

Report to Cabinet

23 February 2022

Subject:	Approval to proceed with Small Sided Spaces project
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Tourism and Culture Cllr. Danny Millard
Director:	Director of Borough Economy Alice Davey
Key Decision:	Yes The Council will incur expenditure in excess of £250,000 and The project will be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards of the Borough.
Contact Officer:	Business Manager – Sport & Leisure Gemma Ryan gemma_ryan@sandwell.gov.uk Senior Lead Officer – Sport and leisure. Rob Marlow robert_marlow@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That approval be given to apply for external funding via the Football Foundation to develop and deliver a portfolio of 'Small sided' multi-sport facilities within the Borough of Sandwell with the facilities being a 'legacy' from the Commonwealth Games and will be either refurbishments of existing facilities or new builds.



1.2 That the Director of Borough Economy in consultation with the Section 151 Officer be authorised to:

- Prepare any necessary Tendering documentation
- Procure, in accordance with the public procurement rules, the Council's procurement and financial regulations a contractor(s) to carry out works on site; to award a contract and to enter into or execute under seal any financial agreement(s) as may be deemed necessary in relation to the project
- Accept Grant funding from the Football Foundation on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Director of Borough Economy in consultation with Legal services.
- Commit 'Capital' match funding of £100,000 towards the project. (£50,000 from Public Health and £50,000 from Sport & Leisure). The minimum funding ratio is 75 : 25. Therefore a maximum total project cost for the main project would be £400,000 with the Football Foundation investing £300,000 along with a £100,000 match funding amount from Sandwell Council

1.3 That a 'Front Runner' project is delivered, completed ahead of the Commonwealth Games.



2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 Inward investment from the Football Foundation will enable the delivery of Small Sided multi-sport facilities. These may be 'refurbishment' of existing facilities that have fallen into disrepair or the creation of brand-new facilities.
- 2.2 Approval to apply for external funding will enable officers to complete and submit the necessary grant paperwork.
- 2.3 The project will be seen as leaving a lasting 'Legacy' from the Commonwealth Games and recognise Sandwell's contribution as a 'host Borough'
- 2.4 By authorising the Director of Borough Economy to oversee the implementation of recommendations will remove the need for further reports and use of Cabinet time.





- 2.5 The project will undoubtedly assist in the Council's efforts to help residents engage in sporting activities, combat inactivity and encourage healthy lifestyles
- 2.6 A fundamental element of the project is to conduct detailed community engagement and secure 'buy in' to the project. This will help to encourage community cohesion and ensure the longevity of developments. Community groups will be involved in the ongoing management of the facilities including in some instances managing bookings. In some cases a small fee may be charged to use the facilities, this is expected to be re-invested into the facility.
- 2.7 Due to the need to deliver the project quickly, in particular the 'Front Runner' project some delegated authority will be required in the commissioning of Community engagement support and possibly technical / design work. The community consultation will be ongoing for the main project. This is likely to be funded in full via the football foundation. This will be before the 'main project' is delivered and will require early community consultation.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>The Best Start in Life for Children and Young People</p> <p>The new / enhanced small sided pitches will offer excellent facilities for families, children and young people to access physical health and wellbeing opportunities together.</p>
	<p>People Live Well and Age Well</p> <p>The new / enhanced small sided pitches will provide opportunities for people to exercise, keep fit and have fun within their local areas. It is also hoped that the facilities will encourage more people to join nearby sports clubs to further develop their interest in sport. The facilities will be 'activated' by Public Health and local community groups which will encourage people to make physical exercise part of their daily routine.</p>



	<p>Strong Resilient Communities</p> <p>A fundamental requirement of the project is to deliver projects that are directly needed following community consultation. This will be carried out by Sandwell Council's public health team along with some external support. The completed facilities will therefore have a direct community 'buy in' and enable people from different backgrounds to enjoy using facilities together.</p>
	<p>A Strong and Inclusive Economy</p> <p>The project will deliver direct improvements within neighbourhoods and make areas more attractive to live in. By enabling people to become more active and healthy, will help to reduce absenteeism at work and school / college.</p> <p>By delivering this project at short notice and within challenging timescales will further demonstrate Sandwell Council's ability to get things done whilst working with a major national funding agency and hopefully lead to further funding opportunities in the future.</p>

4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 Sandwell Council has been directly approached by the Football Foundation and 'solicited' to make a funding application under the Small Sided Spaces programme.
- 4.2 A 'Consortium' of local partner agencies has been formed which is driving this project. This consists of representatives from:
- Sandwell Council, Sport & Leisure, Public Health and Parks
 - The Albion Foundation
 - Birmingham County Football Association (FA)
 - Active Black Country
 - The Football Foundation
- 4.3 Under delegated authority, an 'Expression of Interest' (EOI) to be involved in the project was submitted to the Football Foundation on 26 January 2022



- 4.4 Under delegated authority an external agency will be procured to support Sandwell's Public Health team with the important Community Consultation element of this project.
- 4.5 The football Foundation wishes to see the development of a 'Front Runner' project delivered ahead of the Commonwealth Games. This is likely to be funded in full via the Football Foundation. In order to meet the tight timescales this will require a fast turnaround. (including consultation and technical / design work) Remaining projects will be delivered after this and be classed as the 'Main Project'
- 4.6 £100,000 of match funding is being sought from Sandwell Council. This consists of £50,000 from Public Health (which is now secure) along with £50,000 from Sport & Leisure (unsecure at present). This will allow funding of £300,000 to be secured from the Football Foundation giving a total funding package of £400,000.
- 4.7 Contractors will be appointed either via an existing council framework or via a tendering process depending on the nature of the project. In order to complete the 'Front Runner' project, this is likely to be via a 'Framework'
- 4.8 Sandwell Council's Strategic Investment Unit has been consulted regarding this project. An appraisal will be required which should be complete during March 2022. Capital and Revenue Grant funding will not be accepted until a satisfactory appraisal has been completed by Strategic Finance.
- 4.9 Future management and maintenance responsibility of the pitches will rest with Sandwell Council's parks department this will include ongoing safety inspections, repairs and maintenance.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 No alternative options have been considered for this project. The 'Do nothing' approach would result in the loss of potential inward investment along with a missed opportunity to upgrade sports facilities and engage communities in sport / leisure.



6 Implications

<p>Resources:</p>	<p>There will need to be a financial ‘Match Funding’ contribution of £100,000 from Sandwell Council via Public Health and Sport & Leisure. The funding from Public Health is secure. Funding from Sport and Leisure has yet to be secure but may be found through potential underspends that have been identified.</p> <p>There are no staffing implications other than:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support for the community consultation and ‘activation’ of sites via Sandwell’s Public Health team - Safety inspections which will be conducted by Staff within the Parks team. <p>Ongoing maintenance and repairs of the facilities will be funded via Sandwell Council’s Parks team.</p>
<p>Legal and Governance:</p>	<p>There will be a need for legal support in entering a grant funding agreement with the Football Foundation</p>
<p>Risk:</p>	<p>The following risks have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The £50,000 of match funding via Sport & Leisure may not be available which would result in a significant reduction in project scope. - There may not be suitable ‘buy in’ from local community groups and a desire to be involved in pitch bookings - Timescales for the delivery of the ‘Front Runner’ project are tight and will need to be very carefully managed. Any unforeseen delays could be an issue.



<p>Equality:</p>	<p>The facilities will be open for booking by any group regardless of ethnicity, gender or any protected characteristic. In addition, some open access will also be scheduled within booking programmes.</p> <p>An initial stage Equality Impact Assessment will be completed.</p>
<p>Health and Wellbeing:</p>	<p>The project will have a significant positive impact on the health and wellbeing of residents. By upgrading / creating new small sided spaces, residents will be able to enjoy the benefits of outdoor sport / physical activity for free / a small fee. It is hoped that this will lead to some residents actively taking up more regular sport / physical activity.</p>
<p>Social Value</p>	<p>The project will be ‘labelled’ as a Legacy project from the 2022 Commonwealth games and help to celebrate Sandwell’s involvement. This will help to engender a sense of pride in Sandwell.</p> <p>The project will help to encourage people to engage in sport / physical activity together and provide opportunities to meet with new people.</p> <p>The project will help to put Sandwell ‘On the Map’ as a place that values sport and physical activity. It will hopefully demonstrate that Sandwell is a place that ‘gets things done’ and welcomes inward investment from funders.</p>

7. Appendices

Appendix A – Invitation letter to submit and Expression of interest (EOI) from Mark Coulson at the Football Foundation (dated 14 October 2021)

Appendix B – EOI from Sandwell Council (dated 27 January 2022)

8. Background Papers

None

