

# Brighton & Hove City Council

## TECC Committee

## Agenda Item 57

**Subject:** RWC25 - Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 Host City Bid

**Date of meeting:** 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023

**Report of:** Executive Director of Economy, Environment and Culture

**Contact Officer:** Name: Ian Baird  
Tel: 01273 292712  
Email: [ian.baird@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:ian.baird@brighton-hove.gov.uk)

**Ward(s) affected:** All

### 1. Summary

- 1.1 The council are working with Brighton and Hove Albion Football Club to develop a bid to act as a host city for the Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 which combines the attributes of the state of the art stadium with the city's wider cultural and tourist bid.
- 1.2 This report seeks agreement from the committee that we should pursue this bid, currently at the candidate phase, and authorises officers to agree a suitable financial commitment from the city for the activity.

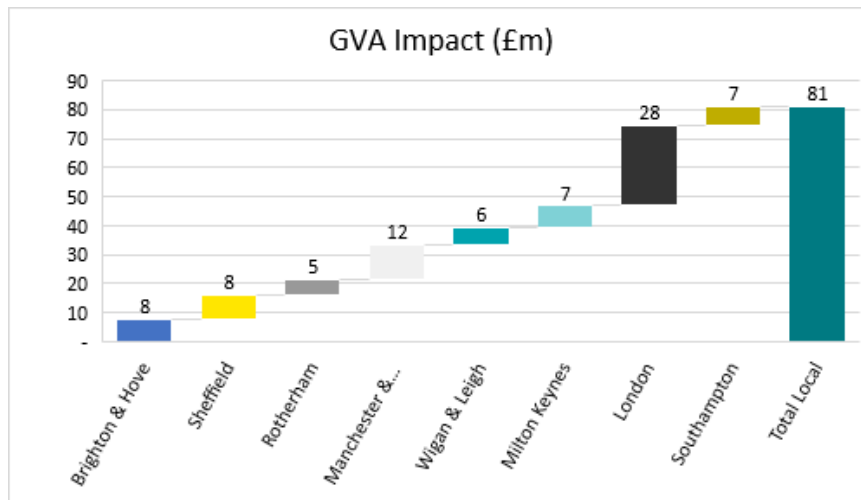
### 2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 That Committee agrees that officers continue through the selection process with an aim, if selected, to be announced as a host city in February 2023
- 2.2 That Committee agrees to a host city contribution from existing EEC budgets and delegates authority to the Executive Director Economy, Environment & Culture to agree the final detail of this contribution and enter into necessary agreement(s) with the tournament organisers depending on the financial arrangements.

### 3. Context and background information

- 3.1 Since England was awarded the tournament in May 2022, officers have been in discussion with World Rugby and the Rugby Football Union (RFU) through Rugby World Cup (England 2025) Limited ("RWCL") who are the tournament organisers, regarding timescales & selection process. Brighton and Hove have reached the Candidate phase of the selection process.
- 3.2 The city has a successful track record in hosting major sporting events including the UEFA Women's Euros in 2022 & Men's Rugby World Cup in 2015. Such events have a range of benefits including a positive economic impact, the promotion of the city on the international audience, further recognition of the city as a venue for major sporting events, and in this instance an opportunity to promote women's and girls' rugby.

- 3.3 Hosting the Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 in England would provide an ideal opportunity for the RFU to grow and promote the women's and girls' game in the build up to, during and post the tournament to drive participants, spectators and fans for the game. This will drive heightened awareness and profile for the tournament across the country, together with specific programmes of activation within the host cities to promote the sport.
- 3.4 In addition, the tournament would provide the opportunity to use local club grounds as training venues and hotels for accommodation specifically for the tournament participants as well as spectators.
- 3.5 The partnership with Rugby Football Union (National) & Sussex Rugby Football Union (Regional) will be key to using the tournament to further promote the women's and girls' game in the city. The Rugby Football Union has outlined a legacy programme to further accelerate the delivery of the Every Rose women & girls strategy specially supporting the aim of reaching 100,000 players by 2027.
- 3.6 Brighton & Hove as a host city would benefit from promotion and visibility across international broadcast and news coverage. Viewing figures for the Women's Rugby World cup 2017 were:
- 1,536hrs global coverage
  - 33.9million TV views
  - 48million Social media views
  - England fixtures receiving an average of 689,000 live views per match
- 3.7 The Rugby Football Union have indicated an initial conservative estimate value of £50.2m total economic impact nationally.
- 3.8 The Rugby Football Union have provided a supporting document, titled Rugby World Cup 2025: Legacy Overview. (See Appendix 1).
- 3.9 Following Brighton & Hove hosting games as part of the UEFA Women's Euros in 2022, the post tournament flash report has stated:
- Host cities received an £81m boost in economic (vs £54m predicted in pre-tournament report)
  - 552,000 overnight stays in host cities from England and overseas visitors
  - 84% of legacy participants said participating had increased their confidence and self-esteem
  - More than half of local residents and 2 in 5 spectators and tournament volunteers have been inspired to do more sport and physical activity as a result of WEURO
  - On track to hit 500,000 opportunities to participate in our host cities by 2024, with 416,000 opportunities already provided.
- (See Appendix 2 for the full Post Tournament Flash report)
- 3.10 The initial post tournament assessments have indicated that of the £81m economic boost received by host cities, £8m (10%) was attributed to Brighton & Hove.



3.11 There are significant economic benefits to the city in hosting major events that bring in additional revenue, contributing towards a successful visitor/sports economy and enhancing the overall reputation of Brighton and Hove.

3.12 Host cities and venues selected for the candidate phase will work with the RWC'25 Team over the next 2 months to provide the following information for the tournament:

- Information required to compile the city/venue bid including venue technical information and maps, information on host city infrastructure including transport and accommodation and input into budgetary information.
- Confirmation of proposed host city funding commitments and relevant confirmation letters
- Confirmation of any value in kind contributions that may be provided by the host city and venue
- Confirmation of the proposed venue hire fee with all inclusions and draft match costs
- A venue guarantee will be required from the owner or operator of each proposed venue committing that such venue will be available for the relevant availability period and will be delivered to the technical standards set out in the Venue Technical Guide.

3.13 As with previous major events our responsibility as a host city will in principle include the following areas. These areas come with a financial commitment which is to be determined, current estimates are based on previous undertakings as a host city for Rugby World Cup 2015 & UEFA Women's Euros 2022. Due to the period that the city will be an active host these costs are likely to be significantly lower than for UEFA Women's Euros 2022.

- City Dressing
- Fan Zone
- Transport & Accommodation Planning
- Ceremonies & Civic Events

- Staffing

3.14 Budgets will be based on the assumption that there will be other pots of third party of funding available closer to the tournament delivery such as National Lottery funding which will allow us to respond dynamically to new work strand as they develop.

(See Appendix 3 for Terms and Conditions of the Selection Process)

#### **4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options**

4.1 Not proceeding with the bid would result in us not being able to act as a host city. This would mean the loss of the social, health, profile and economic benefits to the city identified earlier in this report.

4.2 Proceeding with the bid will be dependent on agreement from Brighton and Hove Albion and the American Express Community Stadium management team. They are currently engaged with RWC25 on the commercial details.

#### **5. Community engagement and consultation**

5.1 The bid has been prepared at short notice in partnership with Brighton & Hove Albion FC and the Rugby Football Union.

#### **6. Conclusion**

6.1 Past experience has demonstrated a very positive boost for the city when international competitions are hosted here with economic and engagement gains that more than outweigh the cost base.

#### **7. Financial implications**

7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from recommendation 2.1. Costs associated with works on the selection process including staff time will be contained within existing resources. Any significant variation to budget will be reported as part of the council's monthly budget monitoring process.

7.2 Under recommendation 2.2 the financial implications will be dependent on if a bid is successful. If successful, the council would be required to meet costs associated with the bid as detailed in paragraph 3.13 above. Funding will be set aside from existing income streams and revenue budgets within the Economy, Environment & Culture budgets over the next two financial years and set aside within a reserve. Any additional funding received relating to the tournament will be allocated for this purpose which may reduce the required funding from existing budgets. The outcome of the bid will be known in February 2023. Any significant variation to budget in each financial year will be reported as part of the council's monthly budget monitoring process.

Name of finance officer consulted: John Lack    Date consulted (22/12/22):

## **8. Legal implications**

- 8.1 If the Council is successful in its bid to host the Rugby World Cup, it will need to enter into a legal agreement with the tournament organisers which legal services will advise on.

Name of lawyer consulted: Alice Rowland Date consulted 13/12/22

## **9. Equalities implications**

- 9.1 Hosting this tournament would provide an excellent opportunity to promote Women and girls' rugby in the city and wider Counties, East & West Sussex.

## **10. Sustainability implications**

- 10.1 There is an expectation that event hosts will implement the ISO20121 Standard and contribute towards making the Rugby World Cup, a world leading event with regarding environmental impact and footprint.
- 10.2 Brighton & Hove City Council have set ambitious targets such as becoming carbon neutral by 2030 & have a number of ongoing projects to improve the city's sustainability. Where possible Brighton & Hove City Council will try and influence event policies and push for sustainable approaches.

## **11. Other Implications**

### **Crime & disorder implications:**

- 11.1 Sussex Police are involved in both the consultation and planning of all major events.

### **Public health implications:**

- 11.2 Outdoor events have a positive impact on the health and well-being of participants and spectators. However, events will need to meet covid safe requirements if they are able to take place.
- 11.3 Officers attend regular meetings held by the Sussex Resilience Forum, to ensure consistency as a region in relation to guidance, advice and information being given to event organisers with regards to Public Health concerns. It is recognised regionally that keeping visitors and residents safe is our priority.

## **Supporting Documentation**

### **1. Appendices**

1. Rugby World Cup 2025: Legacy Overview
2. Post Tournament Flash Report
3. Terms and Conditions of the Selection Process

