

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leader and Cabinet
AUTHOR/S: Chief Executive

14 April 2005

APPLICANT: SWAVESEY VILLAGE COLLEGE DUAL USE SPORTS FACILITY PROJECT

Purpose

1. To consider the following request for grant aid and make a decision on the level of award.

Effect on corporate objectives

2.

High quality, accessible, value for money services	The provision of these dual-use sports facilities provides a very good value approach.
Quality of life	These Dual Use Sports facilities provide residents with the opportunity to improve their health, physical fitness, mental well being and social life.
Sustainability	Providing better sports facilities on school sites ensures less travelling and more sustainable leisure opportunities for all.
Partnerships	Working with the community enables residents to identify local needs and achieve improvements in their quality of life.

Proposal

3. As part of the Council's rolling programme of improvements to the Dual Use Sports Centres, the proposal is to:
 - Build an artificial pitch for tennis, football and hockey
 - Resurface an existing tarmac area for netball, basketball and tennis
 - Refurbish existing changing rooms and build on additional changing facilities
 - Improve existing fitness room and reception
 - Provision for office, storage and cleaning cupboard space
 - Sports hall refurbish
 - General redecoration of floors and ceiling coverings through-out

Copies of the Business Plan and drawings are available for inspection from either Jane Thompson or Jane Lampshire in the Community Services section.

Background

4. Swavesey Village College Sports Centre was given dual-use status in 1993. The addition of a fitness room, social room, office, reception and courts enabled the residents of Swavesey and the surrounding villages access to an excellent facility. The site has served both the college and community well, but is in need of refurbishment.

5. Swavesey Village College Sports Centre currently provides the following facilities for use by the community:
 - Fitness room with a wide range of modern exercise equipment
 - 3 badminton court size Sports Hall
 - Gymnasium with standard wall bars and equipment
 - Fenced floodlit hard surface area for football, netball, tennis and basketball
 - Changing rooms to service the pitches for the Football/Cricket clubs
 - Squash Courts owned by Fenland Squash Club
6. There is a grass area and a football pitch on the local village green, but this area alone is not sufficient to support the growing demand for football competitive fixtures and training time. Furthermore, the village has no suitable floodlit space for teams to practice and hone their skills. As a result of the lack of these important resources, club-coaching structures have suffered due to the lack of coaching opportunities in an appropriate environment.
7. The need for the provision/refurbishment of the floodlit, artificial/tarmac multi-use games area in Swavesey has been identified in the County FA facilities strategy and therefore may be eligible to receive Football Foundation funding. Participant figures for the clubs/individuals using the outside court area have been affected over the past two years, basically as a result of the deterioration of the four courts.
8. The development plan is focused on the provision of more training and playing opportunities for a variety of groups. The Community Sports Manager aims to address the local inequalities that exist in sport, and take positive action to overcome these by actively encouraging greater participation by young people, participants with a disability, women and girls and the 55 + age group. The plan also aims to improve the sports infrastructure within the community and offers more “grass root” opportunities by developing strong links with clubs, for coaching, junior links, matches, training and provision of changing facilities. The key sports that have been identified for development are badminton, basketball, football, hockey, netball and tennis.

Considerations

9. Beyond the village of Swavesey, the nearest Sports Centre in the district is Comberton. The nearest floodlit artificial training pitch is at the Over Community Centre. This is situated 3 miles away and is already at capacity. The Over Netball club is based at Swavesey.
10. At present the all weather macadam surface is used 35% of the time for football training and 5-a-side football. Currently 7 clubs/groups use the facility on a weekly basis, even though it is not an ideal surface for playing football. There are currently 170 junior players and 13 junior teams playing youth football in Swavesey and the surrounding villages. A new artificial surface would provide an ideal venue for football development within the area and provide the FA recommended training surface.
11. The local clubs have already been involved in writing development plans to support the Football Foundation funding application. Swavesey Village College Sports Centre is therefore committed to ensuring that the local clubs get priority use in peak time at an affordable cost. An additional concession scheme has also been introduced to ensure the new facility is completely accessible by all community groups.
12. The location of the artificial and resurfaced macadam surface has been chosen, as it will offer the following:

- Good security as it will be situated close to the sports centre, which is open seven days a week and is well lit.
- Easy accessibility as it will be close to the changing rooms; in addition, users will not have to walk on grass to get onto the surface.
- It will not interfere with any pitches on the playing field.
- Straightforward installation of floodlighting as it will be close to the all weather macadam courts.
- The Sports Centre manager and staff will also organise bookings; furthermore, they will perform daily and weekly checks.
- Enhanced health and safety procedures as there are staff trained in First Aid on site.
- A wide range of holiday courses/taster sessions organised by Sports Centre management.
- Good car parking.

Options

13. To offer a grant will provide enhanced sports facilities, increasing opportunities and improving access to all members of the community. Not to offer a grant will lead to further deterioration of the facilities therefore forcing local community groups and sports clubs to travel further to access adequate facilities which are already used to capacity.

Financial Implications

14. A full copy of the business plan can be made available to members by request to the Committee Section or Sports Development Section. Copies of the Architects drawings will be on display and a reduced version of the drawings will be made available for each member on the day.

<u>Total cost</u>	<u>£570,000</u>	
Artificial Grass	£170,000	
Tarmac Court	£50,000	
Sports Centre (new build and refurbishment of interior)	£260,000	
Pathways from changing rooms to courts and fields	£20,000	
Fees/Additional costs	£70,000	
Amount raised	£130,000 – £150,000	Cambridgeshire County Council
	£120,000 - £130,000	Football
Foundation	£70,000	Swavesey Village College
Total Raised	£320,000 - £350,000	
Population	1,930	

Legal Implications

15. The Village College and Cambridgeshire County Council sign up to the Council's Dual Use agreement.

Staffing Implications

16. Officer time is dedicated to oversee the project.

Risk Management Implications

17. The facility will remain in the ownership of the Local Education Authority. The grant will be subject to completion of a Service Level Agreement.

Sustainability Implications

18. As part of the Dual Use agreement the Community Sports manager is responsible for adequate publicity and promotion of the facility and ensuring that all members of the community can access the facility. The Sports Centre will have a sinking fund in place to replace the carpet of the artificial training pitch and re-surface the macadam courts. Development plans also show the commitment by sports club to improve school/club links and continue to increase junior membership.

Consultation

19. All local clubs were consulted and were in favour of the refurbishments planned for football training, 5-a-side football, netball, tennis, hockey and basketball. Two of the football clubs assisted in the development of this facility. In addition, these clubs are going to work towards the FA Charter standard. All clubs have expressed a wish to hire the facility for training. There is a high demand for provision of an artificial surface in this catchment area due to the number of clubs with growing junior sections. A new artificial and re-surfaced macadam area would help to develop youth sport in the area and in particular will help in the delivery of this Council's sports development programme to work with and encourage participation in sport by specific target groups.

Local Councillor Consultation

20. Cllr Corney supports the application as the sports area is falling into disrepair and there is a big demand for artificial sports areas. Cllr Wright supports the application but declares an interest as his children attend Swavesey Village College. Cllr Waters states that there is a great need for the facility which would be used by all members of the community.
21. Cllr Hall opposes the application as follows:

Although I am a former governor of Swavesey Village College, and my children attended school there, I cannot support this application. I believe that these facilities will chiefly benefit the people of Swavesey which is not the largest in its college's catchment area in terms of population. This belongs to Bar Hill, from where public transport does not exist in the evenings. Referring to 'considerations':

- *Although the nearest Sports Centre is in Comberton, an additional floodlit training pitch is in Bar Hill*
- *A high proportion of the junior footballers and teams is in Bar Hill; although facilities are far from adequate, few of these, if any, would use additional facilities at Swavesey*
- *The third 'condition' implies that 'local' (i.e. Swavesey) clubs would have priority use, other clubs preferring, if possible, to use facilities in their own villages.*

In respect of the other catchment villages, it is clear that there are facilities at the other major village - Over. Boxworth is a very small village which does not even have a football team, and so is Lolworth which is nearer to Bar Hill. I would guess that Papworth Everard may or may soon have major facilities of its own, and is, in any case, too far from Swavesey to benefit to any extent.

I would look on the application more sympathetically if it was for a much smaller amount. Awarding £150,000 would effectively take away money from other projects, that it is out of proportion with the size of Swavesey for facilities (and your paper does not state who would use them) which, to some extent, are replicated elsewhere.

It appears to be a vision borne out of the old village college concept, which does not exist any longer, transport links with other villages having ceased to exist.

Conclusion/Summary

21. The facility will enhance the current provision for the residents of Swavesey and surrounding villages. In addition, it will strengthen existing links between schools, clubs and individual users of the current facility. Furthermore, providing a true multi-sport environment will allow the development of a more extensive range of sporting activities and facilitate the development of sports for girls, boys and adults of all ability levels.
22. This project is part of the Council's approved Dual Use Sports Facility Strategy.

Recommendation

22. That Cabinet award a grant of £150,000 to Swavesey Village College.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: Application form and attached information.

Contact Officers: Jane Thompson, Cultural Services Manager 01954 713348 and Jane Lampshire, Sports Development Officer 01954 713349