



JANUARY 1, 2021

PROJECT 4
LOBBYING AND SPONSORSHIP

DARREN CRAWLEY



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Political Lobbying Document

Mr. Darren Crawley,

Head Office,

Park Street,

Dundalk,

Co. Louth,

Ireland

Mr. Gilroy,

Department of Sport

Government,

Kildare Street,

Dublin 2.

9th January 2021

Re: Consequences of the decision in relation to future lack of funding on our organisation

‘Save Our Club’

Dear Mr. Gilroy,

Who am I and what I am writing to you for?

I am working for the Dundalk Sports Society which is the largest and most efficient social club within the community and town of Dundalk. We are responsible for the organisation and implementation of numerous sporting companies around the town in addition to funding other initiatives which take place within the region. I am writing this letter to you to request that the share for our organization

be increased for our current sports ground project within the town. This is following the recent reduction across all sports and this would not only benefit the wider community however it would benefit the entire country and body of sports within the state. The National Lottery Fund is critical to our own organisation and it is imperative that the funds are maintained due to our reliance on this. We are against the cutting of these funds and it is key to our development and progress that there is an increase in the funding. The reason we are lobbying is to highlight our numerous concerns which have arisen from the recent distribution of funds from the most recent grant allocation. The lack of funding which we have received is fatal to our ability to perform as a club and I am aware that this affects other similar clubs across the nation.

Implications of recent funding decision

We are not able to function as we have been used to without this funding and that is of detriment to the community. One thing we have been particularly prominent in is the promotion of youth activity within the town and we have links to Dundalk Football Club who, as you know, have been extremely successful in the recent past. This has provided great joy to the people of the town and has allowed the youth to latch onto the project which means that we are able to provide a support system for the club also. The lack of funding means we no longer are able to provide the support that is needed for the Society going forward and this will mean that either our sports club will have to reduce our operation capacity by at least 90% or cease operation altogether. That would be detrimental to the town and the surrounding area for a number of reasons as this would see a lot of the activity within the town no longer take place and we as a club have been a huge source of social interaction for the young people and it has been something which has allowed them to participate in sports and other activities from a young age. Due to the link with the football club we have been able to provide an outlet for them to attend the matches which has led to further social interaction across all aspects of society. A recent study has shown that crime has fallen to its lowest ever recorded level among the youth groups and this is in no small part down to the participation in our club. One thing which has

been excellent is the engagement across all levels of the community. That has in turn had the organisation selected for specific projects in cross border initiatives due to our proximity with Northern Ireland. Without the funding of the National Lottery this would not be able to take place and we have gained international acclaim promoting progressiveness across all facets of the community. It has allowed us to give employment and brought more life to the community and with a stroke of a pen that has now disappeared. The funding was crucial to provide facilities to this project. The impact of not having these facilities and functions would see the youth and those participating in running into numerous social problems. It would lead them to a different life which they have not had to live due to their involvement in sport and this would not be good for their mental or physical health. It could lead to an epidemic across all communities including ours.

Who does this decision affect?

This issue is not something which is exclusive to our own group and that has to be acknowledged at a higher level. The mismanagement of the funds is something which will affect clubs across the entire country of similar level to our own and that is of concern to those involved. The implications of this will be in the short term initially however in the long term they will be detrimental to sport and other activity within the community. It will take years for the current funding cut to be recovered from and this is due to the fact that our planned budget has been decimated by the recent decision. That will mean that we will not be able to provide a fully functioning club to the society and youth which will lead them to other vices and activities to keep their attention. This is a catastrophic development in the grand scheme and functionality of our society. Our organisation has been availing of 350k euro and while this may seem insignificant it is the entire heartbeat of us and something that we are now without. **Invalid source specified.**

What do we do and why do we require the funding?

What we do is we are involved in the promotion of participation in particular throughout the local community. We are mainly involved in soccer as it is the number one participation sport within not

only the community but the entire community and that is vitally important to us. We organise and promote participation in a full range of sports such as GAA, rugby, tennis, badminton, golf, athletics and cricket. We have been heavily involved in the organisation of these sports, co-ordinating local initiatives and fundraisers. We are also involved in the administration and youth reach projects which are hugely important to the local area. These have proven to be a major success due to the wide ranging and variety of sports in which we have been able to cover, we have been able to tailor it to everyone's needs and that is something which was a priority for us. That was one of our initial aims going into the project which has been proven successful. The absence of the grant which has allowed us to achieve our goals is disastrous to our planning and our ability to operate to our full potential. That is something which needs to be pointed out and this will unleash issues across the entire country, this is something which will cause issues that have never ever been seen in the current era and it is important that this is pointed out. This funding is our livelihood and is something that we cannot live without. The lack of funding will result in lack of resources for the sports teams and current coaches to practise. Some of the funding goes on renting and upkeep of the training pitches around the community, if this decision was to be upheld then this would leave these to run into ruin and eventually lie dormant. There would be no funding for coaching, no funding for travel, no funding for uniforms, no funding for any of the essential services which would provide a successful sports organisation.

What needs to be done to improve the situation?

What I would like to see happen is that a reversal in the decision which has seen the funding reduced and this should be brought to the relevant authorities at the soonest possible opportunity. I am able to provide all the documentation, evidence, figures and statistics in which you may need. I would also be extremely grateful if you would grant a meeting to myself and other relevant stakeholders to discuss this further and in infinite detail. The reversal of this decision would secure the long-term funding of our sports club and provide further sporting opportunities, social interaction and

employment in the town of Dundalk and the wider region. This funding is critical to the sports club and it's survival. We would be looking for the funding to be restored and we believe that this is within your remit and power to do so.

Recommendations for change

It is understandable that the Olympic and Paralympic games have taken up much of the funding and focus which are due to be held in our area in two years time. That is something which has been vitally important to our vision and the aspirations of the people who are participating in the youth sports and everything that we is within the community. This has been something which we have held centrally to the community sports and within the majority and certainly the Olympic sports which we support, this has been an important part of our plan. To have the Games in our region and for those participating within our sports to have these athletes and organisations descending here, for them to see first hand is a once in a lifetime opportunity and the reduction, cutting and absence of funding would be disastrous to the ambitions of those looking to emulate the athletes which they will see in the flesh in a number of years time.

One of the big issues is the fact that there has been gross mismanagement of the funds and this is preventing both our own and the national ambitions for sporting success on the world stage. It is understandable that there is a priority on the Olympic budget however there seems to have been little thought or planning into the distribution and proportion of the funds. This has led to major issues for my own group and numerous similar groups across the country. It would be recommended that the funding be redistributed and an independent body put in place to regulate the funding, where it goes and how it is distributed within the organisations. This will allow for a fairer and better issuing of the funds to prevent issues like this from arising in future years.

I look forward to working with you to secure the restoration of these funds and will be speaking to you in the coming weeks.

Yours faithfully,

Darren Crawley

Director Dundalk Sports and Social Club.

Copies: John Hartigan (CEO Dundalk Sports and Social Club), Director of the National Lottery, John Treacy Sport Ireland, Jim O'Brien Olympic Ireland, Morgan McGuire, Louth County Council Chair and Government Director for funding.

Press Kit

Press Release

Funding Crisis Hits Local Sporting Organisation

For Immediate Release

It was a busy weekend at the Dundalk Sporting Society as the organization hosted a vital fundraising day in its bid to survive as an entity. First up was the golf classic which was held at Greenore Golf Club in the afternoon which had an incredible turnout and attracted 72 participants. There was sponsorship from local businesses for each tee which raised a significant amount and more than expected before the main event of the evening where the society hosted a comedy evening which was headlined by global superstar Tommy Tiernan in a terrific event at Oriel Park.

The entire day raised 75,000 euro for the society which is crucial to the future of the organization due to the current crisis with the mismanagement of the National Lottery Fund. This situation has developed into a major issue for the organization as the absence of this funding has the potential to kill the organization and these kinds of fundraising efforts will become more regular if the organization and society is to survive in its current form or at all.

The Olympic and Paralympic teams have been allocated much of the funds which have now been diverted away from the local scene and there are continuing doubts about the viability of the society. A hugely popular organization, the Dundalk Sporting Society has generated interest and community engagement in the region. The basic needs of the organization are covered by this funding and in the short timeframe to replace the funding, there is a high probability that the society will cease to exist.

The club has been responsible for creating community engagement within the younger generation and has received praise for its impact in the community and its influence in particular on the youth of the region. The organization has been involved in the local sports scene and with a direct link with Dundalk Football Club it has proven to have numerous benefits within the community. There is a full

range of sports which are organized and promoted by the organization from GAA, rugby, tennis, badminton, golf, athletics and cricket. As there was an absence in the region of any formal organization of these sports and place for young people, in particular, to have an outlet that is how the association was formed and has thrived.

This issue is not something which is exclusive to our own group and that has to be acknowledged at a higher level. The mismanagement of the funds is something which will affect clubs across the entire country of similar level to our own and that is of concern to those involved. The implications of this will be in the short term initially however in the long term they will be detrimental to sport and other activity within the community. It will take years for the current funding cut to be recovered from and this is due to the fact that our planned budget has been decimated by the recent decision. Our organisation has been availing of 350k euro and while this may seem insignificant it is the entire heartbeat of us and something that we are now without.

Speaking about the loss of funding Public Relations Director Darren Crawley said:

“While it has been a worrying number of weeks for everyone involved in the society, the fundraising effort recently was very successful and we have been blown away by the support and finance that we have received. It was a huge success and this is something we wish we didn’t have to do however the crisis which has hit our organisation means we have had to take action. However hopefully there will be a resolution soon.”

Notes to the Editor

- Dundalk Sporting Society was founded in 2012. The society focuses on youth engagement and improving skills within the community. The society is responsible for a wide range of activities and organises the majority of the sports, activities and to promote and co-ordinate local initiatives and sports and also providing resources, training, equipment and any other necessary aspect to ensure a successful society and sporting community.
- DSS has become the leading sports society in the region and has a high level of youth participation across the community
- The society had been in receipt of large amounts of the National Lottery Fund and were fully functional with it. The society is dependent on this funding and the recent fundraising event was as a way to raise both finance and awareness of the situation that the society is in.

- The society has partnerships with a number of local clubs including the biggest football club in the country – Dundalk FC.
- Contact details - Darren Crawley, Email - Darren.crawley@dssc.com, Phone - 0878877654



Our sports society logo

Our impact

We have been collecting data almost since the beginning of this society and there has been some very interesting results. There has been a steady increase in engagement throughout the past number of years since we have formed and taken over the setup. This has led to the organization being run by the youth themselves and they have a direct input into the every day managing.

We have run many surveys throughout the last 12 months to gather information, data, facts and figures to see the success and the impact that the organization has had on the members and the wider community itself. We have uncovered the following:

- We now have 4,000 members. This has been a steady grow throughout the years of the project and the years since we have started. This represents 25% of the local youth population who have been willing to engage with the project.

- There has been a drop in anti-social behaviour in the intervening years since the formation of the society. There has been factually a 80% drop of anti-social and criminal behaviour in the youth cohort in the years since the inception of the organisation.

Improvement in social and emotional skills

- Huge increase in community engagement. Before the formation of the organisation, community engagement was quite low however through activities and sports this has increased by 400%. There has been a host of initiatives launched by the organisation which has allowed us to engage with the local community on a weekly and monthly basis. There have been regular community meetings, focus groups, surveys and also there have been community days where everyone meets each other with a number of the members of the organisation to outline and gain ideas. This has allowed both the organisation and people within the community to feel more welcome and also has allowed there to be a unified approach to tackle the issues and problems which are within the local area, this has allowed us to go to the local authorities for example with a proposal, which has been approved, for a new facility to be built for the organisation under the umbrella of the local community.
- Attendance levels are close to 70% across all age cohorts. There is a real sense of pride and contentment within the organisation at all levels and this is something we are incredibly proud of. This is also something which is the big indicator of the impact we have had on the local community. It has garnered local support and also it is something which we have done to keep people interested and ensure that there is something different on each week. The wide array of sports and activities we provide is something which contributes clearly to this.
- Participation levels have increased hugely over the years. We now have a core participant group who

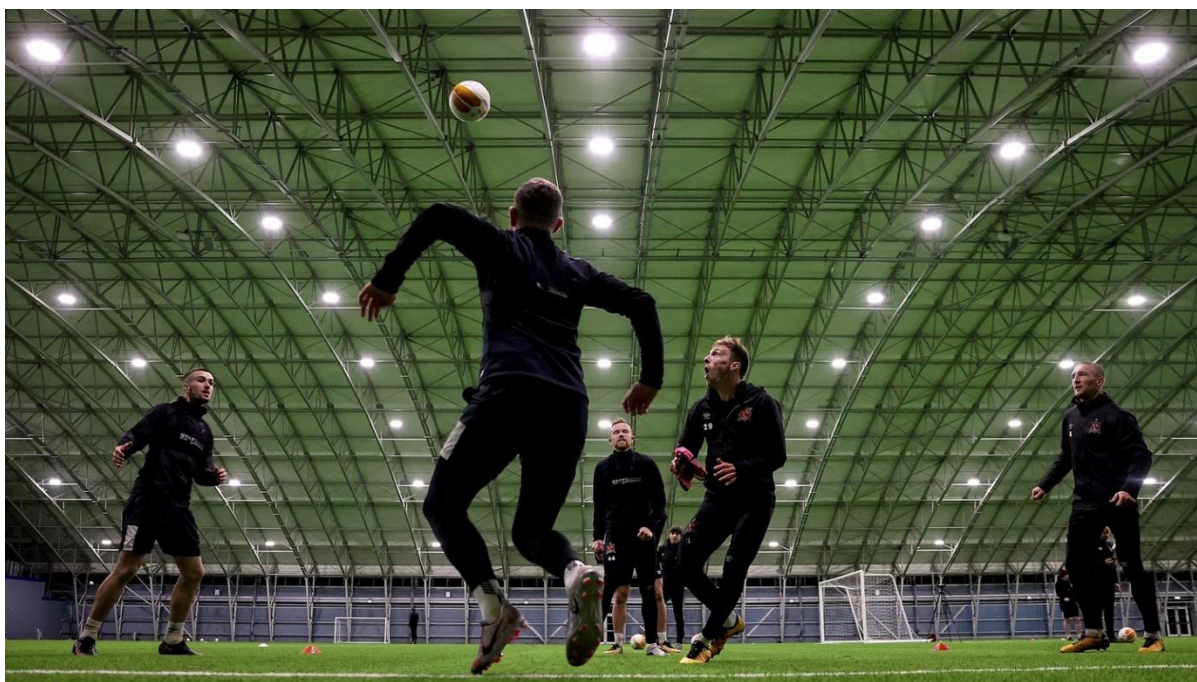
- Ages between 8-18 highest attended cohort. This is the one which have engaged and attend almost every single training, event and community activity which is on. This has been the biggest uptake within the organisation and that has contributed to the level of togetherness which has engulfed the entire community which in turn has encouraged other members and cohorts to build and participate much more also.
- A build in confidence within the community. There has been a noticeable increase in the confidence of the younger cohort and this has been seen through their engagement and willingness to do their own work, engage in the other groups and help with the local community in any job, work or help that is required.
- Development of skills has been a big factor of the organisation and the survey outlined that there has been a huge development in the communication, organisation, interpersonal, leadership and productivity skills in almost all of the members that we have in the organisation. This has been a big part of the impact of the organisation and this is a big contributor to the society.
- They have become active agents in their own lives. This is one of the key outcomes of the entire organisation and the community itself in the sense that those involved have been able to display their own independent thinking, they have used their own skills to solve problems, to discuss, create methods and to organise their own events. This has been evident in the fact that they now take responsibility and control for certain segments of the organisation. This has also led to a proactive approach in the members taking on responsibility with other local sports clubs within the community.
- Society has created social values. This is something which has been a shared journey since the beginning of the organisation. This is an important facet of our organisations and we have intended to create social values which help every member of the community and every member within the organisation. The values have been decided on and overwhelmingly accepted by everyone which are fairness, respect, responsibility, hard work and education. These are the values which we have

sought to instil in all of our members and have those follow within the community and this is a big part of our organisation.

- Empowers local communities to be part of the decision making. This has been encouraged from the very first day. This is something which has been built through continued communication with local authorities and the local sports clubs. For example, the decision to get involved and lend the skills to the local sports club was one which was taken by the members in that cohort themselves which is admirable and one of the big impacts of the organisation growing. This is something which we did not set out to do however has become one of the big influences in the organisation and something we will continue to work on.

- Built social cohesion. This is the main factor which has come across in all our discussions and ideas with those within the community and the members. There has been a renewed sense of social cohesion and belonging, in particular among the younger members of the group. This is something which they felt has been lacking in the past and now there is a real togetherness within the community, a proper family feel and there are shared community values. The impact of this has been so great that a number of the older members of the organisation have commented that they wish this had been a factor when they were of that age and has encouraged them to get more involved now also than they would have intended to otherwise.

There has been a big impact by the organisation in the local community and this has been most widely seen within the youth of the society. We are exceptionally proud of our impact and what we have done within the community. Building community engagement and participation has been the main aim of ours. With these results above we have certainly done that however we have no intention of stopping here, it is the organisation's intention to grow and expand further, there is always room for improvement and we shall endeavour to do so at every given opportunity.



Our senior football team training

History of the organization

Dundalk Sporting Society is the biggest sporting society in the County Louth and North Eastern region. The society was founded in 2012 by current Public Relations Director Darren Crawley after he noticed that there was no such society within Dundalk and the surrounding area. The aim of the society was to provide an outlet for both the youth and the adults in the community to exercise and learn new skills. Over time this has grown to be a society which provides support, entertainment and the environment for people to play sports, participate in all activities and gain competition. facilitate, encourage, coach and help in a sporting context. We also provide a coaching opportunity for those in the older, adult age groups should they wish to participate. We provide a social output for all age groups to participate and engage with others within the community. The aim is for us to be a core pillar of the community and reach out to all participants across all ages. That has been the aim over the past decade and it is something which we have hoped to advance and expand in the next stage of our development.

The society has been promoting and providing support for all sports clubs within the region. This has included organising, coordinating local initiatives and events, providing coaching and support for all within the community. This has been an imperative resource within the region and that has allowed us to play a part in the recent and unprecedented success of individuals across all aspects of sports in the past number of years. It has been the pride of our organisation that we have contributed to the local community and the success of athletes, individuals and have seen sports grow from almost nothing to major outlets within the region. This has included supplying and developing Olympic & Paralympic athletes, professional footballers to national and international level, rugby players to national and international level, professional golfers and a host of other individuals to other sporting codes.

The organisation has succeeded in ensuring that there has been an increase in engagement with the local population and community members. We have recruited and employed highly skilled coaches who instil discipline, hard work and confidence into each member in their chosen sport and activity. We provide a structure and environment for these people to thrive no matter their intention and ability. One of the major aims has become to ensure that these individuals gain life and social skills to use in their every day being. The growth of our organisation has allowed us to employ more people to professionalise the operation as well as purchasing our own base which allows us to accommodate all sports teams and individuals who should need it with all facilities such as medical, pitches and conference rooms within.

There has been a link with the local football club – Dundalk Football Club – who have been the biggest and most successful in the country in the past decade with five league titles and two European group stage competition qualification. One of the major supporters and patron of the organization is current Republic of Ireland international manager Stephen Kenny.

This support has given us an increased status and we have benefitted from the link with the football club as the club is the most important, best supported and heartbeat of the town.



A general view of the sports equipment used in the society

Activities

There are a number of activities and projects in which the organization have been responsible for. These are the pride of the organization and the staples of the society. These are huge for our community engagement and these are the ones which stand out in our calendar and they are the big focus for a number of people and a number of people. These are within sport and outside it also. These are the pillars of our community engagement and social values. They are as follows:

Sports Weekend

One thing which has been a constant feature of our years is a major sports weekender. In fact it began as a sports day however due to the popularity and the increasing participation it has grown into a Friday-Sunday event. This is a major event which has become the staple of our organization where every single member and staff person gets involved in all of the events in which they are

capable of competing and willing to compete in also. This has been a festival really across a weekend in June which incorporates everything from the sports that we compete in and the values we have instilled in the individuals.

Community Newsletter

While we do have two excellent local newspapers who do outstanding work however one of our big projects has been the introduction of the community newsletter. There are community sections in the local newspapers however they don't have the space or the time to be able to give it the publicity it should get so we have managed to create our own personalised newsletter. This is released once a month. We have partnered with a local printer Anglo and they help us out with costs and have been outstanding to us. In the newsletter we report on the latest happenings in the organisations, local results, getting to know sections, messages from the management, community letters, upcoming events, competitions performances, new initiatives, awards which have been one, performances of our past stars on the international stage, recent pictures and so much more. This is a collective effort across the organisation and there are numerous contributions from every member of the organisation. It doesn't just fall on one person or side of the organisation and this has been an excellent initiative which has invited collaboration and engagement throughout the organisation. As well as physical newsletters, we have managed to have an online newsletter which has allowed us to reach new audiences and gain more readership.



A general view of one of our running facilities

Healthy eating/Healthy Lifestyle drive

Our partner Fyffes have generously and absolutely brilliantly supported us throughout all of our initiatives and one of the major events which we have been responsible for is the healthy eating programme which has gained national acclaim and awards through our work. This is an initiative where we have encouraged healthy eating, healthy behaviour and healthy attitudes towards exercise and activity. There are guidelines linked with fun tasks for people to do to achieve their goals and change their lifestyle. The uptake has been phenomenal and there have been sponsored days by Fyffes to encourage engagement and people to contribute. This has been something which is interlinked with the exercise campaign and we have been a major promoter of the 'Fyffes Fit Squad' which combines both healthy eating and healthy lifestyle to ensure that those in the community and encourage a change in lifestyle.

Charity Fun Run

Every summer we have one of our most popular events which takes place usually in the middle of August where we ask both the local community and our members to dress up and do the charity run

at Oriel Park in Dundalk. That is something which again has taken off more than we anticipated and the money raised goes to a charity which has been decided upon at the beginning of the year.

Nursing Home visits

This is a weekly thing. There are members rostered to go visit nursing homes and interact with those staying there. It is something which our Chief Executive used to do when he was in school and he felt that this was a good idea and something which could be implemented by the members. The roster is usually around the fun day which happens on Wednesday afternoons. Those there tend to play cards, bake and have chats to get to know them. This is one of our big community engagement projects. This has been something which has been important to our progression and our pillar of engagement.

Helping the homeless

The helping the homeless initiative is something which is important and this is a big thing to branch out and use our platform for the good of the community. That is what is at the heart of all our projects and none more so than helping the homeless. Obviously homelessness is a major issue in the country at the moment and to help those who are homeless it is important to us that we contribute to that. It is important that we can do what we can and what we have been able to and every year, three times a year we as an organisation do our best to help the homeless. That is spending weeks in the shelters, raising funds, donating clothes/food and also doing the sleep out to help those who are homeless. That is the thing which we have aimed for and we always do our best to help. This is something which we have managed to make our own and this project is one of our best ones.



Local facility Oriel Park which we are tenants

Tidy Towns Partnership

We have linked with the Tidy Towns which have been fantastic and that is something which we have worked closely a lot. With the Tidy Towns, we have an agreement that twice a month we volunteer in the clean up around the town and ensure that the town is kept clean. We also volunteer on a regular basis to help those in the planning committee of the Tidy Towns for where they go and what they like to do, what direction and help in everything which is required involved in the Tidy Towns.

Culture celebration

As there are many diverse cultures in Dundalk and Ireland as a whole, at the beginning of each year we host a culture celebration weekend. This is where we celebrate their food, lifestyle, way of living, their culture and look to delve into their lives as to how they live and show that everyone is welcome. This goes from the African community to the Muslim community to the Eastern European and everyone else. There are different segments and we use our sporting backgrounds to ensure there is a connection, the aim is to create a connection between these cultures and the town and that is something which we have been very successful with.



An example of the community decoration around Dundalk

Community art decoration

As some of you may have noticed there has been a new abundance of signs and slogans and designs which have popped up around the town. The themes of these have been phrases which have been famous around the town. 'Right am away', 'Well Our', 'CMon The Town'. These are just a few of them and they are ones which hold a lot of affection within the town. Using our creative instincts and talented members, we got permission from the local authority to create these iconic phrases in places around the town. We have used the unbelievable talents of our members and those within the society and this is where we have really come to the fore. They have gained national and local acclaim and are something which we are immensely proud of. These are things which we have come to life and took off more than we imagined, I have attached these graphics for your own viewing also.



An example of the community decoration in the town

Community fundraising

This is something which has been ongoing and we are one of the biggest fundraisers in the region which has been important to us. We partner with as many people as possible due to our community engagement and our social values. That has allowed us to gain support and praise for our actions and how we behave in public. This has helped us when it comes to fundraising and there are numerous initiatives which we have been approached for – Irish Cancer Society, Guide Dogs for the Blind, school fundraising etc. and these are the kinds of organisations which we are delighted to help. We have taken over the organisation and running of these fundraisers in an effort to ensure that the communities raise the funds that they both deserve and also need.

Providing a sports pack for each newborn in the town

This has been an ongoing initiative and it was started a number of years ago. As soon as there is a newborn within the community, we send them a welcome pack which includes a sporting society jersey which will bond them to the society from the day they are born, this will allow them to have a full connection to the club and become a member from day one.

Grow inclusion – return to sport

This is a focus with a lot of the older generation and those who have fallen out of sport. This is one which we run early every year to welcome people back to sport at whatever level and whatever interest that they have. Every February we hold open nights to recruit and focus on the social and physical aspect of the sport to bring the people back in. We are all about inclusion and the social aspect of the sport for people. This has proven to be exceptionally popular and we now have 33% of our members in that cohort.



An example of the community artwork in town.

Focus on developing niche sports in the town

This has been an ongoing project and one which is thoroughly enjoyable. Skateboarding, badminton, tennis, table tennis, snooker and golf are mainly the ones which we have tried to bring in and this is something we have fostered a lot of the time. This is what we have encouraged which will allow

other sports to breathe and it will allow them to develop. A lot of members take up the niche sports and have supported them brilliantly.

Biographies

Chairman

Jim Hartigan has been chairman of the society since January of 2021 after his departure from the League of Ireland committee with an extensive and impressive record in operations to bring with him. A member of the council for over 25 years and a league of Ireland footballer in his time, lining out with Monaghan United and hometown Dundalk Football Club, he also coached and held many different positions at the club including general manager, security officer and development lead. That led to a role with the league until the end of his term at the beginning of the year.

Director of Finance

With a history in Finance, Elaine Shields joined from Dundalk Rugby Club as part of the support network between the club and the society. Before that Elaine was finance director of Fyffes and has extensive support and contacts in the financial sector.

Director of External Affairs and Public Relations

A graduate of DCU with a degree in English and History, Darren Crawley is the founder of the organisation and has been director of External Affairs and Public Relations since 2019. This was after a spell as a PR executive with betting firm BoyleSports combining this with his role as Press Officer of Dundalk Football Club where he won five press officer of the year awards. As Press Officer of the football club, Crawley was responsible for transforming and modernising the club's media and communications operation to make it the standard bearer not only in Ireland but across the United Kingdom. Crawley was a key member of the success in recent years of the club where he worked closely alongside manager's Stephen Kenny, Vinny Perth and Filippo Giovagnoli as the club dominated Irish league with two Europa League group stage appearances also. This led to attention

and a call to the Society where he has looked to implement his style from the football club to the organisation.

Director of Sport and Chief Advisor

The most global of the company is John Spencer. A football agent by trade, Spencer has turned his attention to football and organisation investment. Spencer has a high level of contacts and expertise in the business world. A self-made millionaire, Spencer divides his time between New York and London mostly and is present in Dundalk regularly, also joined the society in conjunction with the partnership with the local football club and their principal owners Peak6, with links in the football industry and the financial sector, he acts as advisor to all within the organisation and gives advice to the youth within the community to enhance their skillset and their ideas on how to advance in life.

Testimonials

“Dundalk Sporting Society is a fantastic organisation. They have been a pillar of the community for as long as I have been in the town. The organisation couldn’t have been more welcoming and helpful during my time as manager of Dundalk Football Club and they have continued that support in my further career. I am delighted to be associated with the organisation.” – Stephen Kenny, Republic of Ireland international manager.

“Dundalk Sporting Society is a vitally important and worthwhile venture. They have been outstanding in their youth and community work which has gained accolades and acclaim nationwide. We are proud to have the society associated with Dundalk and have been a superb asset to the people and town itself. – Sean O’Connor, Dundalk FC Chairman.

“Dundalk Sporting Society have been a major force in combatting local crime and activity in the young people of the area. The organisation have provided an outlet and a platform for the younger generation to stay active, to exercise and to grow their own skillset as well as help with the local

community. They are central to projects throughout the town and they have been fantastic in their support to the local authorities". – Joan Martin, Louth County Council

Quotes

Chief Executive

"This funding is extremely important to our organisation. You can see through the figures and the research the impact that this organisation has had, not only in the Dundalk town area but also in the North East region. We have members from all over the region and even across the border into the hinterland of Newry. It is important that we have this funding restored and we need to have something as a replacement to ensure the successful running of the society. We are calling on those in power to return the funding to us and allow us to function properly.

Financial director

"The loss of funding is devastating to us as a group and as a society. We just about made ends meet with that funding and that loss will mean a severe cut back on our own resources and that will result in job losses, loss of services and inevitably a return to crime for a number of those in the society. This is crisis mode and for the good of the region it is vital that the funding is restored.

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Corporate Sponsorship Proposal

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Introduction

I am the Chief Executive of Dundalk Sports Society. We are the largest sports club in the area and provide support, opportunity and organisation of all sports within the community. This has facilitated the younger generation in the area to participate and improve their sporting skills across a number of activities. We facilitate, encourage, coach and help in a sporting context. We also provide a coaching opportunity for those in the older, adult age groups should they wish to participate. We provide a social output for all age groups to participate and engage with others within the

community. The aim is for us to be a core pillar of the community and reach out to all participants across all ages.

I am writing to you to submit a proposal for sponsorship from Fyffes. The main reason that we are reaching out is because of the recent crisis with the National Lottery Funding which has been the primary source of finance of the society. This has come as a major blow to the society and as the main sporting society in the locality, we provide the main opportunity for the youth of today to realise their young sporting dreams. The reduction in funding will have a detrimental effect on the society which will more than likely result in the reduction of the operation. This is unless we are able to secure further funding to substitute the shortfall. It would be more of a business partnership in fact and this is something which could remain in the local community. Fyffes are one of the leading global importer of fruit and based locally in Dundalk. Everyone is aware and are fully appreciative of the impact that the company have had in the local community. The partnership itself would increase Fyffes global reach, show their commitment to local projects and maintain the good community relations which have been accrued over many years from involvement in initiatives in the region. They are also appreciative of the global appeal of the company. I do believe that I can present an interesting and worthwhile project to you for which you would be interested in entering.

Background information

As you are aware, Fyffes and the McCann family have a long history of interest in sport and in particular football in the town. The long term sponsorship of Dundalk Football Club is one which stands out and which has been spoken of warmly by everyone involved with the club and throughout the town. This sponsorship ended at the end of the 2020 season and this is an enquiry as to whether there is an interest in re-entering the sports portfolio and help with local projects. This is a business partnership which can prove to be successful with mutual benefits. The sponsorship had sat along side with all of the cultural, economic and business environments in which the company have operated. For example, as a fruit importer, one of the most noticeable aspects of the

sponsorship was the promotion of the healthy eating and lifestyle associated with fruit. This allowed distribution of fruit in particular among the younger generations. In turn this has allowed an advantage on other fruit importers in the Irish market as this allows the company direct contact with their target market and pushes the Fyffes brand throughout the household in the country. It allows the business targets to be met and this is something across all of Fyffes commitments which has been successful. The Fyffes Fit Squad is a perfect example of this and that was continued through the sponsorship of the football club. We would be looking to ensure a Return on Investment such as Fyffes have had with other community ventures as they have had with Dundalk FC, the Fyffes Fit Squad, the Fyffes football camps among others which have returned quite a favourable ROI for the company. It has allowed other businesses see how committed the corporation are to the community and attracted further custom, business and other interest from global markets including the Asian, American and Scandinavian. Fyffes is also a champion of community relations with support for a number of local projects including Temple Street Children's Hospital. There is also the support of the environments and countries where Fyffes operates such as in Central and South America which is critical to the brand.

Objectives

There are a number of objectives for this partnership which I would like to detail now. These are medium to longer term objectives in which will be the goals of the organisation going forward. These have been developed using SMART analysis technique.

To increase participation

This is the overall aim of the club, this is to increase participation across all levels, all sports, all age and all sectors of the community. This would be to entice new members to participate across newly created age groups and in some cases sports which we have not ventured into yet.

Maintain a high level of performance in competitions and events

The club have been very successful in a variety of competitions and members have regularly represented the club in winning many tournaments, medals and other accolades in various competitions. Excellence in sport and competitiveness is not a key aspect of the social club, participation is, these accolades and the high performance environment in which we have cultivated here is something which we aim to maintain in the coming years.

Improve the club infrastructure

This falls into the longer term aims but the hope is that the club will develop infrastructure to become more functional. This includes improving the facilities that we have at our disposal such as changing rooms, meeting facilities and the training grounds themselves. We also intend to put in systems for accreditation, telecommunication networks, participation times allocation, an upgraded membership system, coaching structures, increase our social media/media presence and electric systems This is a long term plan which we would be keen to use Fyffes' expertise and this would be a major part of the partnership.

Increase community engagement

This is one of the major objectives if truth be told. We wish to develop our community engagement. At present we are currently embedded in the community however we would love to engage further with the community in which we are inhabiting and this would be in the form of essentially rebranding and reinventing ourselves. This would be using new projects, opportunities and the introduction of new sports, new teams and new age groups for those in the community to participate in. This would tie in with new participants also and we have been considering adding a gaming section to the club to attract a different strand of people from the community, the use of video content to show the good work being done by the club and to encourage more voices, coaches and any volunteer who wishes to help in any way that they can. There is also the consideration of an

education programme participants to gain knowledge on a range of subjects which we hope to develop.

Focus on developing sports individually

This is an ongoing goal which can be achieved in its own time however the plan is always to develop each sport and activity which we have in the club. This is to ensure that we are providing the environment for our participants to not only enjoy their chosen sport/activity however it is to help those succeed and be competitive in the knowledge that they have the most modern and best coaching techniques available to them. This would also upskill each participant as to how they can take these skills to their own lives or transfer to a new sport.

Contract details

We are proposing a contract that would suit both parties with a number of clauses and different details which can be discussed in detail at any point.

- Two year deal, with the option of extension.
- €150k per annum.
- Bonus of €50k per annum based on agreed targets.
- Fyffes have naming rights on the Sports and Social Club and future events.
- Fyffes have their logo on all club gear.
- Fyffes have their logo on all promotional activity and training venues.
- Fyffes take control of marketing in the club
- Review of partnership after 12 months.

We have two major events in the year which are the 'Dundalk Sports and Social Club Sports Summer' and the 'Winter Games'. These are events which have taken the form of Olympic Style and they have proven particularly popular over the past number of years. These are our flagship events. This would be something which we would be delighted if Fyffes were to take the naming of both and this is included in the deal.

Proposed action plan

We have the following plan in development:

First we have drawn up a budget for marketing which will come to around 10k. This includes the media advertisements which will come in the form of local radio, local newspapers and social media campaigns. There will be the naming of Fyffes on all club gear and all associated products. – This will begin immediately and fall upon both parties to facilitate.

There will be a press event which will be held at the club with members from both the club and Fyffes present. Photographers, videographers and local/national press will be invited to find out details of the partnership. – This will be next week and all details, including the date and time, will be agreed by both parties.

There will be a brochure published on the club and with new Fyffes branding where it lists the benefits of the Fyffes sponsorship and the activities of the club within the community. This will also see the new membership structure listed and a reboot of the current membership scheme – This will be undertaken by the club and available following the press event next week.

The plan is then go on an aggressive joint social media and media campaign to promote the new venture across as many outlets as possible to get the reach as far as we possibly can. – This is a joint project and will begin immediately after agreement.

Evaluation strategy

After 6 months there will be a review of the strategy with monthly reports in between. After 12 we will sit down and review the partnership as a whole.

The key performance areas will be the response we get within the community, the finance which we generate from the marketing and our new members.

After 6 months, there will be a review on the following:

- New signups to the club
- Reach within the media
- Support from the local community by way of membership fees
- Participation on training nights

- Fyffes media outreach
- The finance generated by the new marketing strategy.
- 3 monthly questionnaires and surveys within the community

Should we find that there has been a notable shift and improvement in our support and reach, then we will continue to follow the plan set in place. If there are areas that we feel can be improved within the strategy, these will be modified and implemented.

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