

DEPUTATION MEETING REPORT

Date & Time: Wednesday 30th of April 2025 @ 2.30pm

Deputation Group: Tallaght Rugby Club

Deputation Group attendees: Noel Gavin, Darren McElligott, Ken McGovern, Tom Hall, Gillian Maher, Barry Naughton.

Elected Members: Cllr Mick Duff (Chair), Cllr William Carey, Cllr Paddy Cosgrove, Cllr Roisin Mannion, Cllr David McManus, Cllr Adam Smyth, Cllr Jess Spear, Cllr Niamh Whelan,

Council Officials: Sharon Conroy (SEO, Environment Dept), Brendan Redmond (Senior Executive Parks and Landscape Officer), Suzanne Furlong (Senior Parks Superintendent), Catherine White (SSO, Community Dept), Alison Somerville (SO, Community Dept), Fionnuala Keane (AO, Community Dept).

Cllr Mick Duff presided

Items Discussed

Item 1 – Request permission to allow Tallaght RFC to develop Pitch 100, Firhouse.

Suzanne Furlong, Brendan Redmond and Sharon Conroy replied to the group's query.

Commitment given:

S Furlong noted that Sports Capital Grants are available to SDCC to apply for as owners of the pitch. There has been good success with recent applications, and they will be focusing on Pitch improvements in the next round of applications. Pitch 100 could be included in this if agreed.

In terms of short-term maintenance, B Redmond agreed to meet out on site and to look at drainage and the overall wear and tear of the pitch/drainage issues

S Conroy advised that when and if the Pitch 100 is under refurbishment works, the council would do their best to work with the club to provide alternative space for the period in question with the potential for preferred time slots in some astro pitches for the duration of the works or have a pitch share with another club.

Item 2 – The club has been in the area 20+ years and still has nowhere to call home, we have 250 members and train out of shipping containers. We have the people, funds and backing to grow but we need a place to call home.

Sharon Conroy and Suzanne Furlong replied to the groups query:

Commitment given:

The Pavilion program is something that the Council is working on in that regard and designed to meet the needs of many clubs county wide. There is a €10 million capital investment this year towards this program. They will be placed in the larger parks at the moment at the car park location to facilitate as many pitches as they can. The car parks are the central location for this. It is hoped, when the primary positions are filled, the council would be able to review and see what is necessary for a secondary set of facilities.

Item 3 – There is a water meter located at the fence and with the shops close by power and water shouldn't be a major job. This alone would make a massive difference to the club, with proper facilities in place it would allow us to host more school blitz, grow our playing numbers and club as a whole.

Sharon Conroy replied to the groups query:

Commitment given: At present, there are no plans to provide electricity or other utilities to containers. Instead, the focus is on the Pavilion Programme, which marks the beginning of a more structured approach to addressing facility needs across the county.

This issue is one that affects many clubs, and both the Council and the Councillors have taken it seriously. The development and support for the Pavilion Programme, backed by a significant €10 million investment is a commendable step forward. As Suzanne mentioned, this is a strong foundation, and we hope to build upon it in the coming years to continue supporting clubs where the need is greatest.

While immediate solutions may not be feasible, this initiative is designed to bring long-term benefits. Regarding containers, the current policy does not allow clubs to install new ones. However, if an existing container is in poor condition or requires replacement, the council is open to reviewing those cases on an individual basis.

Item 4 – Request to allow a long-term lease on pitch 100, this way we could apply for capital grants for club developments. There are clubs in the area receiving massive grants 100k plus / 400k grants which we can't apply for as we don't have a long-term lease.

Sharon Conroy and Suzanne Furlong replied to the groups query.

Commitment given:

Regarding the broader issue of the annual agreement and licensing process: the current policy is for one-year leases, which is applied across more than 65 clubs county-wide.

The managers confirmed they are committed to working with Tallaght Rugby Club to determine what can be provided to help them make the best use of the available resources. Specifically, with regard to your current allocation of two pitches for the 2024/25 season.

S Conroy noted that, at present, there are no plans to approve additional facilities or services beyond the current allocation/lease agreement. The Pavilion Programme remains a key focus, with the initial 10 sites selected based on their potential to serve multiple clubs and maximise community impact. Offering alternative or interim solutions outside of this strategy could create unrealistic expectations among the 65 clubs currently being supported. The manager highlighted that she has recently met with clubs to communicate the need for patience until sustainable, long-term solutions can be delivered. She acknowledged the response may be disappointing but emphasised the importance of transparency. The Council is committed to providing what is feasible and responsible to the wider community. In the meantime, the Dodder Valley Pavilion remains available, offering access to facilities, storage, and continued use of the pitch.

The meeting ended as there was no other business.