

Record of Decision taken by Executive Councillor

Decision title: Acceptance of grant to refurbishment tennis courts at Vivary Park and Taunton Green

Executive Councillor making the decision: Cllr Derek Perry

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Date of Decision: 21.03.2023

Details of decision:

The tennis courts owned by the Council at Vivary Park and Taunton Green are in need of refurbishment. The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) has approached the Council and offered to provide £120,000 of grant funding to refurbish two tennis courts at Vivary Park and two tennis courts at Taunton Green.

Following a four-week public consultation Somerset West and Taunton Council will accept the grant funding of £120,000 from the LTA for the regeneration of the four tennis courts. The Council will provide match funding of £20,000 for the regeneration works.

As a condition of the grant funding from the LTA the tennis court facilities will become a pay to play facility with an online booking system. Once the courts are renovated fees for the use of the tennis courts for the 2023/24 financial year will be £6 per hour or £36 per annum for an annual household pass. Some discounted and free sessions will be made available to ensure that everyone still has an opportunity to use the courts.

As per the reorganisation of the council, the ownership and long-term maintenance of the Taunton Green tennis courts will be transferred to Taunton Town Council after it is formed on 1st April 2023. The tennis courts at Vivary Park will remain in the ownership of Somerset West and Taunton Council and subsequently Somerset Council once it is formed on 1st April 2023.

Reasons for proposed decision:

The tennis courts owned by the Council at Vivary Park and Taunton Green need refurbishment including resurfacing, repainting and some repairs to fencing. The Council does not have sufficient funds within its current leisure budget to pay for these works but the grant funding from the LTA will enable this work to be carried out to make the tennis courts high quality facilities. Following refurbishment, the tennis courts will become pay to play facilities and the income generated will allow the Council to maintain the courts.

Somerset West and Taunton Council carried out a four-week consultation seeking the public's views on whether the Council should accept the grant funding from the LTA to refurbish the courts with the courts to then become pay to play facilities. Overall the responses to the survey indicated support for the tennis courts being refurbished using the grant funding from the LTA and the courts becoming pay to play facilities. Of the 107 respondents received 57.01% were in favour of the courts at Vivary Park being refurbished and becoming pay to play facilities, 26.17% were against and 16.82% had no preference. For the tennis courts at Taunton Green 51.40% were in favour of the courts being

refurbished and becoming pay to play facilities, 33.64% were against and 14.95% had no preference.

However, many of the responses to the survey highlighted the need for there to be free or cheaper sessions for different groups such as school children. The Council intends to ensure that some free and concessionary rate sessions will be made periodically available to ensure everyone can still access the facilities.

Alternative funding options sourced:

Funding for the work has been obtained through grant funding from the LTA with the Council to provide match funding of £20,000 towards the works.

The below has been completed:	Name(s)	Date
Relevant ward councillor(s) consulted	Cllr Lee Baker Cllr Libby Lisgo Cllr Brenda Weston	Between 1/3/23 – 7/3/23

The following are if appropriate / applicable: Yes/No. If yes the implications should be attached to this decision notice.

Finance implications	Yes	
Unitary Council and S24 Direction Implications (Contracts and Land Disposals)	No – Does not meet the threshold for Section 24 Direction.	
Legal implications	No	
Links to corporate aims	Yes	
Climate and Sustainability implications	No	
Community Safety Implications	No	
Equalities Impact	Yes – Equalities impact assessment attached.	
Safeguarding Implications	Yes – Details attached.	
Risk management	Yes	
Partnership implications	Yes	

Any conflicts of interest declared by Leader or Executive Members consulted on the proposed decision. If Yes provide confirmation from Chief Executive to grant dispensation for the Leader's / Executive Member's views to be considered.

Decision Maker

I am aware of the details of this decision(s), considered the reasons, options, representations and consultation responses and give my approval / agreement to its implementation.

Signed:



Name:

DEREK PERRY

Date:

21/3/23.

Note – This decision record is for decisions taken by Executive Councillors. The decision(s) can be implemented following publication and the period for any call-in has expired.

Note: A copy should also be sent to the Governance Team – governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

