1 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to request authority to reconfigure the capital project being led by Wrenn School. The project was originally approved for construction of a sports hall. Permission is now sought to use this funding for the construction of three tennis courts.

1.2 This report relates to the following Council objectives:
   (a) Improving the life chances for young people
   (b) Delivery of efficient and responsive services

2 Executive Summary

The 2009-10 capital programme has allocated £250,000 to Wrenn School for the construction of a sports hall. The school is seeking authority from the council to re-direct these monies into the construction of three tennis courts.

3 Proposed Action:

3.1 The Committee is invited to RECOMMEND that the £250,000 originally allocated for the construction of a sports hall in the 2009-10 capital programme is re-directed for the construction of three tennis courts. This approval is conditional upon the school’s bid to the Lawn Tennis Association for £200,000 being successful.

4 Background

4.1 In February 2009 the Council approved the allocation of £250,000 to Wrenn school for the construction of a sports hall on the London Road site. This sum was less than the school were seeking and subsequent attempts by the school to secure additional funding have not proved successful.

4.2 The school’s sports development programme calls for a range of improvements across the site and high amongst these requirements is the need to improve tennis facilities.

4.3 There are no dedicated tennis facilities at Wrenn school, instead the astro turf surface is presently used although this requires special balls to obtain the correct bounce. More broadly, with just fifteen courts in the Borough there is a shortage of tennis facilities in the area. There are no indoor tennis facilities available in Wellingborough. The nearest indoor courts are in Northampton, 13 miles from Wellingborough. Appendix One summarises the recent research undertaken into the need for tennis locally.
5 Discussion

5.1 The vision from the management of the school is to offer the community of the Borough a totally integrated sports campus, similar to those provided by universities, where an artificial turf pitch and covered tennis courts are all available to the public on the same site in a relatively short travelling time from the town centre. For larger, regional events, the site offers easy access, located just off the A45 and on a main road into town, as well as being situated close to the train station.

5.2 The £250,000 funding from the Council would provide for the construction, floodlighting of three tennis courts and would part fund a framed fabric covering for the courts. If the proposal is approved, the school aims to draw on a further £200,000 of grant funding from the Lawn Tennis Association. This second allocation would be used to provide the balance of funding required for the covering of the tennis courts. The location of these courts will be on the back field of the London Road site, behind the school building. Appendix Two provides an illustration a completed fabric framed tennis court.

5.3 In addition to providing school tennis during the day time the facility would be available for use by club users and the community.

5.4 The Earls Barton Tennis Club (EBTC) is already being used as an exit route for gifted students, as part of the Sport Unlimited programme. This practice will be built upon by EBTC who will trial new formats for social tennis and match practice within the club, to offer more playing opportunities. The Club have undertaken to forge links with local primary schools and offer free taster sessions within school hours, and give every child at least one hour of tennis. The Club will also establish additional men’s and ladies teams to the Northamptonshire League, using new members. It is anticipated that this activity will result in the formation of new Wellingborough Tennis Club, incorporating members from the whole Borough. Appendix Three provides an overview of the range of services presently provided by EBTC.

5.5 As well as increasing the access to children, the school will focus on getting adult players in who currently do not play, or who wish to get back into the sport. The school will provide also specialist courses for women to improve women’s tennis.

5.6 Wrenn School has a highly effective management and administrative structure in place. The school runs a profitable company, Wrenn Astro, leasing out the artificial turf pitch for community use. The profits made from this company have been placed into a sinking fund to maintain the quality facility for community use.

5.7 The school already has good-quality changing facilities in place, as well as a club pavilion and refreshment area, committee room and good parking. The site is a secure-site with an on-site caretaker, which reduces the risk of vandalism of the community facilities.

6 Legal Powers

6.1 Section 111 of The Local Government Act 1972 gives the Council power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of its functions.

6.3 Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 gives the Council the power (subject to certain exceptions which do not apply here) to do anything which...
they consider is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the Borough.

7 Financial and Value For Money Implications

7.1 The School plans to build three framed fabric covered, floodlit tennis courts on its London Road site. These courts will be dual-usage, used by the School, the community and Earls Barton Tennis Club. A user agreement will be agreed between the School, Borough Council, Lawn Tennis Association and Earls Barton Tennis Club to ensure the correct proportion of usage is given to the School, the community and the clubs.

7.2 Short-Term: First phase: Three outdoor, floodlit tennis courts to be built on the back field of the London Road site, by March 2010. (Borough Council grant, £250,000).

7.3 Mid-Term: Second phase: Permanent fabric-frame to be installed over the tennis courts to provide year-round indoor tennis by September 2010, subject to successful grant application to the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) for the remaining £200,000 required. (Next project review by LTA October 2009)

7.4 Total estimated costs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost £’000</th>
<th>No. of Items</th>
<th>Total £’000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost per court (incl. floodlighting, no cover)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost for bubble cover (per court)</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>450</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.5 It is anticipated that the income generated by hiring the tennis courts out to local clubs and the public will fully cover the annual running costs. Any potential deficit will be underwritten by the school. Money will be saved by using the school’s existing staffing structure (i.e. additional cleaning staff, maintenance staff etc will not need to be hired).

7.6 The below figures are based on the revenue expenditure of the school’s
artificial turf pitch, which is a three-court facility, and will give a good indication of the likely income generated by the new tennis facilities, which will also be three courts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue Expenditure</th>
<th>Part Year Effect</th>
<th>Full Year Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees &amp; Charges</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Income</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expenditure:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Costs (0XX)</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premises &amp; Grounds (1XX)</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport &amp; Plant (2XX)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies &amp; Services (3XX)</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Running Costs</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditure:</strong></td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Net Expenditure: 0 0

Capital Charges (F&IT Dept): 0

Total Revenue Expenditure (F&IT Dept): 0 0

8 Risk Analysis

This table needs to be completed for any report setting out a proposed course of action that entails risks at the outset of the project or if the risks change along the way.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of risk</th>
<th>Consequences if realised</th>
<th>Likelihood of occurrence</th>
<th>Control measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Club and community usage lower than anticipated</td>
<td>Council’s investment not fully realised</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>School to be required to deliver levels of club and community participation as a condition of the funding being granted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawn Tennis Association grant not forthcoming</td>
<td>Project cannot be delivered as currently specified</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Alternative configurations for the tennis courts to be developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Construction of facilities is not to specification | Facilities of poor quality and/or unsafe | Low | Quality of buildings works to be assured specialist assessors

School requires revenue funding from the Council for on-going maintenance of the facilities | Unplanned revenue expenditure for the Council | Low | Capital funding from the Council to be dependant upon their being no subsequent revenue implications

9 Implications for Resources

9.1 None directly from this report.

10 Implications for Stronger and Safer Communities

10.1 The promotion of sport and physically activity are important outcomes for the Council and its partners to raise the quality of life for local people.

11 Implications for Equalities

11.1 If the re-configuration of capital funding is approve the Council will require Wrenn school to undertaken an equality impact screening for the project in order to demonstrate how the design and management of the tennis courts will aim to include all sections of the community.

12 Author and Contact Officer
Terry Wright, Corporate Director

13 Consultees
Liz Flores, Cultural Development Manager
Quintin Allen, Sports Development Officer

14 Background Papers
Wrenn School Sports Bid document to the Lawn Tennis Association
Project files
Appendix One: The need for tennis

The PE & Sport Strategy for Young People Survey conducted in 2008 by the Wellingborough & East Northants Sport Strategy Partnership showed a high demand for improved tennis provision and facilities in the region. As part of the survey, 3242 boys and girls aged 11-13 from 10 different secondary schools in Wellingborough and East Northamptonshire were asked to rank 14 sports in order of merit, as activities they would like to do at the weekend if adequate provision and facilities were supplied. The top three activities for the SSP, in rank order, were football, tennis and dance.

The most recent “Who cares? about sport” survey about children in care, showed that tennis was the third most popular sport after football and basketball (obtaining 8% of the vote), beating rugby which was placed in 4th position. This is believed to be because tennis can be played with just two people on concrete courts, whereas rugby and other team sports required more organisation, a greater number of players and specialist facilities.

This is a clear indication that more children would take up tennis in the borough and local region if they had access to local, high-quality community tennis facilities and coaching. Many of the residents in the Castle and Croyland Wards can’t afford private membership to tennis clubs, whereas a local, high quality community tennis centre based within walking distance would offer this underserved population excellent sporting opportunities.

There is an evidence base from calculations made by both Sport England and more recently supported by the draft Nortoft report that Wellingborough needs to show an expansion of its indoor recreational facilities. Location is a key factor to this, and the school offers the opportunity of indoor tennis facilities within easy access of the town centre and by old and new housing areas to the south and east of the town, including the proposed WEAST development, that are currently underserved by sporting facilities.
Appendix Two: An illustration of fabric framed tennis courts
Appendix Three: Earls Barton Tennis Club, existing provision

**Club Programme (Earls Barton Tennis Club):**
The club currently has around 65 members, with a further 20-30 children estimated to join by the middle of summer 2009, following a six-week block of coaching.

The club’s present provision includes:

*Thursdays: mini red, orange and green tennis*
*Fridays: tennis for 11+year olds; performance squad coaching.*
*Saturdays: mini red, orange and green tennis*

In the summer, mini red performance players will be selected to move on to competition level.

Coaches: the club has two full-time coaches and a number of volunteer coaches. The club is starting to coach young leaders (16-18 year olds) to become coaches.