

## **CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the proceedings of the Leisure Services Committee held, in committee, in Lough Moss Leisure Centre, on Thursday, 5 January 2006, at 7.30 p.m.

**PRESENT:-** Alderman M Copeland (in the Chair from 8.00 pm)  
Alderman J Norris  
Alderman Mrs G Rice  
Councillor Mrs A M Beattie  
Councillor J Beattie  
Councillor Ms J Bunting (in the Chair until 8.00 pm)  
Councillor Mrs J Cochrane  
Councillor Mrs S Duncan (from 7.40 pm)  
Councillor M Henderson  
Councillor T Jeffers  
Councillor A Ramsey (from 7.45 pm)  
Councillor C Tosh

**IN ATTENDANCE:-** Director of Finance & Leisure Services, Area  
Leisure Manager and Assistant Members' Services  
Officer

**APOLOGIES:-** No apologies were recorded

Councillor Bunting welcomed Members to the meeting.

### **REPORT FROM THE AREA LEISURE MANAGER**

#### **LS/2006/01: PRESENTATION ON THE POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOUGH MOSS FACILITY**

The Area Leisure Manager gave a presentation on various possibilities for the development of Lough Moss Centre.

- Soft Play Area

This facility would be similar to Indianaland in the Ice Bowl, but on a smaller scale, and would be intended to cater for younger age groups.

The Manager informed Members that there were several options for the location of the soft play area, for example, the conversion of some of the existing squash courts would allow for a purpose-built facility. A court conversion would minimise initial costs, but as the squash courts were currently also used for other purposes, this flexibility would be lost.

Another option would be a stand-alone facility to the back of Lough Moss Centre. This would involve more capital outlay but would allow for more flexible usage.

Funding options included:

- Coca Cola with naming rights
- Fully owned Council facility with 100% income for the Council
- Partnership option with shared income or profit

Members entered into a discussion regarding the best way forward. Councillor Cochrane informed Members that the softplay facility in Kiltonga Leisure Centre was due to close, and she enquired whether this might be to the Council's advantage. The Director of Finance & Leisure Services replied that he would investigate.

The Area Leisure Manager stated that, as the Council wanted to make a decision regarding this development as soon as possible, he intended to contact Alliance Leisure regarding funding and House of Play regarding the manufacture and construction of the facility. The Director of Finance & Leisure Services added that there was a possibility that funding could be obtained from the Government.

- Fitness Suite for Age Group 5-11

Members were shown a PowerPoint presentation in respect of a fitness suite to cater for the younger age group, and following this, the Area Leisure Manager informed Members that he was currently liaising with Eze Fitness to ascertain whether they would be interested in this project, otherwise he recommended that the Council develop a facility within the existing complex or incorporated in the soft play area. The Manager added that several companies specialised in catering for the younger age group, including Panatta and Shokk.

Members entered into a discussion regarding the potential of a facility of this kind. Councillor Bunting suggested that primary schools could be contacted to ascertain whether they would be interested to avail of the fitness suite as part of the curriculum. Councillor Tosh stated that the cost of transport might be a problem for schools. Alderman Rice said that a way around this could be to offer a package that included transport. However, she felt that the fitness suite would be ideal for families and that weekend usage should be explored.

Councillor Henderson felt that hospitals could also avail of the fitness suite for therapy purposes. He added that some time ago, a White Paper had raised concerns regarding the inactivity of children, therefore Councillor Henderson suggested that there might be funding available from the Government on these grounds.

The Area Leisure Manager agreed to investigate further and to report back to the Committee.

- Multi-Purpose Pitch

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services sought Members' views regarding the benefits of this type of facility to the Council.

Councillor Duncan suggested that, as well as football, tennis and hockey, the Council could promote Gaelic games. However, Councillor Bunting replied that, due to the different size of pitch required, this might not be possible. Alderman Rice pointed out that the GAA offered appropriate pitches for Gaelic games.

Councillor Henderson felt that consideration should be given to the elderly. He continued to say that aerobics or tea dances could be made available to cater for the over-50s.

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services advised that the cost of a multi-purpose pitch could be shared with the private sector, and there was a possibility that funding could be obtained from the Sports Council. He added that this might include funding for the installation of floodlighting. Alderman Rice agreed with the Director that the option of private funding should be explored further.

The last development option presented by the Area Leisure Manager was the Flowrider facility. The Manager outlined that this was one of the fastest growing sports in the UK and would be the only facility of this kind in the country if the Council decided to go ahead.

Councillor Henderson felt that Flowrider could be used in conjunction with a swimming pool, and he suggested that Officers investigate further.

Councillor Bunting enquired regarding the cost of construction and running Flowrider. Councillor Tosh raised concerns about the cost of insurance.

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services agreed to provide a brief for a feasibility study and financial impact and report back at a future Committee meeting.

- Additional Facilities

The Area Leisure Manager advised that, due to increased usage of the centre, additional car parking facilities would be necessary as well as additional CCTV cameras for security purposes. Consideration should also be given to providing additional space for catering and the conversion of the existing pool area to include a 25-metre swimming pool, possibly in conjunction with a surf pool. The cost of the construction of the swimming pool was estimated to be approximately £1.4 million.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Director of Finance & Leisure Services prepare a brief for a feasibility study to include the financial impact in respect of the Soft Play Area, Fitness Suite for Age Group 5-11, Multi-Purpose Pitch, Flowrider and additional facilities and report back to the Committee.
- (b) That the presentation be given at a future Leisure Park Board meeting.

**LS/2006/02: MINUTES OF THE LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE  
MEETING OF 13 DECEMBER 2005**

Noted.

**MATTERS ARISING**

Minute LS/2005/58 – The Director of Finance & Leisure Services informed Members that he had received some information from the Administration Manager, for example, stationery at an approximate cost of £2,700 to date. He advised that he hoped to be able to provide a more detailed update at the next Committee meeting.

Alderman Norris expressed concerns that agenda enclosures, particularly minutes, were not sent to Members together with the agenda, which did not provide enough reading time for Members.

Councillor Duncan reported that she had not received the email containing the agenda for the meeting. The Director of Finance & Leisure Services replied he was aware of problems and that this matter was being dealt with by the IT Department.

Minute LS/2005/61 – The Director of Finance & Leisure Services stated that he had not received any further information regarding the construction of a 50-metre swimming pool.

Minute LS/2005/68 – The Area Leisure Manager advised that he would report on the matter at the next Committee meeting.

Minute LS/2005/70 – The Area Leisure Manager reported that no further progress had been made regarding the purchase of a minibus. However, he advised that an application for funding was being made to the Foundation for Sports and the Arts.

Minute LS/2005/71 – The Director of Finance & Leisure Services reported that he had not yet received a response to his letter to the Minister for Sports regarding the availability of funding towards hosting the Special Olympics in Northern Ireland.

Minute LS/2005/72 – The Director of Finance & Leisure Services stated that he would ensure that Directory Enquiries 118500 would list the correct telephone number for Castlereagh Hills Golf Club.

Minute LS/2005/77 – The Area Manger advised that the IT Manager was in the process of updating the Council’s website and he would provide appropriate staff with training and access codes as soon as they were available so that the appropriate sector of the website could be updated as and when required by leisure staff.

Minute LS/2005/80 – The Area Leisure Manager confirmed that admission charges would be increased by 4%. At present senior citizens were charged £6.30 in Belvoir Activity Centre and £6.50 in Cregagh Community Centre. However, he added that financial support was available.

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services confirmed that he would investigate regarding subsidies from the Government for admission charges to leisure centres in areas without a community centre, and he would report back to the Committee at a future meeting.

Minute LS/2005/81 – The Area Leisure Manager advised that Coca-Cola had agreed to supply uniforms for staff via the Marketing Promotions budget, but that the logo on the t-shirts would be River Rock.

Minute LS/2005/82 – The Area Leisure Manager reported that he had contacted various companies regarding the purchase of new lockers for the Robinson Centre. He advised that the lockers being offered included time-banded locks at a charge of 50p to £1, therefore he was exploring other options and would report back to the Committee at a future meeting.

Minute LS/2005/85 – The Area Leisure Manager informed Members that the following dates had been set for centre user group meetings:

Belvoir Activity Centre	6 February 2006
Lough Moss Recreation Centre	14 February 2006
Robinson Centre	21 February 2006

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services suggested to hold one think tank meeting, covering all centres, after the rates for the forthcoming year had been set.

Following some discussion, it was:

RESOLVED: That a think tank meeting be convened to take place in February in respect of Belvoir Activity Centre, Lough Moss Recreation Centre and the Robinson Centre.

Minute LS/2005/86 – The Director of Finance & Leisure Services advised that the restaurant had achieved an increase in bookings during December, and this had continued after Christmas. The Director added that he had asked the Manager to closely monitor wage costs.

Councillor Jeffers enquired if external stocktakers could be employed to carry out a stocktake on the dispensary. The Director of Finance & Leisure Services agreed that this would be possible.

Councillor Tosh informed Members that it had come to his attention that customers had been turned away because they had not booked a table even though the restaurant was not busy. He expressed concern that this would not be beneficial for the restaurant's reputation and business. Members agreed, although Councillor Bunting felt that more time should be given for the restaurant to become more established.

Following some discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That the Director of Finance & Leisure Services investigate regarding booking procedures in the restaurant.

Minute LS/2005/84 – The Director of Finance & Leisure Services reported that an agreement had been reached with the union that, should the Council's VAT claim be successful, it would be included in the target calculations. In turn, if the final figures were within the agreed limits, then the Assistant Managers would continue to receive their bonus under the PRP scheme.

Members raised concerns regarding this agreement. Councillor J Beattie felt that morale among workers in the other centres might be affected, and a precedent might be set regarding future performance. The Director assured Members that performance-related bonuses would be reviewed on an annual basis, in line with the PRP agreement, and would be discontinued if targets had not been reached.

Minute LS/2005/83 – The Area Leisure Manager reported that a new photocopier had been purchased to be shared between Lough Moss, Robinson and Belvoir Centres. This meant that, together with the photocopier situated at the Ice Bowl, there were two copiers available.

Councillor J Beattie enquired as to the necessity of having two photocopiers. He was of the opinion that equipment belonging to the Council should be shared and, therefore, Councillor Beattie felt that the photocopier at the Ice Bowl might be obsolete to requirements.

The Area Leisure Manager replied that the photocopier that would be situated at the Robinson Centre would be regularly used by the Robinson, Lough Moss and Belvoir Centres as well as our fitness partners Breathe. This location would allow reasonable access by all partners.

RESOLVED: That the Committee approve the purchase of the new photocopier for the three leisure centres.

### **LS/2006/03: LEISURE CENTRE ACCOUNTS**

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services apologised for not being able to present the accounts at the meeting. He stated that he would post the information to Members within the next few days.

Noted.

As there was no further business, the meeting concluded at 10.20 p.m.

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**CHAIRMAN**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**Adopted by the Council this \_\_\_\_\_ day of**  
**\_\_\_\_\_ 2006 with the exception of**  
**Minute Nos. \_\_\_\_\_**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**MAYOR**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**