

RIVERSIDE PLAYING FIELDS AND COMMUNITY CRICKET

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CITY OPERATIONS

AGENDA ITEM: 8

PORTFOLIO: ENVIRONMENT (COUNCILLOR BOB DERBYSHIRE)

Reason for this Report

1. The Council is keen to assist community sports clubs wherever possible. This report seeks authority to advertise the opportunity for a lease to be offered on public open space at Riverside Park, Llanrumney for the provision of community Cricket and to consider subsequently the outcome of consultation.
2. The Council would be keen to consider the prospect of a Community Asset Transfer, subject to an advertisement being issued and any objections raised being satisfied or deemed immaterial.

Background

3. The Council is actively seeking interested clubs, organisations, trusts and co operatives to run and manage a range of outdoor sport facilities in Cardiff to reduce the financial burden to the Council and develop community sport where appropriate. Recently, a variety of alternative delivery arrangements in outdoor sport and parks have been put in place to safeguard and enhance services, whilst seeking to improve the offer to the community. These arrangements have included a joint venture with Cardiff Metropolitan University on sports development, the issue of prior information notices on Roath Park Boatstage and on Heath Park pitch and putt and on the tennis courts (as part of a scheme securing funding from the Lawn Tennis Association and Sport Wales), and the issuing of preferential user agreements to clubs such as Fairwater Sports Trust at Poplar Park and Pentwyn Dynamos at Parc Coed Y Nant. In addition, there are further hire agreements at many of the Council's leisure facilities. However, where clubs in an area wish to expand and develop facilities, they require security of tenure in order to attract funding from many of the external funding bodies; and this is where the opportunity for Cricket at Riverside Park Playing Fields arises.
4. There are a number of agreements which have concerned the Council issuing leases to sports clubs to assist them with their future growth,

development and security. Examples of such current lease agreements are cited below:

- St Peter's RFC – Building and playing field, Harlequin Ground, Penylan
 - St Albans RFC – Clubhouse and car park
 - Old Iltydians RFC – Moorland Old Library for clubhouse
 - Fairwater Sports Trust – Poplar Park
 - Cardiff Cricket Club – Forest Farm Diamond Ground
 - Cardiff High School Old Boys – Forest Farm Diamond Ground
 - Rumney RFC – Riverside Park
5. Demand for community Cricket has been identified, particularly within the Southern part of the City. This has been evidenced by the Cricket Board of Wales through its club audit. There is significant Cricket activity in schools and amongst the community but no club exit route in the area. Cricket clubs are primarily located in the North of the City.
6. It is envisaged that the area for lease for Cricket could potentially include an area of land to accommodate two full size Cricket tables, outfield areas and the current Riverside Park Changing Rooms as detailed in Appendix 1.
7. Further to the advertisement of the opportunity, and the determination of whether interested parties meet the requirements, it is envisaged that a lease in the region of 25 years should be offered by the Council. However, this would be for a further Cabinet decision. If the Council was to be able to help a community sports club in this way through the issuing of a lease, this requires the Council to advertise the opportunity under Section 123 of the Local Government Act, through which it has to advertise the `disposal` of Public Open Space. A competitive tendering process would be initiated in order to meet the Council's requirements to obtain best value, as required by Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972. It should be stressed though that the Freehold would remain with the Council and there would be no sale of land.
8. The advertising of the opportunity for community Cricket fits with the strategic direction of the Council, which is to support and encourage community organisations to take operational responsibility for services wherever practicable and when that demand exists. The strategic needs for Cricket in the Southern arc of the city is well-known by Cricket Clubs and the governing body of the sport. The principle of clubs having greater control over their future development is supported at national level by Sport Wales. In addition, the Council has recognised that it must consider alternative delivery models for its services, find the best uses for its assets and act as client and commissioner rather than a deliverer in every instance.

Issues

9. The Riverside Park Changing Rooms and proposed playing area are currently under-utilised. A lease to a Cricket Club would enable that Club

to invest in the facilities. The impact of using this land for Cricket has been considered. Currently, the site accommodates Rugby pitches. The demand for Rugby pitches has been calculated for the playing field area and allows for decommissioning two pitches to accommodate Cricket. The neighbouring Rumney Rugby Club has been consulted and would welcome the opportunity to have Cricket on the playing fields and has agreed to work with an appointed club to recruit new players from the local community.

10. Llanrumney United FC make some use of the changing rooms during the winter playing season and will be consulted on any eventual lease arrangement in order to establish if a partnership can be developed for joint use.
11. There is potential for a reduction in revenue expenditure and a saving to the Council under the lease of the building and potential annual financial return from a lease agreement.
12. The principles upon which the opportunity would be advertised would include the following:
 - Proposed use and maintenance of grounds and pavilion by Cricket
 - The Club to be financially sound and a member of a bona fide league under the auspices of the national governing body of the sport
 - The Club to have a sound development plan to include promoting and developing Cricket to all sectors of the community
 - Open access and equality of opportunity for all within the community to join the Club.

Local Member consultation

13. Local Ward Members have been consulted and in principle, support this proposal.

Reason for Recommendations

14. In order for community clubs to seek external funding they require security of tenure under a lease agreement. Therefore, approval to advertise the use of this Public Open Space for community Cricket is sought to enable future investment in this Park facility and to develop Cricket in the neighbourhood area.

Financial Implications

15. The financial impact of a lease arrangement would be quantified and detailed in the next report to Cabinet, which would report on the outcome of the advertisement.

Legal Implications

16. Prior to the grant of a lease of public open space land the Authority is required to undertake consultation by way of public advertisement

pursuant to section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. approve the advertisement of the proposed opportunity for community Cricket of public open space land at Riverside Park (Appendix 1)
2. Subject to a further report being brought forward outlining the responses from the advertisement, agree to the disposal by way of Community Asset Transfer in principle, subject to an advertisement / appropriate public consultation, Equalities Impact Assessment, a competitive selection process, and with a report being brought back to Cabinet on the preferred operator.

ANDREW GREGORY

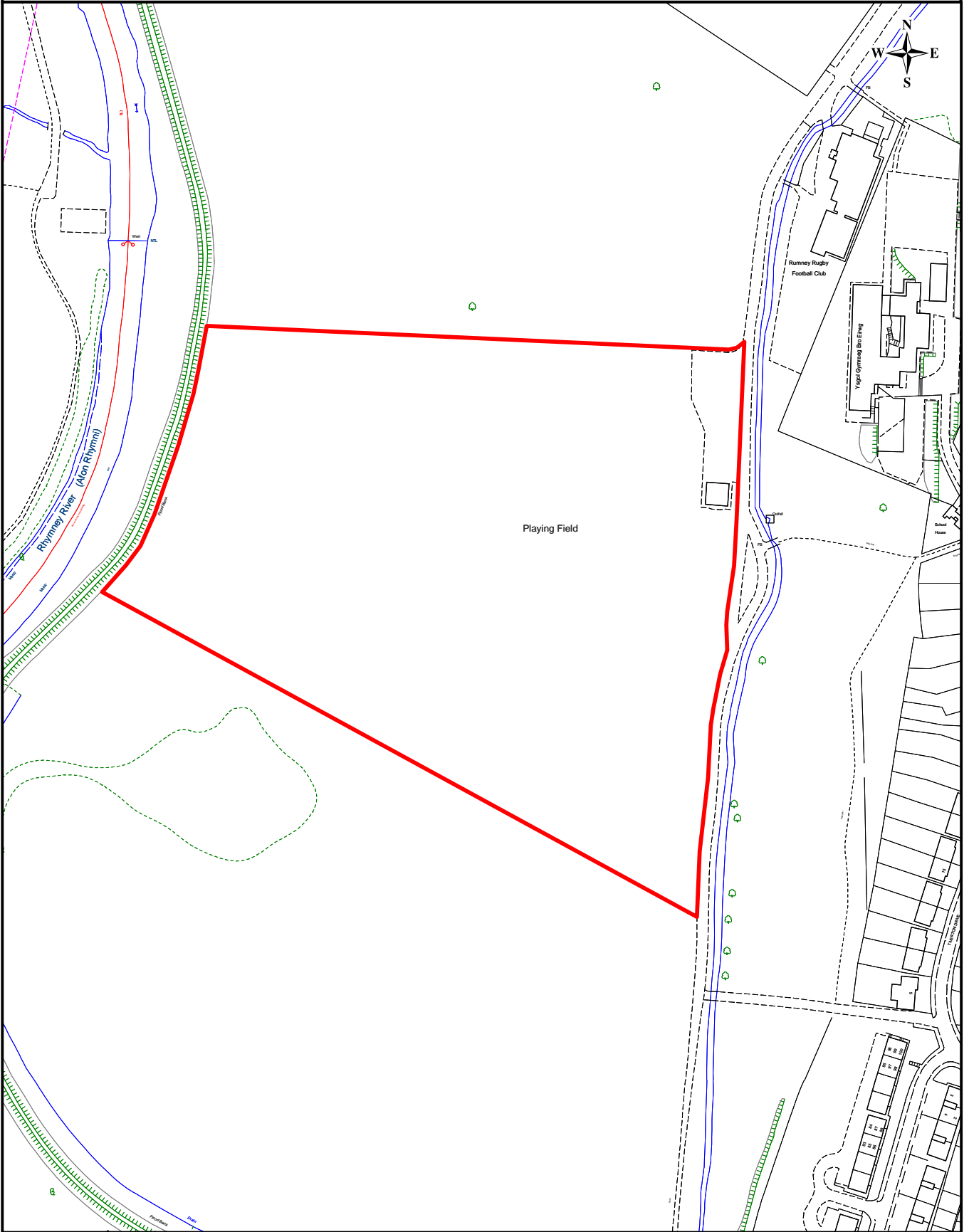
Director

26 June 2015

The following appendix is attached:

Appendix 1. – Map of site

Land at Riverside Park, Llanrumney, Cardiff



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	Drawn by RPC	Scale 1:2500	Date 15/05/2015	
	File Pathname / Project / Drawing No. R:Propinfo / pcrippin / RiversidePark1			Strategic Estates Division Cardiff County Council County Hall Cardiff CF10 4UW Chief Officer - Neil Hanratty

