



SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Report of: Executive Director Place

Date: 10th April 2013

Subject: Don Valley Stadium and Woodbourn Athletics Stadium

Author of Report: Paul Billington

Summary:

In response to the significant budget cuts facing Sheffield City Council (SCC), and following an assessment of facility options by the Council and Sheffield City Trust (SCT), SCT has decided to close Don Valley Stadium with effect from 30th September 2013. Subsequently, on March 1st 2013, Sheffield City Council set its budget for 2013/14 and this included a consequent reduction in the annual funding to SCT.

This report seeks a Cabinet decision on accepting the closure of DVS and to declare the site surplus to service requirements. It also seeks approval to re-open a refurbished Woodbourn Athletics Stadium as the new home for city athletics.

Reasons for Recommendations:

The City Council has to make savings of £50M in 2013/14, largely as a result of significant reductions in Government funding. The city's sports facilities have to take a share of the cuts and the closure of Don Valley Stadium was recommended and agreed by SCT because of its high cost; its relatively low usage and the availability of an alternative low cost/ high quality athletics facility at Woodbourn Road. The city's athletics clubs have indicated a willingness to relocate outdoor athletics to Woodbourn and the city is already working with Sport England and England Athletics (athletics' national governing body) on a joint approach to its refurbishment.

Work is also underway regarding the relocation of other activities from Don Valley to alternative suitable venues.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet;

1. notes and accepts the Sheffield City Trust proposal to close Don Valley Stadium from the 30th September 2013.
2. approve the demolition of Don Valley Stadium following its closure and to declare the site surplus to service requirements, enabling alternative options for the site to be fully considered.
3. delegates to the Executive Director Place in consultation with the Director of Legal and Director of Finance (and where they relate to property arrangements in consultation with the Director of Capital and Major Projects) the authority to agree such amendments to or consents under the legal arrangements with Sheffield City Trust and Sheffield International Venues as well with the leasing banks as appropriate to achieve the closure and demolition of Don Valley Stadium.
4. notes the proposal to re-open a refurbished Woodbourn Athletics Stadium
5. delegates to the Executive Director Place in consultation with the Director of Legal, Director of Finance and the Director of Capital and Major Projects the authority to enter into such legal arrangements as appropriate to achieve the refurbishment and re-opening of Woodbourn Athletics Stadium
6. notes that a separate capital approval submission will be made for the necessary authority to undertake and procure the proposed works at Woodbourn Stadium
7. delegates to the Executive Director to take such further steps as he thinks appropriate to achieve the outcomes outlined in this report, including entering into arrangements with third parties.

Background Papers:

Sheffield City Council Revenue Budget Report to Council, March 1 2013
Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix A)

Category of Report: OPEN

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

Financial Implications
YES/NO Cleared by: Paul Schofield
Legal Implications
YES/NO Cleared by: David Hollis
Equality of Opportunity Implications
YES/NO Cleared by: Ian Oldershaw
Tackling Health Inequalities Implications
YES/NO
Human rights Implications
YES/NO:
Environmental and Sustainability implications
YES/NO
Economic impact
YES
Community safety implications
YES/NO
Human resources implications
YES/NO
Property implications
YES/NO
Community Assembly(s) affected
East
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Leader
Cllr Isobel Bowler
Relevant Scrutiny Committee if decision called in
Economic and Environmental Wellbeing
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?
YES/NO
Press release
YES/NO

1 SUMMARY

In response to the significant budget cuts facing Sheffield City Council (SCC), and following an assessment of facility options by the Council and Sheffield City Trust (SCT), SCT has decided to close Don Valley Stadium with effect from 30th September 2013. Subsequently, on March 1st 2013, Sheffield City Council set its budget for 2013/14 and this included a consequent reduction in the annual funding to SCT.

This report seeks a Cabinet decision on accepting the closure of DVS by SCT. The closure is part of a wider plan to relocate athletics to Woodbourn Stadium and given the budget pressure to close DVS, seek new regeneration opportunities on the Don Valley site. The report therefore seeks approval to re-open a refurbished Woodbourn Athletics Stadium as the new home for city athletics.

.Work will also continue with other sports clubs to find alternative suitable venues for their future use.

2 WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SHEFFIELD PEOPLE

For the athletics community, Woodbourn will offer a dedicated and sustainable home for outdoor athletics in the city. It will also avoid athletics programmes and training being subject to regular disruption due to competing pressures from other activities which is inevitable in a major, multi purpose stadium such as Don Valley.

Whilst there is clearly some concern about the loss of a major sports facility such as Don Valley, alternatives sports facility closures would be worse in terms of impact on sports participation and health. For example, to achieve the same level of saving as closing Don Valley, the city would have to consider the alternative closure of several community pools with a loss in participation many times greater. Therefore, by comparison, the closure of Don Valley and the relocation of athletics to a nearby venue mean that the impact on the people of Sheffield is relatively low.

Unfortunately, Don Valley has not hosted a major athletics event for 5 years and the prospect of regularly hosting major events in the future is low. Therefore the international scale and cost of the venue can no longer be justified within the context of the major and continuing reductions in Council budgets.

3 OUTCOME AND SUSTAINABILITY

Given the budget cuts for 2013/14 and beyond within SCC, it is essential that a more affordable home for athletics be established. The proposed re-opening of Woodbourn Road Stadium offers a

sustainable athletics facility for the city which will accommodate all club and schools programmes and cater for events up to regional and potentially British League standards. An annual budget to support the operation of Woodbourn has been set aside from the Don Valley savings.

SCC has continued to develop its Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix A). This concludes that the proposed closure of DVS would be equality neutral impacting the same regardless of age, sex, race, faith, disability, sexuality etc .i.e. no disproportionate impact on any groups with protected characteristics. This could be compared with potential alternative facility closures in the city where there is a more significant usage by groups with protected characteristics. It also indicates the closure would impact on relatively low numbers of participants, particularly given that the key usage of athletics will be fully relocated to the nearby Woodbourn Stadium.

Work is also underway to identify alternative venues for other users of DVS.

4 CLOSURE OF DON VALLEY STADIUM AND RE-OPENING OF WOODBOURN ATHLETICS STADIUM

Background

As part of the Major Sports Facilities in the city, Don Valley Stadium is owned on a long lease by SCT and operated on their behalf by SIV. The lease specifies minimum operating standards but the operation of Don Valley Stadium is a matter for SCT and SIV. Through a funding agreement that is separate to the lease SCC agrees to fund any operating loss made by SCT and/or SIV. This arrangement covers all the Major Sports Facilities and in relation to Don Valley Stadium SCC has funded SCT/SIV at an average of around £700K in recent years.

In response to the significant budget cuts facing SCC it has had to consider all savings options and that includes its funding and provision of sports and leisure facilities. In addition SCC has had to look at its existing contractual arrangements and has had discussions with many of its partners to agree revisions to those arrangements to allow SCC to make the savings its needs to in these unprecedented times.

Following a joint assessment of facility options with the Council, Sheffield City Trust has agreed to close the Don Valley Stadium with effect from 30th September 2013 so that it will no longer need to call upon SCC for funding under the Funding Agreement. Although precipitated by the SCC budgetary position this was an independent decision of SCT's trustees and was made by them

having regard to the charitable obligations of SCT.

Subsequently, on March 1st 2013, Sheffield City Council set its budget for 2013/14 and this included a recognition of the consequential reduction in the annual funding to DVS.

This report seeks a Cabinet decision on agreeing to release SCT from the minimum operating standards under the lease arrangements. It also seeks approval to re-open a refurbished Woodbourn Athletics Stadium as the new home for city athletics.

Alongside the English Institute, Don Valley is the current base for outdoor athletics in the city and therefore it is desirable to replace this facility. The floodlit track at Woodbourn Athletics Stadium that was mothballed two years ago is of the same technical standard as Don Valley and also has the major advantage of a dedicated throws area. These factors, combined with a commitment to give athletics the priority use of Woodbourn, have meant that the city's key athletics clubs have constructively engaged in the planning of a refurbished stadium. The plan has also received a positive response from Sport England and the athletics' governing body, England Athletics.

Proposal

The proposal is for Don Valley Stadium to close on the 30th September 2013 after the last of the existing pre-booked events and to demolish and clear the site thereafter.

It is also proposed that at the same time the Woodbourn Athletics Stadium re-opens. Prior to that there will be a need to carry out refurbishment works at Woodbourn. To this end, capital funding of £115,000 has been identified within the Culture and Environment budget in 2013-14. In addition, discussions have taken place regarding prospective bids for further capital funds to both Sport England and England Athletics. A Capital Plan for Woodbourn is being finalised which will form the basis of the funding bids and it is planned to deliver total investment of at least £300,000 in the venue.

Discussions are also taking place regarding the options for operating Woodbourn. One option is for an athletics club to take a lease on the site, with grant aid support from SCC to meet core running costs. A business plan for this option is currently being developed. If one club were to operate the site, it would be on the basis of fair and guaranteed access to the city's other key athletics clubs and appropriate community access.

Work has already started to look at post-closure options for the stadium and/or site. This will continue through to the proposed

closure in September. If an affordable and sustainable solution is found to retain the stadium before the end of September, then this would be considered by SCC. If such an option is not forthcoming, then the stadium would be demolished soon after September and proposals for the site would be progressed.

Benefits

There are a number of key benefits from the proposed closure of Don Valley Stadium:-

- achieves significant savings with relatively low impact on sports participation
- helps prevent alternative closures in other sports facilities in the city which would impact on many more people
- offers the opportunity to create a low cost sustainable home for athletics at Woodbourn Stadium
- relieves Sheffield City Trust from an funded liability
- creates a regeneration opportunity on the site after the stadium is closed and demolished

Risks

The closure of Don Valley Stadium poses a risk to the city's reputation as a City of Sport. However, much of the concern expressed so far has been in relation to the loss of a '*national facility*' with a consequent call by some for the Government and/or national sporting agencies to step forward with solutions. It appears this is unlikely to happen. Both Sport England and Lord Coe have acknowledged the Council's difficult decision in relation to Don Valley, but also noted the opportunity arising at Woodbourn.

The support recently offered for Woodbourn by the city's athletics clubs is also a strong indication of the potential it offers to meet the city's long term athletics needs.

A Capital Plan and a Business Plan are both important pre-requisites of a sustainable solution for athletics at Woodbourn. The commitment of all parties to develop and deliver these plans is extremely encouraging. The co-operation of the clubs to potentially operate the venue is also very positive, A Woodbourn Delivery Group now meets regularly to oversee the project and this includes SCC, England Athletics, City of Sheffield AC and Hallamshire Harriers. Sport England is also offering regular advice and support to the group.

Consultation

SCC held citywide public consultation events on the potential budget impact on sports facilities on January 23 and 24. These took place at Sheffield Town Hall. Further information explaining the Council's proposals has been available on the SCC website since January.

SCC has responded to a number of public requests for information and letters of complaint.

Extensive and detailed discussions have taken place with the city's two main athletics clubs. This has involved several meetings since January and dialogue is on-going. Support by the clubs for the redevelopment of Woodbourn Stadium is the key outcome of this consultation. Dialogue is now in the form of regular formal meetings of the Woodbourn Delivery Group.

Further detailed consultation has taken place between the DVS manager/SCC officers and a wide range of DVS user groups to update them on the proposal and to assist them in considering their future options.

Consultation with the local community with regards to opportunities for participation at the re-opened Woodbourn Stadium is planned for the coming weeks.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

By implementing the proposal to close Don Valley Stadium and provide alternative facilities at Woodbourn, the Council will be able to operate within its significantly reduced funding allocation for sport in 2013-14, whilst still providing first class athletics facilities.

Given the high subsidy level required by Don Valley Stadium, its closure also allows the Council to focus its reduced resources on other lower cost and better used community sports facilities such as local swimming pools.

The Council will incur one off redundancy costs of approximately £150k which will be funded from the Council's overall provision for redundancy costs. There may also be some liability for SCT to repay third party funding if Don valley closes and SCC will assist them to look at ways to avoid or mitigate any repayments. Any further one-off costs relating to the closure will be funded from the gross saving from Don Valley. Of course these one-off costs in 13/14 are significantly outweighed by the recurrent annual savings of £700K, which will generate around £3M total savings over the first 5 years.

Don Valley Stadium was built in the early 1990's and financed through the Major Sports Facilities (MSF) funding arrangements. There may be a need to amend some of the detailed provisions in respect of DVS. The Council continually reviews its debt and investment strategy and any changes to the overall MSF arrangements will be the subject of a separate report

The estimated demolition costs of DVS of £250k, and the capital investment at Woodbourn Stadium will be found from the Council's

Corporate Resource Pool and will be the subject of a separate capital approval submission.

The proposal to demolish the stadium is based on the emerging consensus with key partners and national sports bodies that it is uneconomic to remodel the stadium and its retention would incur the upcoming major repair costs of around £1.6M starting in 2014.

If an affordable and sustainable solution is found to retain the stadium before the end of September, then this would be considered by SCC. If not, then beyond the September closure, it is more economic to demolish the stadium than to secure and sustain it in a closed condition over an extended period of time.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has the power under s19 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to provide facilities for sports. This power also allows loans or grants to voluntary organisations to allow them to provide such facilities.

Various other legislation also allows the Council to provide these facilities under a contract for services or to enter into land deals with a third party.

The current agreements between SCC and SCT/SIV are by way of a long lease from SCC to the leasing banks who have granted an under lease to SCT and a funding agreement to cover operating losses at the city's Major Sports Facilities – including Don Valley. These agreements will continue to operate in respect of the other Major Sports Facilities.

Any proposals for investment and operation of Woodburn Stadium will need to follow Council policies and relevant procurement and state aid law.

Any decision will have to have regard to the public sector equality duty.

7. PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

The property implications from this proposal may be dealt with in a later report as they are tied into the future funding arrangements for the Major Sports Facilities and the wider redevelopment plans for the Lower Don Valley. However it may be necessary to deal with them separately for Don Valley Stadium so a delegation is sought to allow those arrangements to be made.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Both the City Council and SCT have considered a wide range of options to achieve the necessary budget reductions and both have concluded that this option is the one that has the least impact on

sports participation and health in the city. The alternative would be the closure of several community facilities that would have far higher adverse impact.

Work is on-going to review future options for the stadium and/or site beyond its closure in September.

9. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Council has to make savings of £50M in 2013/14, largely as a result of significant reductions in Government funding. The city's sports facilities have to take a share of the cuts and the closure of Don Valley Stadium was recommended and agreed by SCT because of its high cost; its relatively low usage and the availability of an alternative low cost/ high quality athletics facility at Woodbourn Road. The city's athletics clubs have indicated a willingness to relocate outdoor athletics to Woodbourn and the city is already working with Sport England and England Athletics (athletics' national governing body) on a joint approach to its refurbishment.

Work is also underway regarding the relocation of other activities from Don Valley to alternative suitable venues.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. notes and accepts the Sheffield City Trust proposal to close Don Valley Stadium from the 30th September 2013.
2. approves the demolition of Don Valley Stadium following its closure and to declare the site surplus to service requirements, enabling alternative options for the site to be fully considered.
3. delegates to the Executive Director Place in consultation with the Director of Legal and Director of Finance (and where they relate to property arrangements in consultation with the Director of Capital and Major Projects) the authority to agree such amendments to or consents under the legal arrangements with Sheffield City Trust and Sheffield International Venues as well with the leasing banks as appropriate to achieve the closure and demolition of Don Valley Stadium.
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Sheffield City Council Equality Impact Assessment



[Guidance for completing this form is available on the intranet](#)

Help is also available by selecting the grey area and pressing the F1 key

Name of policy/project/decision: Don Valley Stadium

Status of policy/project/decision: New

Name of person(s) writing EIA: Paul Billington

Date: Updated March 2013

Service: Culture and Environment

Portfolio: Place

What are the brief aims of the policy/project/decision? To inform a potential decision on the proposed closure of Don Valley Stadium - part of the budget saving measures 2013/14

Are there any potential Council staffing implications, include workforce diversity? No. However, there may be staffing implications for our partner SIV. They will follow their procedures for this.

Under the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#), we have to pay due regard to: “Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.” [More information is available on the council website](#)

Areas of possible impact	Impact	Impact level	Explanation and evidence (Details of data, reports, feedback or consultations. This should be proportionate to the impact.)
Age	Negative	Low	Some impact on young people who use DVS. Also some potential impact on bowlers who tend to be older people.
Disability	Neutral	-Select-	No specific impacts
Pregnancy/maternity	Neutral	-Select-	No specific impacts
Race	Neutral	-Select-	No specific impacts
Religion/belief	Neutral	-Select-	No specific impacts
Sex	Neutral	-Select-	No specific impacts
Sexual orientation	Neutral	-Select-	No specific impacts
Transgender	Neutral	-Select-	No specific impacts
Financial inclusion, poverty, social justice cohesion or carers	Neutral	-Select-	No specific impacts
Voluntary, community and faith sector	Negative	Low	A number of sports clubs will be affected by the proposed closure.
Other/additional: Mobility/accessibility	Negative	Low	DVS is used by a citywide customer base which is already largely travelling by car to use the facility.

Areas of possible impact	Impact	Impact level	Explanation and evidence (Details of data, reports, feedback or consultations. This should be proportionate to the impact.)
			Other customers will travel by tram to the venue.
Other/additional:	-Select-	-Select-	

Overall summary of possible impact (to be used on EMT, cabinet reports etc):

Fundamentally this proposal is equality neutral, impacting most people the same regardless of age, sex, race, faith, disability, sexuality, etc. However, there are some potential negative impacts in relation to age (young and elderly), plus voluntary groups. However, the usage levels at DVS are relatively low compared to other sports facilities and there are a number of mitigating actions summarised below. The overall impact on sports participation and therefore health will be relatively low.

Detailed work will continue before Sept to ensure reasonable relocation of activities

The immediate catchment population surrounding DVS is also relatively low.

If you have identified significant change, med or high negative outcomes or for example the impact is on specialist provision relating to the groups above, or there is cumulative impact you **must** complete the action plan.

Review date: 20/03/13 **Q Tier Ref** / **Reference number:** /

Entered on Qtier: Yes **Action plan needed:** Yes

Approved (Lead Manager): Paul Billington **Date:** March 2013

Approved (EIA Lead person for Portfolio): Ian Oldershaw **Date:** March 2013

Does the proposal/ decision impact on or relate to specialist provision: no

Risk rating: Low

Action plan

Area of impact	Action and mitigation	Lead, timescale and how it will be monitored/reviewed
Age	All outdoor athletics activity, club and schools, will relocate to Woodbourn Other activities will relocate to alternative venues - work is already underway with users to identify suitable venues Consult and work with gymnastics customers	SCC Woodbourn switch by Sept and monthly delivery group meetings Switch other user groups by Sept - joint work by SIV and

Area of impact	Action and mitigation	Lead, timescale and how it will be monitored/reviewed
	and fitness customers on relocation options prior to September Work closely with bowlers to assist in relocation by September	SCC officers
VCF	Working closely with affected clubs - particularly bowling and athletics to manage migration plans	SCC and SIV - monthly reviews
Other	Relocation will involve review of customer travel patterns. Alternative venues will be assessed in terms of access to public transport (including tram) wherever possible e.g. EISS, Woodbourn and Ponds Forge	SCC and SIV - monthly reviews
-Select-	I	
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		

Approved (Lead Manager): Paul Billington Date: March 2013

Approved (EIA Lead Officer for Portfolio): Ian Oldershaw Date: March 2013