

Bo'ness Community Development

Short background

Bo'ness United is currently run as an unincorporated association with members and an annually elected committee. Their ground Newton Park is now owned and run by a trust comprising a board made up by 32 Councillors from Falkirk Council, the ground having previously been owned by the club which was a predecessor to Bo'ness United in the 1930s.

The ground and facilities although suitable for the club and the community of the 1920s and 30s, given minimal investment over the years is generally accepted as no longer 'fit for purpose' in the 21st century.

Community Ownership

The intention is to create a new legal entity with charitable status which takes ownership of Newtown Park and facilities. The club is currently getting legal work done, which a view to having this as a framework for the eventual formation of the charity. The costs associated with this work is currently be met by the football club.

The objective is to have board members/ trustees who are properly representative of the community of Bo'ness, only part of which is the football club.

To obtain this broad based board, and also to encourage as many people as possible to participate and understand the ambitions, the club will organise public meetings to explain the purpose, and also stimulate ideas. These meetings will start in late summer and go into September/October.

Following these public meetings a board should be identified which can then endorse the basis of the charity and its purposes, allowing an application to be made to OSCR. The progress through public meetings, development and decisions will be communicated to Falkirk Council staff and Councillors to ensure understanding and agreement. The final detail of this would be then agreed with Falkirk Council.

Development and wider engagement

The charity will then look to improve and develop the facilities of the grounds, through attracting grant funding from various public bodies and trusts.

The assets would be locked into the charity itself. Given the closure of the charity at any future date, the assets must be handed over to an organisation with similar aims and objectives at no cost.

Firstport a Scottish Government support body will assist actively in this area.

The charity will also look to encourage activities and projects, based around sport and fitness, to deliver benefit to the local community. Mostly this could be funded through external sources. Where there are larger projects run on a commercial or service level agreement basis, a subsidiary company limited by guarantee would be formed, to ensure that no risk lies with the charity.

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The existing Bo'ness United football side will be run by a company limited by guarantee, which will take over from the currently unincorporated association. It will have the same membership as the current setup and be run by volunteer committee members elected at the AGM.

The Community Club which owns the ground will be a registered charity. The football club will have a right to use the ground facilities but will run itself financially quite separately from the charity.

Vision and ambition

Our vision is to provide the community of Bo'ness with a community inspired, developed and managed facility, to help develop people of all ages in sporting, social and life skills.

Our shared ambition is for The Bo'ness Community Club to become the no.1 locally led community club in Scotland by 2015.

Underneath our vision and aspirations for the future sits a number of specific key social aims and objectives which drive our organisation, namely, to:

- provide new opportunities for more people to participate in sport and recreational activities.
- provide learning and development opportunities for people.
- have a positive impact on social targets such as health improvement, increased employment opportunities and crime reduction.
- help strengthen community cohesion by becoming a focal point for a range of community based activities and programmes.

A number of projects have already been identified:

- For young people in particular, with schools projects aligned with Curriculum for Excellence, Active Schools and Eco Schools initiatives at the forefront.
- Links with local businesses to become involved in community activities.
- Links with other projects across Scotland delivering social outcomes, which could be replicated through the community club for the benefit of the local Bo'ness community.

The charity will liaise with the various public agencies, the Third Sector single interface, Council education and economic development, Police and local voluntary groups to help build capacity and positive outcomes within the Bo'ness community.

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Outline timetable.

1. End **June 2011**
 - a. Agreement in principle by full Council meeting to proceed with transfer from Falkirk Council.
 - i. Details would then be discussed and agreed
2. End of **September 2011**
 - a. Public meetings held
 - i. Probably 3 meetings
 - ii. Explain to community what is happening to gain their support
 - iii. Attract good calibre and committed potential board members
3. Charitable Status
 - a. **End July** – have draft articles for charity in place
 - b. **End September** – agree version in conjunction with public meetings and potential board members
 - c. **Mid October** – agree content with Falkirk Council and apply to OSCR
4. Bo'ness United Football Club
 - a. **End August** - Form as a company limited by guarantee
5. **September onwards**
 - a. Through contacts made at public meetings form sub committees who can work to progress various developments. The sub groups would include:
 - i. Funding group to look at potential sources of funding
 - ii. Wider active community engagement and understanding
 - iii. Identifying the harder to reach and the socially isolated who normally would not present themselves to such initiatives.
 - iv. Business planning and development
 - v. Others as agreed