

CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the Leisure Services Committee held, in committee, in the Council Chamber, Civic & Administrative Offices, Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Castlereagh BT8 6RB on Thursday, 2nd November 2006 at 7.30 p.m.

Present:- Councillor C Hall (in the chair)

Alderman J Norris
Councillor Mrs A Beattie
Councillor J Beattie
Councillor Ms J Bunting
Councillor Mrs S Duncan
Councillor B Hanvey
Councillor J Spratt (from 8.25 p.m.)

In Attendance:- Area Manager Leisure, Assistant Members' Services Officer

Apologies:- Apologies were recorded on behalf of Councillors Tosh, Cochrane and Stevenson.

LS/2006/125 : MINUTES

Tabled:- Minutes of the Leisure Services Committee meeting held on 5th October 2006 (copy previously circulated).

Noted.

REPORT FROM THE AREA MANAGER - LEISURE

LS/2006/126 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

The Area Manager Leisure referred Members to correspondence received from Belfast City Council in relation to their current discounted pricing promotion and asking if the Council wished to participate in a similar scheme.

Members then discussed the matter and, following a proposal from Councillor Beattie, which was seconded by Alderman Norris, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the Area Manager Leisure be recommended to write to Belfast City Council declining their offer to participate in a similar discounted pricing scheme because of the following reasons:-

- The impacts on Castlereagh Borough Council with regard to the forthcoming Review of Public Administration
- The administrative difficulties in policing this type of system
- The fact that the Council's gym facilities are privately franchised out.

LS/2006/127 : CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The Area Manager Leisure drew Members' attention to his report in which he referred to a Child Protection Policy Seminar that he had recently attended along with the Council's Child Protection Officer/Sports Development Officer.

He outlined that the seminar had been well supported by local Councils, and it had highlighted the concerns and difficulties that all Councils were facing in relation to child protection policies, from an operational and resource perspective.

Councillor Hanvey stated that he had also been in attendance at this seminar and the issue of Child Protection was a rolling process. He indicated that the speakers at the seminar clearly placed the onus and responsibility on local Councils with regard to service provision and what policies were currently in place.

The Area Manager Leisure commented that virtually every Council department would be affected by this policy in some way and that Child Protection training was already being carried out with Leisure Services staff. Although, he stated that the extent of staff training would be dependant on each particular Department's involvement with children, which would also minimise the cost implications. The Area Manager recommended that a Child Protection Working Group be established to allow all departments and interested parties to comment and contribute to the Child Protection Policy.

However, he added that, compared to other Councils, Castlereagh had already taken remedial steps to prohibit the use of cameras in its leisure facilities.

Members discussed the implications of this policy, and its impact on training and policing requirements, but agreed that it was important that Castlereagh had the correct procedures in place to ensure that staff, as well as the children using the Council's facilities, were not placed in a vulnerable position.

Councillor Duncan also suggested that once the current Council's Child Protection Policy, which was currently with the Council's Solicitors, was agreed, it should be included with the Staff/Member Induction packages. It was also agreed

that a CP Working Group be established with representative (s) from all departments being asked to contribute.

Noted.

LS/2006/128 : LOUGH MOSS DEVELOPMENT

The Area Manager Leisure informed Members that the consultant employed to investigate the potential developments was currently on long-term leave.

Noted.

LS/2006/129 : CARRYDUFF COMMUNITY PLAYGROUND APPLICATION

The Area Manager Leisure referred Members to his report with regard to the application to the Big Lottery People's Millions for a playground at Lough Moss, which was one of the six projects to be televised on UTV live. Subsequently, viewers would vote for the project they think should win the funding, with the winners to be announced by UTV on the day following the vote.

Members expressed concern that the public support meeting, which had been organised by the Playground Support Group, was being held at Lough Moss on the same date and time as the Council's Technical & Environmental Services Committee.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, Alderman Norris, as Chairman of the Technical & Environmental Services Committee, would liaise with the Director of Technical Services with a view to bringing the Technical & Environmental Services Committee forward to enable Members to attend the Playground Support Group meeting.

LS/2006/130 : GRANT APPLICATIONS UPDATE

The Area Manager Leisure referred to the list of grant applications currently being progressed by the Grants Officer and Leisure Services Officers.

Councillor Duncan asked that all Officers submitting applications for grant funding are made mindful of the fact that the Council should not be tied in to any criteria which would restrict usage of the facilities. Councillor Bunting concurred with these comments.

The Area Manager Leisure responded that although there were some minor stipulations, there were no major binding implications for the Council in the grant funding criteria on the list provided.

Noted.

LS/2006/131 : BELVOIR DEVELOPMENT (MULTI-PURPOSE PITCH)

Councillor Hanvey enquired why Councillor Hughes had not been included in the list of representatives meeting with Rev McIlrath. He was subsequently informed that this decision had been taken at a meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

The Area Manager Leisure informed Members that the meeting had been scheduled for Tuesday, 7th November at 10.00 a.m. (Members to meet with the Area Manager Leisure, at 9.45 a.m. prior to the main meeting) and the Capital Projects Officer had also been invited to attend.

He stated that he was not aware of the objections that were being raised by Mr McIlrath, but indicated to Members that there would be very little Sunday usage and most of the play would take place during the evening.

He further advised that a meeting had been held with Playdale who are responsible for the pitch installation on behalf of the IFA and that they had provided indicative costs of the project. However, he stated that he would bring back additional quotations organised by CBC staff to the next meeting of the Committee to ensure that the Council was getting the best deal possible. He intimated that funding may be available from a number of sources but that there would be conditions attached and that partnerships would need to be entered into that would diminish the Council's role. It would also delay the progression of the project which was time banded.

Councillor Bunting referred to the nature of any partnership involvement and stated that the Council would need to know the terms and conditions of the partnership, prior to any agreement.

The Officer responded that there were no apparent stipulations applied for IFA funding.

Councillor Duncan proposed that the Committee agree to the £25,000 funding but did not enter into any partnerships with user groups, and this proposal was seconded by Councillor Mrs Beattie.

RESOLVED:- That, the Council be recommended to accept the £25,000 funding available from the IFA/EUFA, but that they do not enter into partnership with the

user groups. The Area Manager to provide quotations for any necessary additional spend.

LS/2006/132 : ROBINSON CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

The Area Manager Leisure reported that, following clarification in relation to the formation and election of the Group, it was his understanding that the Leisure Services Committee had the necessary powers to change the make-up of the Working Group membership.

Councillor Beattie stated that the original Working Group membership had been agreed by the Finance & Leisure Services Committee, because of the financial implications of the issues to be discussed.

The Area Manager Leisure stated that the impacts of the forthcoming RPA may impact on any decisions to be made in respect of the Robinson Centre.

Councillor Bunting commented that the Department would be issuing guidance in relation to spending restrictions and the cessation of loan sanctions, therefore the Council should be mindful of this fact when discussing the Robinson Centre.

The Area Manager stated that if the Council wanted to keep the Centre open for a further 2-3 years, the area around the changing room required urgent address to modernise the facilities and he suggested the creation of a village type of changing facility. If this action was carried out, along with some additional minor refurbishment and cosmetic work he felt that the Centre could last a further 3-5 years before it needed total refurbishment.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the Area Manager Leisure prepare a report on the work to be carried out, and the costings involved in modernising the changing room area at the Robinson Centre and other relevant areas, for the Committee's consideration.

LS/2006/133 : SECURITY FENCE AT REAR OF ROBINSON CENTRE

The Area Manager Leisure referred Members to his report in which the Technical Manager had indicated that the lowest quotation received was also the most suitable for the purpose.

Noted.

LS/2006/134 : CHP UNIT AT THE ROBINSON CENTRE

The Officer informed Members that the installation process of the CHP unit at the Robinson Centre will commence shortly and be in use from February 2007.

Councillor Bunting indicated that the Ice Bowl had experienced some problems with their installation and there would be merit in the Area Manager Leisure liaising with the Acting General Manager, prior to signing of the contract.

The Area Manager Leisure stated that he was aware of the problems experienced by the Ice Bowl, but indicated that the service costs were grant aided and would be payable from the pc sum.

Noted.

At this point of the meeting, Councillor Spratt entered at 8.25 p.m.

LS/2006/135 : 50 METRE POOL

The Area Manager Leisure informed Members that the Council's Planning Officer and the Chief Executive would be attending a meeting with the Sports Council later this month to progress this matter.

Councillor Duncan asked that the Officers ensure that there are no caveats or restrictions placed on the usage of the pool, especially in light of the forthcoming Olympic Games in 2012.

The Area Manager Leisure responded that a 50m pool could create 3 separate 25m pools thereby accommodating all users but that it was likely that that there would be caveats and user agreements in relation to use by Swim Ulster/Ireland and elite swimmers on development programmes .

Noted.

LS/2006/136 : RESERVOIR DEVELOPMENT

The Area Manager Leisure reported that he had received no response from the Water Board to date, therefore he had written directly to the Chief Executive to ensure that the Council would receive an acknowledgement of its correspondence, thereby registering its interest in development of the reservoir site.

Noted.

LS/2006/137 : STAFF AT THE ROBINSON CENTRE

The Area Manager Leisure referred Members to the content of his report.

Councillor Spratt stated that, in his capacity as Mayor, he had asked the Chief Executive to pass on his congratulations to the staff members involved, as their swift actions in saving the customer's life should be formally recognised.

The Area Manager Leisure responded that the Council's praise and thanks to the staff involved had been well documented in previous minutes.

Noted.

LS/2006/138 : USER GROUP MEETINGS

Members were advised that the following user group meeting dates had been agreed, and Members would receive formal notification in due course.

Belvoir Activity Centre – 9 January 2007
Robinson Centre - 16 January 2007
Lough Moss Centre - 24 January 2007

Noted.

LS/2006/139 : TRADING ACCOUNTS

The Area Manager Leisure referred Members to the trading accounts for the Robinson, Lough Moss and Belvoir Centres attached to his report.

He stated that he was in the process of obtaining independent surveys from several installers to affect repairs to the artificial pitch at Lough Moss.

In response to a query from Councillor Hanvey in relation to the breakeven point for the wind turbine, the Officer stated that approximately £15k savings would be gained from this installation. He further indicated that the Technical Manager had prepared a report on the matter in June, and the Council was now about to appoint consultants in relation to the planning aspects.

Councillor Bunting expressed her concern at the Robinson Centre's variance figures and she asked how Members could assist the Officer in addressing these issues.

The Area Manager Leisure identified gas, electricity and maintenance costs as the main areas creating largely expenditure issues. He was trying to minimise expenditure and looking at ways to promote further business, e.g. plant training courses etc.

Members welcomed the steps taken by the Officer, but asked that he keep the Committee updated if any matters arise.

Councillor Mrs Duncan suggested that the Robinson Centre target Castlereagh College. However, the Area Manager Leisure responded that the users at the College would generally use the Lough Moss Centre to hold their courses, however, he was intending to target other groups, such as ethnic community groups.

Noted.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

LS/2006/140 SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT FROM THE AREA MANAGER LEISURE – BELVOIR ACTIVITY CENTRE (STORAGE OF CARPET FOR SPECIAL EVENTS) – copy tabled at meeting.

The Area Manager Leisure referred Members to the content of his supplementary report.

Councillor Bunting was delighted to see this matter tabled for discussion, as she recalled that it had been previously resolved that this carpet would be stored at Belvoir Activity Centre on the basis that ratepayers would not be financially penalised as a result. She stated that its absence severely restricted the use of the facility for different purposes.

However, she expressed her concern that she had only been informed that the carpet could not be rolled and therefore stored at Belvoir Activity Centre. She felt that Officers should have notified Members that they were unable to implement this decision because of the problems of storage. The Area Manager suggested the purchase of a 20ft container that would be sited at the rear of the centre and this could be used to store the carpet. He also advised that there was no provision in the revenue budgets for the purchase and that it would need to be capitalised if possible to avoid a detrimental effect on the current trading accounts.

Councillor Bunting subsequently proposed that the Council purchase a 20ft enclosed container to be sited either to the side or rear of the Belvoir Centre, which would reduce the current costs of transporting the carpet from the Ice Bowl to the Activity Centre. Furthermore, she had been informed by the Chief

Executive that the container could possibly be used to store other items, as well as the carpet.

Councillor Spratt wished to second this proposal, as it had been brought to his attention that groups wishing to use the carpet were incurring expensive charges to have it transported, and he was appalled at the level of the costs involved.

The Area Manager Leisure stated that it was his understanding that anyone wishing to use the carpet at Belvoir Activity Centre was charged no more than £80 for transport costs, but he would clarify this amount for the next meeting. However, he added that if a specific booking was made and the Council had to incur any additional charges, it was customary that this amount would be passed on in the fee.

In response to concerns expressed, the Area Manager Leisure advised that the proposed storage unit would be adequately secured and informed Members that he would arrange for an Officer from the Technical Services Department to accompany him when selecting the container.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That,

- (a) the Area Manager Leisure be recommended to seek quotations for the provision of a container to house the former carpet from the Ice Bowl at an anticipated cost of £1500 + vat for a new container, or £1000 + vat for a used one.
- (b) the Area Manager Leisure to be instructed to ascertain the costs that were invoiced to groups previously requiring transportation of the carpet from the Ice Bowl to Belvoir Activity Centre.

LS/2006/141 : NEWLY FORMED BELVOIR COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Councillor Spratt wished to make Members aware of a newly formed Belvoir Community Association, but advised that this matter was being raised at the next Central Services Committee meeting.

Members discussed the implications of this organisation and Councillor Beattie pointed out that the Belvoir Activity Centre had been initially designed as an Activity/Community Centre with the Mary Stuart Hall specifically being designated for community usage.

Noted.

As there was no further business, the meeting concluded at 9.15 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Adopted by the Council this _____ day of
_____ 2006 with the exception of
Minute Nos: _____

MAYOR

