

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S
REPORT TO**

Health Wellbeing and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee
28 November 2022

Report Title: Tennis Provision Newcastle under Lyme

Submitted by: Executive Director - Development & Growth & Executive Director Sustainable Environment

Portfolios: Leisure, Culture and Heritage

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To provide an update on tennis provision/investment in Newcastle under Lyme to The Health Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendation's

1. That the contents of the report are noted by members of the Health, Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny Committee.

Reasons

To ensure that Members of the Health, Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny Committee will have an up to date knowledge of tennis provision in the Borough, and in particular the £100,000 investment being made by the LTA.

1. **Background**

1.1 The Borough Council owns and operates a total of 18 tennis courts across the Borough at the following six sites:

- Westland's Sports Centre – 10 courts.
- Wolstanton Park – 4 courts
- Clough Hall Park – 2 Courts
- Silverdale Park -1 court
- Bardwell Lodge – 1 court

In addition to the above Courts there are also numerous tennis courts that are provided by schools, Higher and further education establishments so of which are available for general hire by the public

1.2 The LTA have identified the Borough as a priority area to increase tennis participation. This is an exciting opportunity for the Council, to develop a strong relationship with the LTA, develop innovative solutions for the development of recreational tennis, enhance the vibrancy of some of the Boroughs parks, and the support the sustainability of parks tennis in future yea

2. Issues

- 2.1 The Councils Playing Strategy identified that two facilities in the Borough required investment to enhance the tennis offer for the Boroughs residents, namely Westland's Tennis Centre and Wolstanton Park.
- 2.2 Over the past year officers of the Council have been working closely with the LTA to identify the best opportunities to a) support the correct level of investment in these two sites, b) identify the most beneficial operating model to increase participation in tennis and support the health and wellbeing of residents, and c) to identify the a tennis pathway to allow residents to excel in tennis should they chose to do so,
- 2.3 It has been identified that both sites would benefit hugely from the installation of a gate access system. This provides an opportunity for the Council to enable residents to find, book tennis court through the LTA's website/online booking platform and or mobile app. This would enable a clear customer journey for parks tennis initially at these two sites, take the headache out of managing bookings, breaks down barriers to access, as well as providing residents with high quality tennis facilities.
- 2.4 In order to support increased participation in tennis, there is also an essential need to make a capital investment at both the Westland's Sports Centre and Wolstanton Park in the form of replacing the tennis courts surface and or the painting of the surface. This will enhance the quality of the tennis offer, and have a greater appeal to the tennis fraternity in the Borough
- 2.5 Using their expert industry knowledge coupled with a schedule of rates from their preferred list of contractors, the LTA have provided an indicative cost to install the gate access system and enhance the courts at both sites at a cost in the region of £100,000 and in principle the LTA have agreed to fund this investment without any capital contribution from the Council. It is envisaged that work will start on the tennis courts at Westland's and Wolstanton early in 2023.
- 2.6 A key grant condition from the LTA is that the Council should provide adequate finance to resurface their courts at the end of their lifespan. Have considered this grant condition Officers are recommending that this provision should be made in the Council's capital programme in seven to ten years' time, supported by a sinking fund from any income being generated by a coaching company.
- 2.7 In conjunction with the LTA Officers have reviewed Sport England's Market Segmentation Tool. This has provided an analysis of the percentage of adults that would like to participate in tennis in the Borough but are not currently doing so. Through the use of this system it has been identified that there is a latent demand of 2,213 adults who live within the Borough. This suggests that there is a large body of players that would participate in tennis if barriers such as the quality of courts and booking systems being in place were addressed. To support increased participation the Cabinet have also agreed that participation in recreational tennis will continue to be provided to residents free of charge
- 2.8 This latent demand for tennis in the borough, provides the perfect opportunity for Officers from the Councils Leisure Services Team to work with the LTA to develop a comprehensive inclusive/affordable tennis programme at both sites focusing on:
- A Youth programme
 - An adult programme
 - Local tennis leagues,
 - Competition programmes
 - A tennis coaching programme,

- Tennis for free initiatives.

To support the above Officers are working closely with the LTA to identify suitably placed tennis coaching companies, who will have the capacity to deliver a robust tennis programme starting in the Spring of 2023. Following a competitive quotation process it is envisaged a licence will be granted to the most suitable tennis operator (registered with the LTA) for a period of up to five years.

3. **Proposal**

3.1 . That the contents of the report are noted by members of the Health, Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny Committee.

4. **Reasons for Proposed Solution**

4.1 To ensure that Members of the Health, Wellbeing and Environment Scrutiny Committee will have an updated knowledge of tennis provision in the Borough.

5. **Options Considered**

5.1 Without this investment in these two sites, the quality of tennis court provision in the Borough will continue to decline, with a limited opportunity to increase participation in tennis to support the health and wellbeing of residents.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

6.1 The works to refurbish the tennis courts will follow a compliant procurement procedure in line with the Public contract Regulations 2015 (PCR2015) and the Council's constitution. There will be need to ensure appropriate and timely legal input into the completion of any contract/agreements.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

7.1 Officers of the council will work closely with the LTA to develop a diverse tennis programme attract a wider range of users include those with protected characteristics.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

8.1 Initial estimates provided by LTA have indicated the project can be delivered within the broad cost envelop of £100,000.

8.2 It is proposed that the project is financed through the acceptance of a grant from the LTA.

8.3 The required maintenance regimes for the Westland's Sports Park Tennis Courts is met form existing revenue budgets and includes general maintenance, replacement of equipment, and remaking of courts etc.

8.4 A key grant condition from the LTA is that the Council provide adequate finances to resurface their courts at the end of their lifespan. Have considered this grant condition Officers are recommending that provision should therefore be made in the Council capital programme in seven to ten years' time, as opposed to creating a sinking fund that would be funded from potential revenue.

9. **Major Risks**

9.1 It is proposed that all risks will be proactively managed through a small working group of officers from Sport and Active Lifestyles, and Operational services to ensure that the delivery project meets the aspirations of the Council and the LTA.

10. **UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)**

10.1 The improvements to the tennis courts at the Westland's Sports Centre/Wolstanton Park contribute to the UNSG and Climate Change objectives in a number of ways. Principally, through partnership working, improving health and wellbeing and supporting, infrastructure and skills, the following UNSGs are supported.



11. **Key Decision Information**

11.1 The in principle acceptance of the LTA was a key Council decision and appeared on the forward plan.

12. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

12.1 Cabinet 8th December 2021

13. **List of Appendices**

13.1 None

14. **Background Papers**

14.1 None