

Rother District Council

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 8 February 2021

Title: Egerton Park leased tennis courts: disposal of public open space

Report of: Head of Service Housing and Community

Cabinet Member: Councillor Brewerton

Ward(s): Central Ward, Bexhill

Purpose of Report: To dispose of two tennis courts and associated clubhouse and terrace as public open space, as required under the Local Government Act 1972 and lease the courts to Bexhill Tennis Club.

Decision Type: Key

Officer

Recommendation(s): It be **RESOLVED:** That:

- 1) by virtue of Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the Council gives formal notice of its intention to dispose of two tennis courts (3 and 5), clubhouse and terrace area at Egerton Park as public open space;
- 2) subject to the above, a new lease of three years term be granted to Bexhill Tennis Club with terms and conditions to the satisfaction of the Chief Executive.

Reasons for Recommendations: To support Bexhill Tennis Club to sustain their current membership in addition to maintaining the associated physical and mental health benefits of the sport for the community.

Introduction

1. Egerton Park has eight courts, seven of which are used for tennis with one doubling up as a pickleball court. The eighth court is used for informal football kickabouts. Two of the courts are leased to Bexhill Tennis Club and the remainder are available for wider public use.
2. Bexhill Tennis Club is based in Egerton Park, and has 85 members, including a junior section.
3. Bexhill Tennis Club has had exclusive use of Courts 3 and 4 for some 30 years, as well as the exclusive use of the timber clubhouse and terrace, through various informal and formal arrangements, including more recently a lease.

4. The leased tennis courts, clubhouse and terrace are well used by Bexhill Tennis Club who play a valuable role in supporting the Council's vision for a district where residents have the opportunity of being pro-active in sport in order to derive physical and mental health benefits.

Proposal

5. The Club presently leases Court 4 and they would like to replace it with a new lease for Court 5 as shown in the appended plan. The reason the Club wish to do so is that Court 5 is closer to their clubhouse and the playing surface is considered to be slightly better. The new lease would still include Court 3 as well as the clubhouse and terrace. It is therefore required to dispose of Courts 3 and 5 as public open space, together with the footprint of the clubhouse and terrace area.

Impact on Park Users

6. Officers do not consider this will have any detrimental impact on the use of the tennis courts by others.

Conclusion

7. Accommodating the Club's wishes will support their activity and sustain their current membership in addition to maintaining the associated physical and mental health benefits for the community.

Financial implications

8. The cost of disposing of the demised area is in the region of £915 + VAT and will be paid by the Club. There will be no associated change in the rental income to the Council.

External Consultation

9. The proposed disposal of the public open space will be advertised in accordance with the provisions of Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Legal Implications

10. The demised area must be disposed of as public open space. The site is not subject to the Fields in Trust (FiT) QEII Playing Fields scheme therefore there are no implications in that regard.

Environmental

11. Court 4 will remain being used as a tennis court, therefore no new environmental implications are likely to arise.

Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
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Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	No
Crime and Disorder	No	External Consultation	Yes
Environmental	No	Access to Information	No
Risk Management	No	Exempt from publication	No

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Appendices:	A Plan showing area to be leased
Relevant Previous Minutes:	N/A
Background Papers:	N/A
Reference Documents:	N/A