

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet Delegated Decisions

20 October 2023

TITLE:	Outdoor Sports Facilities - Capital Allocations
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Councillor Matt Swindlehurst - Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism
CONTACT OFFICER:	Gareth Knapper – Service Development Officer
WARDS INVOLVED:	Leek North

1. Reason for the Report

- 1.1 To seek approval to allocate funding towards a facility improvement project at Leek Tennis Club.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism approves the allocation of £11,572.00 from the Outdoor Sport Capital Fund towards the project at Leek Tennis Club, as detailed within the report.

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 Move More Staffordshire Moorlands is the new strategy for physical activity and movement. The strategy identifies key priorities and actions that the Council will take, supported by its partners, to enable residents to become more active. One of the 'Shared Priorities' of the strategy is "Accessible, safe and welcoming environments".
- 3.2 The Council has assigned £100,000 of capital funds in the MTFP, to be used to towards supporting the delivery of local projects. The fund has supported seven projects to date across the District, with £26,810.00 currently left in the budget.
- 3.3 During the last two years, officers have been supporting the development of a wide range of capital projects in Kingsley, Forsbrook, Knypersley, Waterhouses, Werrington, Biddulph Moor and Endon, which has included building relationships with Parish Councils, community organisations, sports

clubs, schools and national governing bodies of sport, in order to help them develop ideas and potential projects.

- 3.4 Leek Tennis Club (LTC) has been working hard over the last few years to not only improve the accessibility and attraction for new players and members to their club based on Park Road, Leek but also to ensure that they are being inclusive to the local community.
- 3.5 Recent improvements include the installation of an online booking function and ability to 'pay and play' at the club for anyone, without having to become a member. This included a new gate system which operates via a key pad and allows those with bookings to enter the court.
- 3.6 For many years the club has reached out to the wider community which they serve to offer not only concessions to membership but also importantly has taken the game to schools within Leek. They have attended Beresford Memorial First School, Churnet View Middle School and Westwood Middle School to engage with the pupils and look to get them interested in the game. They have even gone as far as to obtain funding for tennis kit (including clothing) for the children to use.
- 3.7 LTC have found that over the last twelve months or so more people have been attending the club who are aged over 55. This has been partially due to an arrangement with Leek U3A who now attend weekly, but also through new membership offers. The numbers of members aged over 55 has increased to 54 in recent times.
- 3.8 The Club is now looking at improving their facilities further by converting one of the hard-surface (macadam) court to an astro-synthetic surface. This all-weather surface offers a more enjoyable experience for the players whilst additionally providing a cushioned surface. This in turn reduces the impact on the players' joints and therefore sustains and encourages usage.
- 3.9 The conversion of one court will cost £20,376. This will include the astro surfacing, sand and labour to install. They are also looking to refurbish two existing astro courts by power cleaning and applying a new sand covering which will be a further £4,620. Lastly, they are looking to refurbish the two remaining hard-surfaced (macadam) courts with power cleaning and re-coating (painting) these courts, this will cost a further £6,576. The total for the work to all five courts is £31,572 (including VAT). The club are able to contribute £20,000 from their own development fund towards this project, and as such have requested funding from SMDC of £11,572 to match fund.

4. How this report links to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The provision of sports facilities and leisure opportunities, focused upon improving health, supports delivery of Aim 1 of the Council's Corporate Plan "To help create a safer and healthier environment for our communities to live and work".

5. Alternative Options

5.1 There are two options available to the Council:

5.1.1 Approve the allocation of £11,572 to the Leek Tennis Club project from the Outdoor Sports Capital Fund as detailed in the report **(RECOMMENDED)**.

5.1.2 Do not approve the allocation of funds which would mean that the Club would need to find the outstanding amount from another source if they wished to carry out the improvement to their facilities **(NOT RECOMMENDED)**.

6. Implications

6.1 Community Safety - (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

Creating improved sports facilities in local communities helps engage people, especially young people, in positive activities.

6.2 Workforce

No implications. The delivery of the capital project will be undertaken by Leek Tennis Club and appointed contractors.

6.3 Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment

An equalities impact assessment has been completed for this project.

6.4 Financial Considerations

Previous funding awards have been made from the allocated capital budget totalling £73,190 leaving £26,810 to be allocated to other projects.

Should approval be given to allocate the sum of £11,572 to this project as outlined, a remaining amount of £15,238 will be available to allocate to other projects.

6.5 Legal

There is power within the Council's constitution to allocate funds to community initiatives. The funds should be allocated in accordance with the Council's Finance Procedure Rules. A legal agreement between the Council and the recipient of the funds will help to ensure that the funds are used in accordance with the intentions set out in this report.

6.6 Climate Change

None

6.7 Consultation

None

6.8 Risk Assessment

Leek Tennis Club will be responsible for the management of the work to the courts purchased as outlined in the report, and therefore there will be no risk to the Council.

Mark Trillo

Executive Director (Governance & Commissioning)

**Web Links and
Background Papers**

<https://movemorestaffsmoorlands.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2023/07/PB-MM-Staffordshire-v10.pdf>

Contact details

Gareth Knapper

gareth.knapper@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk

7. Detail

- 7.1 Move More Staffordshire Moorlands is the new strategy for physical activity and movement. The strategy identifies key priorities and actions that the Council will take, supported by its partners, to enable residents to become more active. One of the 'Shared Priorities' of the strategy is "Accessible, safe and welcoming environments". The strategy also sets out how certain groups have a greater need in tackling inactivity – one of those groups is the older generation (over 55), with 33% inactive.
- 7.2 The Council has assigned £100,000 of capital funds in the MTFP, to be used to towards supporting the delivery of local projects. The fund has supported seven projects to date across the District, with £26,810.00 currently left in the budget.
- 7.3 During the last two years, officers have been supporting the development of a wide range of capital projects in Kingsley, Forsbrook, Knypersley, Waterhouses, Werrington, Biddulph Moor and Endon. This has included building relationships with Parish Councils, community organisations, sports clubs, schools and national governing bodies of sport, in order to help them develop ideas and potential projects.
- 7.4 Leek Tennis Club (LTC) has been working hard over the last few years to not only improve the accessibility and attraction for new players and members to

their club based on Park Road, Leek but also to ensure that they are being inclusive to the local community.

- 7.5 Recent improvements include the installation of an online booking function and ability to 'pay and play' at the club for anyone without having to become a member. This included a new electric gate system which operates via a key pad and allows those with bookings to enter the court. This option has dovetailed well with recent improvements to the two tennis courts at Brough Park. The courts at the park were improved in 2021 and now offer a fantastic facility which is free to the user. The courts are used on a first come first served basis. This offers a pathway from the fully accessible, free courts at Brough Park, through to the 'Pay and Play' option at LTC and finally the full membership.
- 7.6 For many years the Club has reached out to the wider community which they serve to offer not only concessions to membership but also importantly has taken the game to schools within Leek. They have attended Beresford Memorial First School, Churnet View Middle School and St. Edwards Middle School to engage with the pupils and look to get them interested in the game. They have even gone as far as to obtain funding for tennis kit (including clothing) for the children to use.
- 7.7 The club have been supported by external funding to enable them to employ a fully qualified coach who attends the schools and delivers coaching sessions to the children. They have in recent times transported the children to the club to get them playing on better courts and get them to feel comfortable and confident in visiting the club.
- 7.8 The Club plans to operate a free Saturday morning session in 2024 for 15 weeks which will be offered to up to 30 children from four schools (Beresford Memorial First School, Churnet View Middle School, Westwood First School and St. Edwards Middle School). This will give 120 pupils the opportunity to attend this programme and introduce them to the game and the club.
- 7.8 LTC have found that over the last twelve months or so more people have been attending the club who are aged over 55. This has been partially due to an arrangement with Leek U3A to attend weekly but also a new weekday only membership and a retired membership options.
- 7.9 The Club currently has a membership of 138 of which 54 are 55 or older. With 28 retired members (at least 5 being over 75), 10 weekday members (all over 65) and 16 other full time members who are between the age of 55 and 65 years old.
- 7.10 The Club is also looking to attract younger players via an LTA youth programme which has attracted over 40 players between the ages of 6 and 11.
- 7.9 The Club is now looking at improving their facilities further by converting one of the hard-surface (tarmac) courts to an astro-synthetic surface. This all-weather surface offers a more enjoyable experience for the players whilst

additionally providing a more cushioned surface. This in-turn decreases the impact on the players joints and therefore sustains and encourages usage. The older players prefer to play on the astro surface and as demand has increased significantly since the Covid restrictions eased the Club would like to improve the offer to the players.

- 7.10 The conversion of one court will cost £20,376. This will include the astro surfacing, sand and labour to install. They are also looking to refurbish two existing astro courts by power cleaning and applying a new sand covering which will be a further £4,620. Lastly, they are looking to refurbish the two remaining hard-surfaced (macadam) courts with power cleaning and re-coating (painting) these courts, this will cost a further £6,576. The total for the work to all five courts is £31,572 (including VAT). The Club is able to contribute £20,000 from their own development fund towards this project, and as such have requested funding from SMDC of £11,572 to match fund.