

## **Item: 4**

**Community Development Fund Sub-committee: 22 February 2022.**

**Application Number 0/5/8/73.**

**Orkney Amateur Weight Lifting Club.**

**Partial Redevelopment of Stromness Squash Court Building.**

**Report by Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.**

### **1. Purpose of Report**

To consider an application from Orkney Amateur Weight Lifting Club for assistance towards partial redevelopment of the Stromness Squash Court building.

### **2. Recommendations**

The Sub-committee is invited to note:

#### **2.1.**

That Orkney Amateur Weight Lifting Club has applied for assistance from the Community Development Fund towards partial redevelopment to the Stromness Squash Court building into a suitable gym facility for the Club, at a total estimated eligible cost of £75,439.

#### **2.2.**

That external funding has been secured through various sources as follows:

- Sport Scotland Facilities Development Grant – £20,000.
- National Emergencies Trust – £8,328.
- Scottish Sea Farms Heart of Community Grant – £10,000.

#### **2.3.**

That Orkney Amateur Weight Lifting Club is contributing £3,772 of its own resources towards the project.

#### **2.4.**

That the Community Development Fund is the only remaining grant to be secured to enable the full funding package to be in place.

## **2.5.**

That messages of support have been received from the undernoted groups:

- British Weightlifting.
- Weightlifting Scotland.
- Orkney Swimming Club.
- Stromness Football Club.
- Stromness Academy.

## **2.6.**

A floor plan of the building is attached as Appendix 1 to this report, with the leased area intended for redevelopment shaded pink.

**It is recommended:**

## **2.7.**

That a grant amounting to 44.2% of total eligible costs, up to a maximum sum of £33,339, to be met from the Community Development Fund, be offered to Orkney Amateur Weight Lifting Club towards partial redevelopment of the Stromness Squash Court building.

## **2.8.**

That powers be delegated to the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration to authorise advance payment of the grant, if approved, on receipt of invoices, in order to assist cash flow requirements of Orkney Amateur Weight Lifting.

## **2.9.**

That powers be delegated to the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, in consultation with the Solicitor of the Council, to conclude an Agreement, on the Council's standard terms and conditions, with Orkney Amateur Weight Lifting Club in respect of the funding, detailed at paragraph 2.7 above.

## **3. Background**

### **3.1.**

Established in 2018, Orkney Amateur Weight Lifting Club's (the "Club") primary aim is to promote the long-term survival of the sport of Weightlifting and Paralympic Powerlifting in Orkney.

### **3.2.**

In July 2020, British Weight Lifting, the British Governing Body for Weight Lifting and para-powerlifting, confirmed that the Club had met the required criteria to become a fully licensed weightlifting club with affiliated status as a member of British Weight Lifting.

### **3.3.**

The Club previously hired space from a local independently owned gym, but this agreement came to an end in May 2021, thereby putting the future of the sports in serious jeopardy. The Club has highlighted that hiring space in an independently owned gym created difficulties including limitations on space availability which the Club states was a major barrier to encouraging new members to participate. Additionally, the independently owned gym was considered by the Club to be an inappropriate setting for the participation of younger athletes aged 8 to 12 years old.

### **3.4.**

In October 2021, the Club secured a 50-year lease for part of the Stromness Squash Court building from the Council, following approval of a Community Asset Transfer application, with the intention of establishing a permanent facility that is fit-for-purpose to continue growing the sport in Orkney.

### **3.5.**

Some members of the Club participate at national competitions and have represented, and are members of, Team Scotland and have broken numerous Scottish records. Some members may be selected for inclusion in a future Commonwealth Games squad. Training opportunities have been limited due to time restrictions for use of the hired space at the independently owned gym.

### **3.6.**

The application has highlighted that current gyms in Orkney do not have the specific equipment for either Para-Powerlifting or Weightlifting and fall short in terms of appropriate disabled access.

## **4. Project Proposal**

### **4.1.**

The Club wishes to carry out partial redevelopment works to the Stromness Squash Court building. A floor plan of the building is attached as Appendix 1 to this report, with the proposed redevelopment area shaded pink. The area includes the squash court, main entrance lobby, two showers and a toilet. The remainder of the building includes the football changing room, shower and toilet facilities and will continue to be available for existing use.

### **4.2.**

The redevelopment proposal includes the following:

- New concrete flooring to ensure flooring copes with activities being proposed by the Club.
- Oak lifting platforms and high-density rubber mats.
- A disability hoist and paralympic bench with stands.

- Weightlifting and powerlifting equipment including various benches, platforms, bars, plates, racks, and dumbbells.
- Signage and redecoration.

#### 4.3.

The Club's proposal intends to create a Paralympic Powerlifting and Weightlifting facility that will be able to service athletes with appropriate equipment readily, and permanently, available for the convenience of Club members. The Club has highlighted in their application that the aim will be to provide a quality coaching environment and encourage members of the community to take up the sport. Additional benefits will include muscle strengthening exercises delivered in a structured, safe and supervised environment from experienced and qualified coaches.

#### 4.4.

The project costs and proposed funding arrangements are outlined in the table below (inclusive of VAT as the Club is not VAT registered):

<b>Project Details.</b>	<b>Cost.</b>
Refurbishment of property (including new flooring and disabled access works).	£20,000.
Equipment.	£55,439.
<b>Total.</b>	<b>£75,439.</b>
<b>Project Financing.</b>	<b>Amount.</b>
Community Development Fund (44.2%).	£33,339.
Sportscotland Facilities Development Grant (26.5%).	£20,000.
Scottish Sea Farms Heart of Community Grant (13.3%).	£10,000.
National Emergencies Trust – Local Action Fund (11%).	£8,328.
Orkney Amateur Weight Lifting Club (5%).	£3,772.
<b>Total.</b>	<b>£75,439.</b>

#### 4.6.

The Community Development Fund is the only remaining grant to be secured to enable the full funding package to be in place.

#### 4.7.

Although Weightlifting and Para-Powerlifting do not feature in the Island Games programme for Orkney in 2025, the Club has highlighted the potential for the facility to become integral in the preparation of athletes for the Island Games, with a willingness to offer and facilitate athletes from other sports a space in which to engage with affordable Strength and Conditioning training.

## **5. Project Appraisal**

### **5.1.**

The project works will help the Club to realise its ambition of promoting the long-term survival of the sports of Weightlifting and Paralympic Powerlifting in Orkney. If successful in its bid to secure funding, the Club would benefit from having a permanent facility that is fit for purpose to promote the sport at recreational and competitive levels.

### **5.2.**

Messages of support have been received from the undernoted groups:

- British Weightlifting.
- Weightlifting Scotland.
- Orkney Amateur Swimming Club.
- Stromness Football Club.
- Stromness Academy.

### **5.3.**

The Community Development Fund and its predecessor, the Community Development Fund for the New Millennium, have supported a wide range of development projects involving sporting facilities, including:

- Enhancements to Orkney Golf Club.
- Enhancements to Stromness Golf Club.
- Purchase of kayaks and associated equipment for Kirkwall Kayak Club.
- Purchase of new boats and associated safety equipment for Orkney Sailing Club.

### **5.4.**

With regard the Club's application, the following is an assessment and evaluation against each of the approved assessment and evaluation criteria:

#### **5.4.1. Evidence of need**

- Following sale of the leased premises that had been used since the establishment of the Club, Orkney now has no facility developed for dedicated and supported weightlifting.
- The proposed project has received letters of support from various local groups, as well as support from two national bodies: British Weight Lifting and Weightlifting Scotland.

#### **5.4.2. Achievability**

- The Club is run by a volunteer committee of six people possessing a diverse range of skills and experience that gives confidence in the group's ability to successfully deliver the project and operate the facility upon project completion.

#### **5.4.3. Sustainability**

- Investing in the proposed redevelopment to the Stromness Squash Court building will help strengthen the long-term sustainability of the two sports in Orkney, giving the Club an ideal platform to continue growing the Club and increase the popularity of Weightlifting and Paralympic Powerlifting in the community.
- The Club has presented a detailed development plan which provides information regarding how the Club will operate upon completion of the project. This gives assurances that the overall business model has been well considered and the Club has a strong chance of being successful upon completion of the initial project.

#### **5.4.4. Serving the local public and having lasting benefits**

- The Club undertook a consultation exercise prior to the submission of the Community Asset Transfer application. Most consultation respondents stated that they would use the Club facilities. The consultation indicates a desire for the facility even from people not currently involved in the weightlifting club.
- The long-term lease that has been secured for the facility via a Community Asset Transfer provides great potential for the Club to provide lasting benefits to the community once established within the facility.

#### **5.4.5. Opportunities provided or upgraded**

- The proposals seek to enhance Stromness Squash Court, through partial redevelopment of the facility to secure the future of the Club and weightlifting in Orkney.
- Development of the facility into a space that is fit for purpose could mean an increase in social interaction through opportunities for all ages and abilities to access a growing sport in Orkney.

#### **5.4.6. Enriching quality of life**

- The Club business goals also aim to have enough cash reserves to present hardship funds in the future for vulnerable members of the community facing socio-economic hardship that would like to join the club.
- The Club has researched current and potential users, including specific mention of supporting young people, women and those with disabilities. The Club's proposals intend to lead to positive outcomes such as improving health, fitness and wellbeing.

#### **5.4.7. Value for money**

- Project costs have been carefully considered based on a detailed specification of club requirements as part of redevelopment plans for the premises. Best value has been sought through obtaining quotes from various suppliers and contractors.

#### **5.4.8. Partnership funding**

- The Club has secured £38,328 of external funding towards the project, following successful applications to Scottish Sea Farms, SportsScotland and the National Emergencies Trust – this amounts to 50.8% of project costs met by external funding sources.
- The Club has also agreed to provide 5% of project funding from its own resources to assist with the delivery of the project.

### **6. Links to Council Plan**

#### **6.1.**

The proposals in this report contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan of Quality of Life.

#### **6.2.**

The proposals in this report relate directly to work with partners to provide opportunities to make Orkney an attractive location for young people to live, work and study.

### **7. Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan**

The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priority of Community Wellbeing.

### **8. Financial Implications**

#### **8.1.**

In July 2016, a further £1,000,000 was allocated to the Community Development Fund, with £100,000 ring-fenced for Community Councils.

#### **8.2.**

At present there is sufficient budget within the 2016 Community Development Fund tranche to consider this project.

### **8.3.**

The option of accessing Community Development Fund grant as an advance payment, in order to assist cash flow, may also be required to ensure the project reaches a satisfactory conclusion. It is therefore recommended that powers be delegated to the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, in consultation with the Head of Finance, to authorise advance payment of the grant, if approved, on receipt of invoices if required in order to assist the Club with its cash flow requirements.

## **9. Legal Aspects**

### **9.1.**

There are no legal constraints to the recommendations in this report being implemented and the relevant powers are contained in section 20 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

### **9.2.**

If grant assistance is to be provided by the Council, a legally-binding agreement will require to be entered into between the Council and the recipient setting out the terms on which the funding is being provided.

## **10. Contact Officers**

Gareth Waterson, Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, extension 2521, Email [gareth.waterson@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:gareth.waterson@orkney.gov.uk).

Roddy Mackay, Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services, extension 2530, Email [rodny.mackay@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:rodny.mackay@orkney.gov.uk).

Jackie Thomson, Development and Regeneration Manager, extension 2507, Email [jackie.thomson@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:jackie.thomson@orkney.gov.uk).

Stuart Allison, Economic Development Manager, extension 2514, Email [stuart.allison@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:stuart.allison@orkney.gov.uk).

Jordan Low, Economic Development Officer, extension 2538, Email [jordan.low@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:jordan.low@orkney.gov.uk).

## **11. Appendix**

Appendix 1 – Floor Plan, Stromness Squash Court.



# Appendix 1 - Floor Plan, Stromness Squash Court.

