

FALKIRK COUNCIL

**Subject: APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
DOLLAR PARK COMMUNITY TENNIS COURTS
Meeting: FALKIRK COMMON GOOD SUB COMMITTEE
Date: 24 March 2015
Author: CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An application has been received from Falkirk Community Trust for funding towards the upgrade and improvement of the four blaze tennis courts located within Dollar Park. A key part of the Trust's Business portfolio is sports development which aims to provide sport as an activity that has clear benefits in relation to quality of life.
- 1.2 The Falkirk Community Tennis initiative was established in 2010 in response to a growing interest in tennis in the area and acts as an umbrella for all tennis activity. Since then 2,000 young people of all ability have participated in tennis and 82 teachers in the Council area are trained in tennis coaching.

2. PROPOSED PROJECT

- 2.1 The project aims to upgrade and improve the existing four tennis courts located within Dollar Park, Falkirk. The four courts were originally constructed in 1943 but recently have suffered from lack of investment. The red ash surface combined with poor drainage means the courts are no longer fit for purpose and not being maximised to their full potential as a community sports facility. It is proposed to reconstruct the courts with an all weather, low maintenance playing surface and install flood lights.
- 2.2 The project will not only upgrade the courts, improving the aesthetics of the park environment, it will also offer coaching opportunities for the community with a Modern Apprentice position created. Volunteering opportunities provided through the tennis programme and work undertaken at local schools will help promote a sense of stewardship and reduce the potential for vandalism. Extending the playing season to all year round will ensure the site is busy and well used and the addition of floodlighting will add to the sense of safety and security.
- 2.3 The courts will be actively promoted to the local community with taster sessions and coaching available throughout the year. It is also hoped to introduce women and girl only coaching sessions and a school disability programme will be launched with disability coaching offered at the site. The courts will be suitable for wheelchair tennis and the project will ensure that tennis is an accessible sport for all members of the community.
- 2.4 It is anticipated that by year five there will be circa 800 participants in coaching classes with approximately 300 adult and 850 junior users also regularly using the facilities outwith classes.

3. PROJECT COSTS AND FUNDING

- 3.1 The project involves installing four all weather courts, new fencing, disabled access, floodlights with localised court control and improved access for players with mobility needs. The total cost for the project is expected to be £273,300.
- 3.2 A funding package has been put together to support the cost of delivering the project and the current position is as follows:-

<u>Funder</u>	<u>Grant Request</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
Lawn Tennis Assoc.	£75,000	Confirmed
Falkirk Community Trust	£25,000	Confirmed
Falkirk Environmental Trust	£45,000	Decision due March 15
SportScotland	£99,730	Decision due March 15
Balance	£28,570 to be funded by Trusts/Foundation	

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The value of the Falkirk Common Good Fund at the start of the current financial year was £811,739. Expenditure of £15,000 has been paid for the Steeple 200 Anniversary Event and income of £20,150 is expected during the year from rentals and interest. In previous years when the annual interest has not all been used for funding applications it has been added to the fund balance.
- 4.2 Applications approved in the past from Falkirk Common Good Fund range from £1,000 – £15,000 with three awards of £25,000 in the last fifteen years. Three other applications to the Falkirk Fund are in the process of being prepared and are likely to come before Members during the next financial year.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 That Members consider granting funding towards the cost of upgrading and improving the tennis courts located at Dollar Park, Falkirk.

Chief Finance Officer

Date: 18 March 2015

Contact Officer: Hilary MacArthur

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Funding Proposal received 02/03/15 from P Barnaby, Team Leader Fundraising, Falkirk Community Trust.

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers listed above should telephone Falkirk 01324 506354 and ask for Hilary MacArthur.