

CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the Central Services Committee meeting held, in committee, in the Committee Room, Civic & Administrative Offices, Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Castlereagh, BT8 6RB on Monday 8 May 2006 at 7.30 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs M Chambers
(in the chair)

COUNCILLORS: Councillor Mrs J Cochrane
Councillor C Hall
Councillor Ms R Hughes MBE
Councillor T Jeffers (ex officio)
Councillor M Long (from 8.20pm)
Councillor J Norris
Councillor J Spratt

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs J McCoy, Director of Administration & Community Services, Mr G Walker, Community Services Manager, Mrs E Patterson, Administration Manager

APOLOGIES: Apologies were recorded on behalf of Councillor J Beattie, Councillor J Bunting, Councillor G Robinson, Councillor C Tosh

CS/2006/128: MINUTES

Tabled:- Minutes of the Central Services Committee meeting of 10th April 2006.

MATTERS ARISING

The Director stated that as there was no civic business this month no report was being tabled.

CS/2006/129: MEETING WITH LSP AND COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP (CS/2006/100 refers)

The Director stated that as there was no civic business this month no report was being tabled.

Councillor Hall highlighted that a meeting with the LSP and Community Safety was due to be called following the April Committee meeting. The Director explained that the department was experiencing staff problems within the Members Services Section, adding that she was reluctant to call any non-essential meetings in May, due to staff shortages. She apologised for the delay and asked Members to note the circumstances.

CS/2006/130: GEORGE BEST MURAL (CS/2006/114 refers)

Councillor Jeffers asked if any details had been received regarding the attendance of Council representatives at the unveiling of the George Best Mural in Cregagh. The Community Services Manager stated that a meeting of the Forum was taking place the same evening details should follow thereafter.

Noted.

The Director stated that although a provisional date for the meeting to deal with the Moneyreagh Community Centre issues had been set for 11 May 2006, following contact with Alderman Robinson's office, it had been re-arranged at the request of Councillor Beattie to 18th April 2006, in order that she could attend.

Members then agreed that matters relating to the Moneyreagh Community Centre could be brought forward in the agenda.

CS/2006/131: MONEYREAGH COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING

The Director of Administration & Community Services then updated members on two outstanding legal issues that have still to be resolved regarding the Moneyreagh site. The first was in respect of a covenant to be bought out in order to build on the land in question and the second related to a formal agreement with the South Eastern Education and Library Board to proceed with the land swap in order that access could be achieved through the school grounds.

The Director provided Members with further background on each of the two matters and confirmed that the previous Council had already agreed an amount of £25,000 for the removal of the covenant and she was now seeking the Committees' approval to go ahead and bring this to its final conclusion. With regard to the South Eastern Education and Library Board authority, she confirmed that at a previous board meeting this had been agreed and ratified, however, she was still waiting Mr Walsh to come back to her regarding any formal agreements which would need to be put in place.

Discussion then ensued regarding the covenant, with the Director pointing out that the removal would only relate to the section of ground required for the Community facility. Should the Council, at a later stage, decide to relocate the playground from its existing site to the new community facility, then there would be a requirement to enter into further negotiations.

Following discussion, it was resolved that: -

- (a) The Director of Administration & Community Services agree to proceed to the next stages with regard to the removal of the covenant, at a cost of £25,000

- (b) The Director of Administration & Community Services liaise with the South Eastern Education and Library Board representatives regarding formal agreement in respect of access through the school and should this not be settled, report back to Committee.

Report from Director of Administration & Community Services

SECTION 1: COMMUNITY SERVICES MATTERS

CS/2006/132: REQUEST FROM NEXUS

The Director referred to a request, which community services staff had received to have the use of community facilities in order to develop an outreach counselling service for victims of sexual abuse and their families.

She reported that the organisation had asked for the free use of one of the offices in the Council's Community Centres and she sought the Members' views in this regard.

After consideration, Members' expressed the view that they could not set a precedent by allowing Nexus free use of the Council facilities, but would be happy to make available one of the offices at the current community services subsidised rate of hire.

RESOLVED: That the Council could not allow Nexus free use of the Council Facilities, but would be happy to make available one of the offices at the current community services subsidised rate of hire.

CS/2006/133: SHARED FUTURE

The Director attached to her report advance information on the Government's proposals for a Policy and Strategy for Good Relations in Northern Ireland, reporting that should Members require any further information, they should refer to the website mentioned.

Noted.

CS/2006/134: GREENGRAVES DRAMA GROUP

The Director tabled for Members' information a letter received from Greengraves Drama Group outlining their concerns over Council funding for their project and also the rental costs in respect of the Ballyoran Centre.

She reminded Members' however, that in requesting the groups' accounts and further details, the Council was relating to Community Relations Criteria and therefore felt that the Council was acting properly in order to safeguard the interests of the Community Relations programme.

Noted.

CS/2006/135: FAIR TRADE TOWN

The Director reported that, as a result of the Notice of Motion, which was adopted unanimously at Council, she had assigned the Community Development Worker for Dundonald, Mrs Joanna Wright to the project.

Councillor Cochrane informed Members that the Community Worker had already contacted her in this respect and they were waiting on further details from Fair Trade before proceeding. Once this has been received, it was agreed that a meeting would be convened of Councillors for the area and relevant officers.

Noted.

CS/2006/136: DOWNSHIRE HALL

The Director of Administration & Community Services reported that the Council's Mechanical & Electrical Engineer had inspected the above premises and was of the view that there was a requirement to undertake some immediate work to the pipe system, due to the fact that it was in a bad state of repair. She further reported that it was her understanding that to replace the whole system would cost in the region of £2,000-£3,000 which had not been provided for in the 2006/07 financial estimates. The Director also advised, that as an interim measure, it may be possible to access the worst areas and replace the piping at priority locations.

Discussion then ensued on the current stated of the Downshire Hall, with the Director reporting that it was the Arts Worker's intention to submit an Arts Funding Lottery Application in order to develop the premises as a Community Arts facility. This however could not be done until October 2006.

Members felt that there was an urgent need to take some action with regard to the boarded up windows in the building and tidy up the outside area.

Following discussion, it was resolved that a full report be requested from the Council's Mechanical & Electrical Engineer and tabled for Members' consideration at the next Committee meeting.

RESOLVED: That a full report on the current stated of the Downshire Hall be requested from the M & E engineer and tabled for Members' consideration at the next meeting of Committee.

SECTION 2: ADMINISTRATION MATTERS

CS/2006/137: CIVIL REGISTRATION

The Director referred to information attached to her report regarding the proposed changes in respect of Civil Registration, outlining some of the implications. She went on to state that the main impact on the Council would be the requirement on staff, in terms of offering the facility to register in the

nearest District Registrars Office and also Baby Naming Ceremonies, which again would increase the workload of the Registration staff. The Director confirmed that although an increased workload would be placed upon staff, the General Registrars Office had made no provision for additional registration staff to cover the extra duties which may result from the changes, although a current work-study report is awaited.

After discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the Director write to GRO expressing the concerns of the Council regarding the additional workload which will be placed on existing registration staff and asking that this be taken into account before any changes are made to the current arrangements.

CS/2006/138: LEAFLET STAND FOR TECHNICAL SERVICES RECEPTION, CIVIC OFFICES

The Director tabled for Members' consideration, a request received from Technical Services to erect a wall-mounted leaflet stand in the Reception of the Civic Offices to house literature on waste management. She reminded Members of a previous Council minute which required any such matters to come to Committee for approval.

Following discussion, several Members expressed concerns that it would set a precedent and may mean the Reception area could become cluttered, therefore approval to erect a wall-mounted stand in the Reception area of Technical Services would not be granted.

RESOLVED: That approval for the erection of a wall-mounted stand in the Reception area of Technical Services be withheld.

CS/2006/139: STAFFING MATTERS RELATING TO THE MEMBERS SERVICES SECTION

The Director appraised Members of the current situation within the Members' Services Section due to stress related illness and advised that in addition, one further Officer was off on Maternity leave. She further reported that although agencies had been trawled and an internal trawl had been completed within the Council, it had not generated a lot of interest.

The Director reminded Members that back in April 2003 a review of the staffing levels within the section had been carried out by the Estimates Committee on the understanding that all Council business would be undertaken on two set evenings per month. As a result, redundancies within the section were evoked leaving a compliment of two full-time officers and two part-time.

The Director then appraised Members of the current schedule of meetings, pointing out that the number of meeting per month currently exceeded 2003 levels. She felt therefore that there was an urgent requirement to engage a

temporary officer on a 1-year fixed term basis in order to provide the cover required.

Councillor Long stated that he had expressed concerns at the time regarding the re-structuring, as he did not think that Council business could be dealt with within two meetings per month.

Councillor Spratt expressed the view that further meetings may come on line in the lead up to the Review of Public Administration and therefore he had no objection to the Director of Administration & Community Services advertising the post.

After some discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That the Committee agree, in principle, to the appointment of a full-time officer on a 1-year fixed term contract basis, subject to the matter being referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee for approval and Officers confirm that monies can be found in an appropriate budget to cover the costs involved.

CS/2006/140: BUSINESS PLAN - ADMINISTRATION, CIVIC & MEMBERS' SERVICES

The Administration Manager tabled for Members' consideration, a copy of the Business Plan in respect of the Administration, Civic & Members' Services section. She asked Members if they wished her to go through the document in detail, however, it was resolved that each Member would take a copy home for their perusal and should they have any further questions, that these be raised with the Manager at the June meeting of Committee.

CS/2006/141: APRIL WORK PROGRAMME REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICER, COMMUNITY SPORTS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, COMMUNITY ARTS OFFICER, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKERS AND CAPACITY BUILDING OFFICER

Reports were tabled from the following officers, Joanne McCombe, Community Relations Officer, Chrissie Williamson, Community Arts Officer, Clare Bell, Community Sports Development Officer, Joanna Wright, Community Development Worker, Mark Kent, Community Development Worker, Colin Murray, Community Development Worker, Lisa Wilson, Capacity Building Officer.

During the ensuing discussion, Members raised the following points: -

- Concerns were expressed that money was being utilised to travel to Dundalk for the Community Midnight Soccer initiative, which may be put to better use locally.
- Concern was expressed that it would appear that Officers are becoming involved with projects with the LSP and Community

Safety without first seeking the relevant approval from the Committee.

- Members also expressed concern that as Members of the LSP they were being kept duly advised of decision being taken at the operational level.
- Members generally accepted that the reports presented at the May meeting were to a better standard than those provided in earlier months.

Community Services Manager's Report

CS/2006/142: BROMLEY BY BOW

Following the last meeting it was resolved that the Community services Manager contact the HARCA Centre for further information. The Community Services Manager has contacted the Centre and is awaiting information packs including CD ROMs for each member of the Central Services Committee. The CD ROM will provide elected Members with all details pertaining to the work of the centres as requested by the Committee.

The Community Services Manager is requesting a letter be sent on behalf of the Committee thanking the HARCA Centre for their excellent hospitality and informative visit.

RESOLVED: That the Community Services Manager sends a letter of thanks to the organisers for their excellent hospitality and informative visit.

CS/2006/143: COMMUNITY RELATIONS GRANT APPLICATION – CHRIST CHURCH PRESBYTERIAN

Name of Applicant: Christ Church Presbyterian

Background of Applicant: Christ Church Presbyterian was formed in 1963 as a place of worship and to serve Ballybeen and Dundonald in general. The Church aims to provide various positive programmes for young people of the area and the project for which funding has been applied for is another step in this ongoing process.

Project information: The group requests funding for 'mini soccer' school which is scheduled to take place over a 6 week period, commencing 5th May 2005- 9th June 2006. of mini soccer school will be held at the Billy Neil pitches and will be facilitated by IFA trained coaches from within the Church. The aim of the project is to bring young people from throughout the different areas of Dundonald together and improve relation's between them and also between the young people and the soccer coaches from the Church.

Costs:

Pitch hire	(6 nights, Billy Neil)	£120.00
IFA mini soccer training		£120.00

Trophies/prizes	£150.00
Publicity	£ 30.00
Refreshments	£ 50.00
Dance instructor	£ 30.00
Total	£470.00

RESOLVED: That the Council be recommended to grant Christ Church Presbyterian a grant of £470 as a contribution to the mini-soccer project.

CS/2006/144: MUSIC EVENT AT HYDEBANK YOUNG OFFENDERS CENTRE

The Community Services Manager has received a request from the Mayor to hold a music event at Hydebank Young Offenders Centre on Monday 22 May from 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm. The total cost for the event breaks down as follows:

£500 PA, lighting and hire of the following musical equipment – drum kit and amplifiers

£200 Artists fees

The artists who will be performing at the afternoon event will be Johnny Hero (host and compere – Downtown Radio), Velma (5-piece indy-pop band) and local DJ Mickey Modell. It is also hoped that 1 of the local comedy acts will also perform on the day. The event will provide the opportunity for a marginalised group of young people to engage in positive activity. This project meets the criteria as stated in the Community Relations Strategy.

RESOLVED: That the Council be recommend to approval an amount of £700 from the Community Relations Hard Issues budget for the music event, due to be held at Hydebank Young Offenders Centre on Monday 22nd May 2006.

Arts Officers Report

CS/2006/145: ARTS DEVELOPMENT GRANT APPLICATION RECOMMENDATION -

Name of applicant: Art of Caring

Date of application: 25/04/06

Background of the applicant:

'Art of Caring' has been supporting Marie Curie Cancer Care Centre, Belfast since 1994. The 'Art of Caring' Committee is comprised of 6 professional volunteers who promote art through their bi-annual exhibition which raises funds for Marie Curie Cancer Care. The aims and objectives of the group is to bring art to the wider public, especially young people and to raise funds for people with cancer.

Project Information:

'Art of Caring' is an art exhibition and sale over 3 days with woodturning and watercolour demonstrations. The exhibition includes paintings by established artists and encourages new and local artists. 370 works from 120 artists will be exhibited. The exhibition is being held at St Colmcille's Hall, Upper Newtownards Road from 28th to the 30th April 2006. Proceeds from the sale of the paintings will benefit Marie Curie Hospice. The previous six exhibitions raised £64,000 for the Hospice.

Costs applied for:

£200 to cover postage, stationery, set up and display costs for the exhibition.

RESOLVED: That a grant of £200 for the Art of Caring exhibition be granted to Marie Curie Cancer Foundation.

CS/2006/144: COMMUNITY RELATIONS BREAKDOWN OF EXPENDITURE FOR MARCH 06

The Community Services Manager reported that, as requested at the April meeting, he had provided Members with a breakdown of the Community Relations expenditure for March 2006.

Councillor Spratt again expressed concern that the 'Hate Crime' event had been organised; yet representatives of the DPP had been excluded. Members however, asked Officers to scrutinise such expenditure in the future to ensure that the Council was not covering the cost of projects that other bodies were set up to fund.

RESOLVED: That Officers scrutinise such expenditure in the future to ensure that the Council was not covering the cost of projects that other bodies were set up to fund.

CS/2006/146: COMMUNITY SPORTS DEVELOPMENT – MIDNIGHT SOCCER

The Community Services Manager referred Members to a report attached regarding the Midnight Soccer initiative. Members asked a number of questions, adding that they hoped that the programme would be rolled out across the borough in order that the pilot could be extended into further areas.

Noted.

CS/2006/147: PHOENIX GAS OVERSPEND

Noted.

At the May Council Meeting, Members proposed that Minute CS/2006/148 be taken back to Committee for further discussion.

CS/2006/148: CAPACITY BUILDING RESIDENTIAL AT KILLYHEVLIN HOTEL, ENNISKILLEN

Capacity building Conference, Killyhevlin Hotel – Members’ expressed concern at the cost associated with the residential, particularly relating to the number of hours involved and the need to have an overnight stay at such a faraway location incurring further transport costs.

Councillor Spratt reminded the Committee that Councillors had to scrutinise all of their expenditure to ensure that there was not a waste of ratepayer’s money and therefore Council Officers should not be involved. The Community Services Manager responded that the residential was being organised at the request of the former Project Officer of the LSP and that Council Officers were merely facilitating this process. He felt, however, that e-mail may have been sent to the Hotel to book the accommodation and also transport may have been provisionally arranged.

Discussion then ensued on the liability of the cancellation costs and following a lengthy discussion it was resolved that: -

- (a) The CS Manager contact the LSP, to confirm that the Council did not feel that this residential represented a good use of government money and had therefore instructed its officers not to become involved in organising or attending the residential.
- (b) The Officers also ascertain if cancellation are to be incurred and if so, refer these to the LSP for reimbursement.

CS/2006/149: COMMUNITY SUPPORT PLAN

The Community Services Manager is seeking to engage Denise Wheatley Consultants – the consultants involved in the Community Services Strategy Development weekend for an additional fee of £800. This is to write updated introduction and background information for the Council’s new 3-year Community Support Plan and analyse statistical data as required by the DSD. This money will be taken from additional grant aid received to cover this element.

RESOLVED: That

- (a) the Committee approve the appointment of Wheatley Consultants to undertake the required work in respect of the Community Support Plan, which will be charged to the additional VCU grant at a rate of £800.00
- (b) the draft Community Support Plan be deferred until the June meeting of Committee.

They being no further business the meeting ended at 10.15pm.

CHAIRMAN

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Adopted by the Council this _____ day of

_____ 2006 with the exception of

Minute Nos. _____

MAYOR

CHIEF EXECUTIVE