



Purpose of Report

To seek members approval to work with the Lawn Tennis Association on the resurfacing of the tennis courts in Culver Close. To adopt the booking and gate access control system and introduce charging for the use of the tennis courts.

Background

The Town Council, own three tennis courts in Culver Close which are currently operated as a turn up and play, with no booking or charge. The Town Council agreed at its Environment and Green Spaces meeting 20th July 2021.

“Work with the LTA – undertake the re-binding and painting, install the new infrastructure, and introduce the booking system, and introduce charging.”

At this point the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) was not giving capital grants and the Town Council had not budgeted to undertake the works, therefore it was envisaged that the project would progress in 2022/23. This was then parked whilst the Town Council considered the possibility of the cricket club using the ‘fourth tennis court’ space for cricket nets, which has now received planning permission.

The LTA Park Tennis Investment Programme project was set up for 2022-2024 to identify existing park tennis courts which are in a very poor or unplayable condition and have been working with local authorities to renovate these facilities and bring them back to life for the benefit of local communities. In the initial selection of courts in the poorest condition Bradford on Avon didn’t meet the criteria to be included in the investment programme. However, additional project funding has been made available to allocate before the investment programme concludes on 1st September 2024. As such, the tennis courts in Bradford on Avon have been identified as a consideration for investment funds.

Survey

In May 2024, the LTA organised for the tennis courts to have an independent consultant to complete a condition survey, and the upshot is, the courts need



resurfacing, with a small area that needs more significant reconstruction. The fencing and kerbing condition is in good order and doesn't require replacing.

Therefore, to undertake the works, repaint, provide new nets, new access gate and the booking technology, the estimated costs is c. £50,000.

Next Steps

The LTA is arranging for the contractor to visit site to ascertain a specific costing for the project works. The LTA have already been through a competitive procurement exercise for the delivery of tennis refurbishment works. Bradford on Avon falls into a 'lot' where a contractor has been successfully procured to deliver projects.

Once the contractor confirms their price the LTA will then present the project to their budget panel. This is the point at which a proposal (and amount of funding) would be made to Bradford on Avon council to invest and progress with the project to improve the courts.

In the event of the LTA budget panel agreeing to invest in the project, the council will then need to sign a formal funding agreement, which represents the point at which the council is in a binding commitment to proceed.

The funds would then be transferred to the town council to pay the contractor for the work directly. The project is overseen by a third-party quantity surveyor (TSARiley) who manage building contracts and oversee contractor works alongside LTA project managers. The LTA has a payment process for the projects so the council will never be 'out of pocket' having to pay for a contractor whilst waiting for grant money to be received. Full processes will be received if the project proceeds.

The funding from the LTA is at the end of this current programme and therefore needs to be used immediately to ensure it is not lost. The likelihood is the project would commence at the end of August beginning of September, subject to the contractor's availability.



Written by: Ian Brown – Town Clerk

One condition of the grant is to ensure the long-term sustainability of the investment into the courts. To achieve these criteria, it has been confirmed in current discussions with the LTA that the town council will introduce charging for courts [creating a sinking fund] using the booking and gate access system provided in the project. The council has an option to commit to maintaining the courts sinking fund from the council's own budget.

The town council would also need to meet other criteria around programmes and opportunities with the LTA and local opportunities for play provided by local coaches.

This project would also require the council to oversee the booking and access system. The process for the customer to book and pay is automated, so the role of the council would be to 'set up' the system and oversee any public enquiries.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Town Council, on the successful application for funding

- 1) Agree to work with the Lawn Tennis Association on the resurfacing of the tennis courts in Culver Close.
- 2) Introduce the Lawn Tennis Association booking system and introduce charging for the use of the tennis courts.

Ian S Brown

Chief Executive & Town Clerk - 17th June 2024