

CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the Leisure Park Board held, in committee, in the Board Room at Dundonald International Ice Bowl on Monday 21 February 2005 at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor J White (In the Chair)

COUNCILLORS: Ms J Bunting (until 7.30 p.m.)
M Copeland
D Drysdale (from 6.20 p.m.)

J Norris
Mrs G Rice

IN ATTENDANCE: Marketing & PR Manager, Business Manager,
Operations Manager and Assistant Members'
Services Officer.

APOLOGIES: Apologies were received from Aldermen P D
Robinson and Mrs I Robinson.

LPB/2005/19 : MINUTES OF LEISURE PARK BOARD MEETING DATED 17 JANUARY 2005

RESOLVED: - Members authorised that the Minutes of the Leisure Park Board meeting held on 17 January 2005 be accepted as a true and accurate record.

FINANCE

LPB/2005/20 : FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The Business Manager outlined the details in respect of the above. He reported that business had continued to flourish during February, and he was hopeful that this would continue in March 2005, especially with the Easter spend.

Management remained optimistic that the budgeted deficit could be achieved by the end of the financial year.

Noted.

OPERATIONS REPORT

LPB/2005/21 : SECURITY

The Operations Manager advised that, as agreed, a meeting had been convened with Group 4 Security, which was attended by Alderman P. Robinson, Councillor J. White, the Business Manager and Operations Manager. The Manager stated that proposals were offered by Group 4 to significantly improve the performance of the Intruder Alarm System and the operation of the remotely monitored CCTV system.

The additional works, estimated at approximately £3,500, would be completed at Group 4's expense in order to maintain the reputation of Group 4 and to sustain an amenable relationship with the Council. Management would continue to monitor Group 4's performance on a regular basis.

Members welcomed these improvements.

The Operations Manager confirmed that the recruitment of additional security staff was ongoing and referred Members to a draft job description.

Councillor Mrs Rice advised Members that she had received information in respect of a conference addressing crime in business being held in Rotherham. She undertook to forward the details of this conference to the Operations Manager.

RESOLVED: - Members agreed that the proposals offered by Group 4 to significantly improve the performance of the Intruder Alarm System and the operation of the remotely monitored CCTV system be implemented.

LPB/2005/22 : CAR PARKING

The Operations Manager advised that the recent sale of land for the development of Adventure Golf had resulted in a substantial loss of car parking spaces on the abandoned road.

The Officer advised that a temporary one-way traffic system had been implemented over the previous weekend, which had been extremely busy. She reported that this had worked quite well, with staff helping to control the traffic.

The Officer stated that she had concerns that restricted parking would create problems over the forthcoming Easter period, which Officers anticipated would be a busy period. As a temporary measure it was proposed by Officers that the

underpass road could be marked for additional car parking spaces with a one-way traffic system being implemented.

Members also discussed the possibility of providing additional car parking on land to the side of the building, and asked Officers to obtain approximate costings to hardcore this area.

It was therefore

RESOLVED:- Members agreed

- (a) that, as a temporary solution to the current parking shortage, the underpass road at the facility should be marked for parking spaces with a one-way traffic system being implemented to control traffic during weekends and peak times;
- (b) that Officers obtain several costings in respect of hardcoring an area of land to the side of the facility to provide additional car parking, and table these at a future meeting of the Board for Members' consideration.

LPB/2005/23 : STAFFING

The Operations Manager advised that it was planned to run a second Jobs Fair in March/April 2005, and it was anticipated that this would address staff shortages. She stated that interviews for the two Supervisor posts were to be held on the 22nd February 2005.

The Officer added that, due to the imminent closure of the Hockey Locker, it was felt that there was potential to increase the income from skate grinding. She advised that there were two contracted posts, 20/25 hours, which had not been filled since June 2004. She stated that it was also proposed to recruit one 20-hour post to focus on the maintenance and repair of not only Hire Skates, but to offer a permanent service to customers.

Members considered the above, and it was subsequently

RESOLVED: - Members agreed that

- (a) Officers seek expressions of interest in respect of a new tenancy for the retail outlet at DIIB, currently operating as the Hockey Locker;
- (b) Officers proceed to fill one of the two contracted posts for a Skate Grinding Recreational Assistant, Scale 1c, which had not been filled since June 2004.

LPB/2005/24 : UNIFORMS

The Operations Manager advised that Receptionists' uniforms had not been replaced for over two years. It was therefore proposed to purchase new suits for seven contracted staff and a limited number of casual staff at an approximate cost of £1,000.

RESOLVED: - Members of the Board agreed that Members purchase new uniforms for seven contracted staff and a limited number of casual staff at an approximate cost of £1000.00.

LPB/2005/25 : CATERING & BAR FACILITIES

The Operations Manager advised that to facilitate operational restructuring, the opening hours at Café Lattecino had been reduced to peak times and school holiday periods only. She confirmed that this would be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Members expressed some concern at the limited variety of foods on offer. The Operations Manager stated that the menu was very restricted due to staff shortages which Management were currently trying to address.

Noted.

MAINTENANCE

LPB/2005/26 : COMBINED HEAT AND POWER

The Operations Manager advised Members that the system should be fully commissioned by end of March.

Noted.

LPB/2005/27 : Flagpole

The Officer advised that the flagpole, which had recently been destroyed by vandals, was due to be replaced next week.

Noted.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

LPB/2005/28 : ADDITIONAL CAMERA

The Officer stated that it was being proposed that an additional camera and monitor, at a cost of £800.00, should be installed in the First Aid room to provide additional safety for nursing staff.

Councillor Copeland suggested that a security intercom system might be more beneficial than an additional security camera, as the nursing staff would then be able to control who entered the First Aid room. He also suggested that costings should be obtained from local suppliers as well as Group 4 security and tabled for Members' consideration at the next meeting of the Board.

RESOLVED: - Members agreed that Officers obtain costings for the installation of a security intercom system and table these at the next meeting of the Board.

LPB/2005/29 : LAND OWNERS COMPLAINT

The Operations Manager advised that a complaint had been received from Mr Morrow, 62 Ballyhanwood Road, regarding land that bordered the Leisure Park. Local youths were gaining access to his land via Council land and causing damage with scrambler bikes, and the landowner was concerned that he could be sued for negligence, should anyone get hurt. The Officer advised that temporary repairs to the fencing would cost approximately £800.00 and referred Members to correspondence from the Director of Administration and Community Services.

Councillor White stated that he had a recollection that approximately 6/7 years ago the landowner had removed a bank, which enabled access from his land to the Council's. He asked Officers to investigate whether they could find any correspondence relating to this for the next meeting.

Councillor Bunting also queried whether the landowner had contacted the local police.

Following consideration it was

RESOLVED: - Members agreed that

- (a) Officers seek legal advice as to whether the landowner or Council were responsible for securing the fencing on the land in question;
- (b) Officers ascertain whether there was any previous correspondence relating to Mr Morrow removing a bank, which provided access to Council lands;
- (c) Contact be made with the PSNI, advising them that youths are trespassing on Council land with scrambler bikes;

- (d) Officers take pictures of the area in question for Members' perusal at the next meeting of the Board.

LPB/2005/30 : LOST KINGDOM PROJECT

The Marketing & PR Manager advised Members that DTZ Pieda did not complete the Economic Appraisal report by the 19th January 2005 as agreed. The Officer outlined that there appeared to have been problems with the management of the Company, with the senior management team all having resigned in August 2004. The Officer advised that DTZ Pieda had appointed Mr Eric Hanvey to complete the Economic Appraisal on their behalf and added that Mr Hanvey had confirmed his intention to have the Economic Appraisal fully completed within 2-3 weeks. The Officer then confirmed that Mr Hanvey was in reception and willing to speak to Members in respect of the appraisal and associated matters.

Members expressed their continued anger and annoyance that this appraisal had still not been received and was now potentially jeopardizing the receipt of European funding. They also expressed concern that DTZ Pieda had already received payment of over £25,000.00 to date.

The Officer confirmed that legal advice was currently being sought in respect of the above. In light of this, Members felt it would be inappropriate to speak to Mr Hanvey directly until such advice had been received and considered in some detail by Members.

Following further consideration it was

RESOLVED: - Members agreed that Officers

- (a) ascertain whether permitting Mr Hanvey to complete the Economic Appraisal on behalf of DTZ Pieda would prejudice any legal action that the Council might take against DTZ Pieda at any further date;
- (b) prepare a report for the next meeting of the Board, outlining the full cost of the DTZ Feasibility Study and Economic Appraisal and confirming how much had been paid to date (including reference to the appropriate minute authorisations);
- (c) contact the Chairman of the Board with a full appraisal of tonight's discussions and associated recommendations.

At this stage in proceedings Councillor Ms Bunting left the meeting.

CAPITAL PROJECTS REPORT

LPB/2005/31 : INDIANALAND REFURBISHMENT

The Marketing & PR Manager referred Members to correspondence detailing proposals to progress with both phases of the proposed redevelopment of Indianaland at the same time.

Members referred to the upgrade costs, along with estimates from 2004-2006, indicating the growth in business if phase 1 and phase 2 were progressed together.

The Officer indicated that, if Members authorised that both phases could progress together, this could be completed within the three-week closure period.

She drew attention to the fact that the ROSPA report had indicated that it would be necessary to spend in the region of £60,000.00 to bring the existing facilities up to health and safety standards.

Members noted this but expressed concern that the project was now anticipated to cost in the region of £110,000.00, which was considerably more than had initially been expected.

The Business Manager, in retaking the various income levels and costs associated with the new development, advised that the figures included the cost of a supervisor, who would be responsible for assisting in the planning, development and management of the centre. This person would be responsible for setting up formal operational systems and procedures that would also address the various health and safety issues, not only in Indianaland, but ultimately in every other department as well.

Officers stressed that the facility needed a complete overhaul. They added that there was the potential to earn additional income through charging for the free-fall slide, secondary spend, merchandising/selling Indianaland goods, charging parents etc. with a predicted payback on the total spend of fifteen months.

Members stated that they would not be happy if parents were also being charged an entrance fee after paying for their children's entrance.

Members considered this in detail and agreed that 2 adults would be permitted per family group, and each adult thereafter would be charged £1.00 per head.

Following consideration, Councillor Mrs Rice proposed that the Officer's recommendations be accepted.

This proposal was seconded by Councillor Norris.

Councillor White queried whether the Local Government Auditor would be satisfied that expressions of interest had been sought, rather than tenders, in light of the amount this project was now costing.

Members therefore

RESOLVED: - Members of the Board agreed to proceed with phase 1 and phase 2 of the redevelopment of Indianaland, to be progressed during the three week closure period, at a cost of £110,000.00, providing this satisfied the requirements of the Council's Procurement Policy and Local Government Auditor, that an additional supervisor be recruited for the planning, development and management of Indianaland.

LPB/2005/32 : ADVENTURE GOLF

Officers advised that the deposit had been paid, and as Members could see, the site had been fenced off, with work having commenced on site. The Marketing & PR Manager stated that Mr Hobson had requested to purchase an additional pocket of land to facilitate a single roll-back gate at the Adventure Golf site entrance.

Members perused the lease map, which outlined the area of land concerned. The Officer advised that the site was due to be re-measured by quantity surveyors later in the week, and that a valuation would be sought from the Valuation and Lands Agency.

Members agreed that it would be appropriate to proceed with the above measures.

The Officer advised that the American contractors were due to commence work in the third week of March, with a projected opening date of 1 August 2005. She added that the facility was to be known as Pirates Adventure Golf.

It was therefore

RESOLVED: - Members agreed that Officers arrange to have the additional portion of land re-measured by quantity surveyors later in the week, as requested by Mr Hobson, with a valuation being sought from the Valuation and Lands Agency and a report brought back to the next meeting of the Board.

LPB/2005/33 : MARKETING CONSORTIUM

The Marketing & PR Manager advised Members that it was proposed to form a marketing consortium with Pirates Adventure Golf. She stated that a meeting had been arranged with Mr Hobson to discuss the terms for an initial 2-year

marketing agreement. This would allow Mr Hobson to buy into the overall advertising budget for the Ice Bowl and the Dundonald Leisure Park, which she outlined to Members.

Following consideration it was

RESOLVED: - Members agreed that an initial two-year marketing consortium be established with Pirates Adventure Golf and DIIB, as follows:

- (a) Budget to be agreed at the start of the year between DIIB and Pirates Adventure Golf;
- (b) Contribution from Pirates Adventure Golf in the first 12-month period to be calculated at 10-15% (by negotiation) of the overall DIIB Marketing and Promotions budget. In return, Pirates Adventure Golf would feature in any generic advertising, including TV, radio, literature, point of sale material, website etc;
- (c) Additional marketing activities to be identified and billed separately, i.e. mail shots, promotional campaigns and joint sales initiatives;
- (d) Pirates Adventure Golf to be billed by direct debit on a monthly basis;
- (e) A monthly Advertising and Promotion meeting to take place between the Marketing & PR Department and Pirates Adventure Golf;
- (f) a review of the contract to take place at the end of 12 months, with a view to extending the agreement to a normal period of 2-3 years.

LPB/2005/34 : SPIRIT LICENCE APPLICATION

The Marketing & PR Manager advised that permission was being sought to pay professional fees to Mr Ian H Foster in respect of the application for the Spirit Licence at the facility.

RESOLVED: - Members authorised that Mr Ian H Foster be paid £6000.00 in respect of his professional fees for works undertaken to progress the application for the Spirit Licence for the facility.

LPB/2005/35 : SALE OF LAND

The Marketing & PR Manager sought permission to pay professional fees to Lambert Smith Hampton for works undertaken in respect of the recent sale of land.

RESOLVED: - Members authorised that Lambert Smith Hampton be paid £2,500.00 + VAT in respect of their professional fees for works undertaken to process the land sale from DIIB to Mr Hobson for the Adventure Golf Project.

LPB/2005/36 : MARKETING UPDATE REPORT

The Marketing & PR Manager provided Members with a brief update on the forthcoming marketing campaigns. She advised that the Ice Bowl had embarked on a small amount of Radio and Press advertising, in order to promote a number of events. She also advised that they would be running a number of promotions over the coming months.

Councillor Copeland suggested that it might be possible to run a promotion for St George's Day, which could specifically target Scouts and Cubs, as this was an important event in their calendar.

Noted.

SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS

LPB/2005/37 : EXPRESSIONS FOR INTEREST IN HOT DRINKS

The Business Manager stated that there appeared to be a big demand for the supply of hot drinks throughout the facility, therefore he suggested that it might be appropriate to advertise for expressions of interest from the various suppliers available.

Members agreed and it was therefore

RESOLVED:- Members agreed that Officers seek expressions of interest in respect of the supply of hot drinks at the Ice Bowl facility.

As there was no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.45 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

CHIEF EXECUTIVE