

Decision Maker: EXECUTIVE

For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee on 16 November 2022 and the Environment and Community Services PDS Committee on 22 November 2022.

Date: 30 November 2022

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Key

TITLE: LAWN TENNIS ASSOCIATION PARKS TENNIS RENOVATION FUND

Contact Officer: Chris Chatten, Sport and Leisure Manager
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Chief Officer: Director of Housing, Planning, Property and Regeneration

Ward: Bromley Town, Hayes and Coney Hall, Orpington, St Marys Cray

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 Officers have successfully applied to The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) for a grant to fund the renovation of ten tennis courts across the borough. This report seeks approval to accept the funding and proceed with the renovation works.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 That the RRH PDS and ECS PDS Committees:

Review the contents of the report and provide any comments to the Executive.

2.1 That the Executive:

Approves the acceptance of the LTA Grant, subject to standard Terms and Conditions and agree to the scheme being added to the capital programme.

Agree that officers may go out to tender for the procurement of an operator.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

Summary of Impact: Following completion to the works access to the courts will be low cost with some free provision available. Improvement of these Tennis Courts will increase physical activity in the wider community, with associated mental health benefits.

Transformation Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy:
 2. Making Bromley Even Better Priority:
 - (1) For children and young People to grow up, thrive and have the best life chances in families who flourish and are happy to call Bromley home.
 - (2) For adults and older people to enjoy fulfilled and successful lives in Bromley, ageing well, retaining independence and making choices.
 - (4) For residents to live responsibly and prosper in a safe, clean and green environment great for today and a sustainable future.
 - (5) To manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley's residents.
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Financial

1. Capital cost of proposal: £230,580
 2. Ongoing costs: None
 3. Budget head/performance centre: None
 4. Total current budget for this head: None
 5. Source of funding: Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) via the DCMS (Department of Culture, Media & Sport).
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Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): N/A
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-Statutory - Government Guidance
 2. Call-in: Applicable: Executive Decision
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Procurement

Summary of Procurement Implications: As part of the process to improve and develop the Tennis Court sites LBB will work with colleagues at the LTA to develop a robust process for appointment of a new operator for the sites.

Property

1. Summary of Property Implications:
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Carbon Reduction and Social Value

Summary of Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications: Carbon reduction in relation to this programme is negligible, but significant social value in terms of public health, wellbeing and inclusion for all residents, all ages and abilities amongst the green spaces where courts are situated.

Customer Impact

Estimated number of users or customers (current and projected):

Neither the LTA nor LBB have a way of tracking current usage on the four sites (ten courts) planned for renovation, but subject to approval once the sites are refurbished the new gate access operating system will be able to provide this information.

Sport England's modelled Market Segmentation data suggests that 6,181 people currently play tennis and 6,440 would like to play across the LBB area.

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Yes
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

Councillor Bear

It is good to be doing something positive to improve facilities. The one question I have is how free access is managed.

Councillor Ireland, Webber and Casey

We're really happy to hear that the Church House Gardens courts are to be improved and welcome news of the funding. We know that over the years lots of residents of different ages have used the courts and that the current condition isn't brilliant and that they have suffered from vandalism. We'd like to see details of the low cost entry price, but in principle given the high cost of private tennis clubs around Bromley we think this would be a fantastic way of widening tennis participation within the borough.

Councillor Turrell

I am delighted to see Coney Hall Recreation Ground's tennis courts included in this list. The tennis courts there have been in a sorry state for some time so this is extremely welcome.

I note the Work is to repair 4 of the 6 which I also welcome as am aware the Friends of the Recreation Ground have submitted a Jubilee Parks Fund Bid to convert the remaining two. So, my only comment is to ensure there is co-ordination between these two projects, if the bid is successful.

Councillor Michael

I am very pleased and encouraged see that Coney Hall Recreation Ground's tennis courts are included in this list. The tennis courts there have been in a poor state for some considerable time and are sorely in need of refurbishment work. This money to carry out the work is very welcome.

The intention is to repair four out of six tennis courts. The Friends of Coney Hall Recreation Ground have just submitted a Platinum Jubilee Parks funding bid for the other two tennis courts which I hope will be successful. I would ask that there is co-ordination between the two projects if the Friends' funding bid is successful.

3. COMMENTARY

3.1 Tennis courts in parks play a key role in introducing people to tennis, with around 1.7 million people across Britain playing on park courts in the last 12 months. The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) is committed to promoting tennis and working with Councils to implement sustainable, low-cost usage models for park tennis courts. Their aim is to bring courts across the country back to a good condition which can be maintained for the long-term. They are keen to work with local authorities to secure these facilities for future community benefits.

3.2 DCMS recognise that local authorities in many cases have not invested in courts in public parks in recent years due to budget cuts and other challenges meaning the quality of courts has deteriorated. In October 2021, recognising the need for investment, the LTA and Central Government announced a £30 million package to refurbish more than 4,500 public tennis courts across England, Scotland & Wales with a vision to get one million more people participating in tennis by 2024.

3.3 Bromley Council has been offered a grant of £230,580 to refurbish ten courts across four sites in the borough. There is no capital match funding requirement. Additionally, there will be no ongoing revenue requirement with the LTA working with the Council to put in place an operating model similar to the agreement the Council already has with the Park Langley Club. Park Langley currently operates four public park tennis courts for the Council and cover the full cost of management and maintenance through a low pay to play model – they currently charge an annual fee of £24 for a whole family to access the four courts.

3.4 The Park Langley Club have provided some insight regarding usage of these four courts:

- Court utilisation across all sites for the past 5 years has been very high, which demonstrates the need to have more high quality/playable parks tennis facilities. Court usage varies between winter and summer months but on average is:
- Winter – 75% of all court hours booked across 4 sites
- Summer – 90% of all court hours booked across 4 sites
- There are over 400 people on their waiting list for coaching activity, due to capacity limits in place at the existing park sites
- There is c.17,000 users (higher than ever before) with demand to grow if more sites come forward.

3.5 By accepting the grant of £230,580 from the LTA the Council must adhere to the following conditions: The works must be delivered through the LTA's procurement framework; online booking must be offered; the LTA's established operating model must be followed with some free access available for those who cannot afford the low-cost model; there must be a recreational competitive offer; and a sustainability plan in place. All of the operating requirements are dealt with as part of the tender for an operator, such as Park Langley, to take responsibility for.

3.6 As part of the refurbishment each tennis court will be fitted with the Lite GA System (see Appendix 1 for specification). This system manages access to the court through a Clubspark booking system. The booking system is managed by an external operator and includes a low-cost charge which covers the cost of managing and maintaining the court. The technology is simple and extremely effective, with a proven track record of growing participation. In 5 simple steps a player can locate, book (and pay if required) and access any court at their desired location:

- Participant logs on to LTA Play website
- Participant searches for a court at their nearest venue by name (if known) or by using their current location/post code. They can also include a date and time in the search if known.
- Participant selects their desired venue, date and time and books a court in LB Bromley

- Participant will receive booking confirmation via email which includes a unique 6-digit code that can only be used up to 10mins before or anytime during their booking slot at the venue they have selected
- Participant arrives at the venue, enters unique 6-digit code into gate access system, which gives access into the court and closes behind participant (all gate access systems include self-closing hinges)

3.7 The gate access entry systems can be fitted to the majority of existing pedestrian gates, if they are in good working order. If the pedestrian gates need replacing, the LTA will do this at no further cost to the LTA.

3.8 The LTA has identified Bromley as an area of demand for improved park tennis courts. This demand is from across four main audiences: older people socializing and for gentle exercise; young people playing for fun; females who play a variety of sports and socialize through tennis; and young men who are keen athletes and play for fun during the summer months. Together the LTA and Bromley officers have identified four locations for court improvements and five further locations for the installation of the Lite GA System which will be managed by the ClubSpark booking system.

Location of refurbished courts	Post Code	Penetration (10mins drive time)	No of Courts	IMD	Court Condition	Fence Condition
Church House Gardens	BR2 0EN	1052	3	7	Poor	Poor
Coney Hall Recreation Ground	BR4 9JJ	1118	4	8	Very Poor	Average
Goddington Park	BR6 9DH	1022	1	8	Poor	Average
Poverest Park	BR5 2AB	1265	2	7	Very Poor	Very Poor

3.9 The total funding earmarked for the LTA Parks Tennis Renovation projects in LBB is £230,580 and is split as follows between the following sites.

3.9.1 **Church House Gardens** – £65,515, resurfacing courts 1 to 3, reconstructed area, removal of rigid nets, fencing repairs, along with installation of 2 Lite GA systems improving safety, security and management of the site.

3.9.2 **Coney Hall Recreation Ground** – £59,875, resurfacing courts 1 to 4, replace fence posts, along with installation of Lite GA system, improving safety, security and management of the site.

3.9.3 **Goddington Park** – £27,955, resurfacing court, reconstructed area, removal of rigid net, removal of double gate and infill, new pedestrian gate, along with Lite GA system, improving safety, security and management of the site.

3.9.4 **Poverest Park** – £57,235, resurfacing courts 1 and 2, reconstructed area, new perimeter fencing, new pedestrian gate, along with Lite GA system, improving safety, security and management of the site.

3.9.5 **Croydon Road Recreation Ground** – 8k, installation of 2 Lite GA system, improving safety, security and management of the site.

3.9.6 **Kelsey Park** – 4k, installation of 1 Lite GA system, improving safety, security and management of the site.

3.9.7 Kings Hall Road – 4k, installation of 1 Lite GA system, improving safety, security and management of the site.

3.9.8 Willet Road Recreation Ground – 4k, installation of 1 Lite GA system, improving safety, security and management of the site.

3.10 All of the above sites are currently managed and maintained by idverde. The tennis courts at Croydon Road Recreation Ground, Kelsey Park, Kings Hall Road, and Willet Road Recreation Ground are all currently managed by the Park Langley Club. By moving the Park Langley operated sites on to the same booking system residents will be more easily able to use courts across the borough.

3.11 The impact of accepting the grant and refurbishing the courts is that all the sites would move from free to access to a paid model to cover the costs of the operator managing and maintaining the courts. However, the paid model we currently have through Park Langley is affordable at £24 a year for a family (see further details below). LBB can specify as part of the operating tender that there must be a certain number of free booking slots for all, at least 30% of the renovated sites will be free ‘Parkrun for tennis’ opportunities. The public benefit is that they have good quality courts that are well maintained.

3.12 Free access will be managed by the operator but LBB can stipulate how this is managed in the agreement. This could be in the form of one or all of the below:

- Free slots made available on the online booking system at any of the venues. This will be totally free for the participant to sign up and book and typically ranges between 6 – 12 free hours available per venue, per week. The booking process and customer-journey will be the same for anyone accessing free or paid-for court time or activity.
- Free weekly operator-led sessions for all ages and abilities, imagine a ParkRun for tennis type offer. The LTA are currently piloting this offer in London & Manchester. As part of the DCMS/LTA criteria, the operator will need to deliver these in at least 30% of the newly renovated venues.
- Some LA's have also provide a free household season ticket offer for specifically identified residents i.e. residents access housing benefits etc. This option is more admin heavy especially when controlling data with a third party but can be done.

3.13 A new operator gated access system will be implemented ensuring all sites can be sustainable for the long term and a significantly improved customer journey to court. The system will provide a robust method to track utilisation and secure sites free from anti-social behaviour/vandalism. Tennis players will not have to wait or challenge someone to use a court.

3.14 The procurement process is being managed by the LTA. The LTA have completed two separate tenders for the renovation works:

1. Tender process for the court specific works including fencing will be awarded in 11 regional lots. To ensure quality projects are delivered, only SAPCA (Sports and Play Construction Association) registered contractors will be able to tender for the regional lots.
2. There is a separate tender process for the Gate Access Systems which will be awarded to one contract on a national level and has followed the same tender process.
As part of the programme management, the LTA will appoint a Facility Project Manager (FPM) to oversee and manage the works in LB Bromley from beginning to end including liaising with all relevant local authority departments and final project sign off.

- 3.15 Officers intend to conduct a soft market testing exercise to identify an overarching operator for all four renovated sites. Following this there will be a live tender process for all interested parties. It is anticipated that the Sport & Leisure Manager will manage the relationship, supported by the LTA participation team with the newly identified operator.

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- 4.1 Provision of safer places to enrich vulnerable adults and children's lives.
- 4.2 Provision will also help people to get active whilst having fun making them more likely to do so again in the future.

5. TRANSFORMATION/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Making Bromley Even Better Priority:

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6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The paper clearly states that there will be no revenue cost implication to this request, all improvement works will be funded from the LTA grant and any recurring/ongoing costs of running the courts will be covered by the subscription fee that will be introduced. This project will require the Executive to agree an addition to the Capital Programme before this funding can be utilised.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 This report to Members of the RRH PDS and the Executive requests approval for the acceptance of grant funding totalling £230.5k from the LTA. This report comes before the Executive as a drawdown of such a grant must be approved in this way in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.
- 7.2 Although there is no statutory duty on Councils to provide tennis courts, this use of the LTA grant accords with the corporate strategy of Making Bromley Even Better.
- 7.3 This report does not specifically recommend any procurement actions but, should the acceptance of the grant be approved, such procurements must accord with the Council's CPR's. Officers must also ensure that all conditions of the grant from the LTA, as outlined in section 3 of this report, are met in full.

8. PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 This report seeks to draw down the grant totalling £230,580 from the Lawn Tennis Association (LTR) to fund the renovation of ten tennis courts across the borough and add these works to the Capital Programme. The Approval of Executive is required for the draw down of a grant of this value.

- 8.2 In addition, the report requests Authority to undertake the procurement of a suitable Contractor to undertake the works using the Lawn Tennis Association Framework as set out in section 3.5. The use of this Framework is a requirement of the allocation of the grant.
- 8.3 Both the actions of proceeding to procurement and awarding a subsequent contract can be agreed at an officer level, in accordance with the Council's Contract procedure Rules. In accordance with CPR 2.1.2, Officers must take all necessary professional advice.
- 8.4 As the Contract will be over £25k, an award notice will need to be published in Contracts Finder. The actions identified in this report are provided for within the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, and the proposed actions can be completed in compliance with their content.

9. CARBON REDUCTION/SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Carbon reduction in relation to this programme is negligible, but significant social value in terms of public health, wellbeing and inclusion for all residents, all ages and abilities amongst the green spaces where courts are situated.

10. CUSTOMER IMPACT

- 10.1 The courts after development works will be restricted in terms of being locked and bookable via online portal only, albeit there will still be an allocation of 'free' time which is bookable. This will improve the customer journey, make the courts and wider surrounding green spaces areas more aesthetically pleasing. It is anticipated there will be a significant uptick on the number of participants which will also now be able to be monitored via the online booking system which has not previously been possible on those sites.

11. WARD COUNCILLOR VIEWS

Councillor Bear

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Non-Applicable Headings:	Personnel implications; Property implications.
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Appendix 1 – Smart Access Lite Tech Spec Appendix 2 – LTA Terms & Conditions (draft), Appendix 3 – LTA overview of the open procedure, Appendix 4 – LTA Geographical Report