting low-cost activities, mainly in outdoor locations with adult supervision to ensure personal safety and support fair access to activity space for younger children. There were clear views of how facilities could be improved, citing inconsistencies in pitch surfaces, markings and goalposts on pitches and Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) located in parks.

3.4 There was also feedback from young people around the lack of coaches and outreach for diverse sports, alongside the need for more courts/pitches/surfaces/tracks/gym equipment in parks and greenspaces to be able to access those sports outdoors for free.

3.5 Additionally, lighting was a key aspect consultees would like to change so that they may be able to access opportunities all year round and to feel safe.

<p>Survey of Sheffield residents</p>  1788 responses	<p>Focus groups in 7 local areas</p>  48 residents
<p>Survey of priority audiences</p>  328 responses	<p>Target group consultations with priority audiences</p>  30 groups & 300 individuals
<p>Survey of Clubs & NGBs</p>  38 responses	<p>TOTALS SURVEY REPOSESES – 2116 SESSION ATTENDEES - 348</p>

3.6 As aforementioned, community engagement has started, with over 70 organisations consulted regarding PlayZones (summary provided above) Additional consultation will take place imminently with local residents, target audiences and community groups within each site area. A detailed Community Engagement Report will be submitted to Football Foundation for assessment. This will be considered before any funds are allocated.

4 RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

1.4.9 The proposals identified within this report are expected to have positive equality of opportunity impacts as our community engagement and subsequent investment in facilities will help to reduce barriers to participation and encourage more people to be more active, more often, especially those who may not currently have access to good quality outdoor sports facilities.

1.4.10 The funding programme requires us to work closely with target groups women and girls, lower socio-economic groups, disabled people, those with long-term health condition and ethnically diverse communities. This will allow us to tackle inequalities in access to facilities and inactivity across the city by targeting those groups we know face barriers to getting active.

1.4.11 PlayZone sites will require a collectively agreed (with Sheffield City Council, Community Stakeholders and Facility Operator where applicable) Activation Plan. This plan will ensure access for target audiences. Early discussions with stakeholders on these sites have highlighted there will be targeted provision access for; Disability groups (including Pan Disability Football), Mental Health specific sessions and Weight Management activities. Further discussions will ensure access for local community organisations who work with people from the identified target audiences.

1.4.12 The PlayZones programme will contribute to a number of our Equality Objectives including:

- Understanding Communities – we will use the data and insight we collected Sport and Leisure Strategy consultation and collect further data and insight as part of the PlayZones Community engagement to help inform PlayZone site priorities and meet community needs.
- Break the cycle of inequality and improve life chances – If the grant funding application is successful, the PlayZones programme will contribute to improving health and wellbeing by providing new and upgraded outdoor sports facilities with an activation programme to encourage usage.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 The intention is that the cost of the zones will be funded through income and therefore will not represent a pressure on the Councils' revenue budget.
- 4.2.2 As detailed in the proposal section, the Playzones funding application requires 25% match funding. We have identified the required 25% match funding at Ecclesfield Park (Local Authority owned). Section 106 Funding/Public Health funding has been secured for the wider Ecclesfield Park Masterplan.
- 4.2.3 There will be no requirement for Sheffield City Council to provide the 25% match funding at the Sheffield Wednesday Community Programme Jubilee Sports ground site, as landowner, Sheffield Wednesday Community Programme will be providing the required investment.
- 4.2.4 Business and activation plans will be developed as part of the funding process to ensure they are maintained effectively and provide a range of targeted activities that enable and encourage community use, with a particular focus on target group. The sustainability of the Jubilee site will be the responsibility of Sheffield Wednesday Community Programme.
- 4.2.5 Future consideration of 'non-local authority land' sites reduces the financial risk, as the 25% match requirement will be provided by the land owner.

4.3 Commercial

- 4.3.1 The Football Foundation have stated that a requirement of their funding will be for us to use their design framework to develop designs for the PlayZones. They have not yet determined whether they will have a framework in place for construction work. This will be confirmed when funding is secured.

4.4 Legal Implications

- 1.4.13 There are no implications at this stage. Once funding is secured, we will be required to assess any grant conditions and implications of these before formally accepting the grant.
- 1.4.14 There will be future legal implications if our application to the Football Foundation is successful. There will be a requirement for Sheffield City Council to transfer funds to Sheffield Wednesday Community Programme as they will take sole responsibility for managing the installation and build of the PlayZone at the Jubilee

Sports Ground. More detail will be provided in a future report to Committee.

4.5 Climate Implications

1.4.15 If the grant funding application is successful, any new facilities developed as part of the programme will consider the following principles:

- Ensure the use of sustainable construction methods
- Consider the ecological impact of any proposals and ensure these are mitigated
- Consider the energy implications of lighting arrangements to ensure the most efficient and sustainable options are chosen (for example user controlled)
- Identify opportunities to promote and increase active travel and sustainable transport access to facilities
- Consider opportunities for improving biodiversity where appropriate
- Consider options for minimising waste in construction
- Consider options for repair/upgrade instead of replacing where appropriate

1.4.16 In most cases, Playzones will be refurbishing existing Multi Use Games areas but in the case of new sites as part of the site scoring method site suitability will be considered to ensure the new PlayZones do not impact adversely on ecology, drainage or trees and woodlands.

1.4.17 A full scored Climate Impact Assessment has not been completed at this stage but will be completed for any PlayZones sites delivered if the grant application is secured.

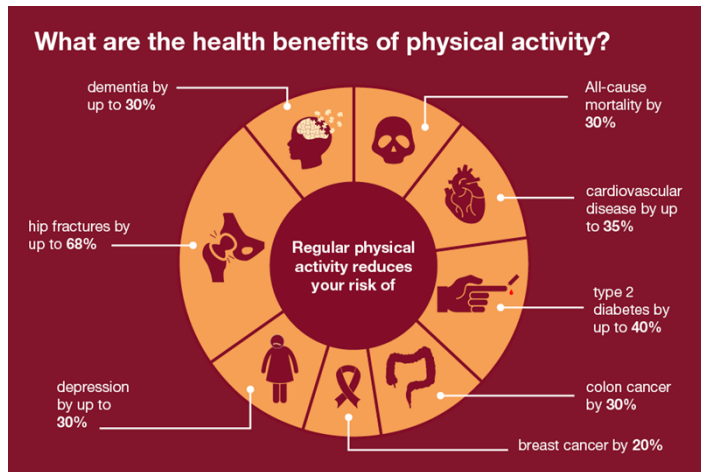
4.6 Other Implications

1.4.18 Personnel Implications

1.4.18.1 The PlayZones have awarded Sheffield City Council a £25K revenue development grant which has been used to employ a temporary member of staff who will support the bid development and community engagement process.

1.4.19 Public Health Implications

1.4.19.1 If funding is secured, the PlayZones will have positive implications for public health. Regular physical activity can reduce the risk of a range of health conditions and can prevent or delay onset of these conditions



1.4.19.2 which will contribute to an increase in life expectancy in target groups.

1.4.19.3 Ensuring facilities are targeted to those groups highlighted by the PlayZones programme, where increasing activity levels can make the most difference, will contribute and have a positive impact on inequalities in health outcomes across the City.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 An options paper has been developed with five options considered during optioneering. This report has highlighted two options, however further information can be found in PlayZones Options Paper April 2023 V1.docx

5.2 **Pause all work until wider learning is shared from the project; earliest is summer 2024.** Due to the lack of information currently available, we could look to pause development on this programme and reconsider once other areas of the country have progressed. The benefits of this would be reduced staff resource, increase knowledge of 'best practice' and an opportunity to understand the most suitable operation models. However, the disadvantages to this would be the potential reallocation of secured Section106/ public health funding for Ecclesfield Park (meaning a PlayZone may not be able to be built in the future). There may also be a reputation risk

with the Football Foundation as well as reducing the opportunity for us to learn and shape the future direction of the programme. Lastly, there is a possible reputational risk with stakeholder, partners and the community who have been involved to date. Due to the reputational risk with both funder and community/ stakeholders, and the potential of reallocated funds for Ecclesfield, this option has not been progressed.

5.3 Encourage Consortium members to lead (Non-Local Authority Land sites only). Due to the challenge in existing Local Authority Land sites meeting the current programme requirements, we could decide to encourage Consortium members to lead on the programme, identifying non-local authority land sites for development of a PlayZone. The benefits of this would be reduced Sheffield City Council staff resource time, plus the opportunity for investment to be secured for the city. The disadvantages include a lack of Sheffield City Council oversight/ influence of the programme. There would also be a lack of investment in open green spaces and facilities which have been identified as requiring investment. There is also an increased risk that sites may not provide free open access for residents. Due to the lack of influence on any prospective programme and the lack of investment within parks and green spaces, this option has not been progressed.

6 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The Football Foundation PlayZones Programme provides an opportunity for us to increase the quality and usability of a significant number of multi-use games areas across the city.
- 6.2 The PlayZones programme will enable us to provide facilities and activities for communities and target groups who currently face barriers to getting active. This will enable us to tackle inequalities.
- 6.3 The updated approach outlined in the above report is required to ensure we test and learn from a range of different models, to ensure we create high quality sustainable facilities which not only meet the requirements of the funder, but also ensure we reach our target audience and create accessible opportunities for the residents of Sheffield.