

## **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, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2006 at 7.30 p.m.

**PRESENT:-** Councillor C Hall (in the chair)

Alderman J Norris MBE  
Councillor Mrs A M Beattie  
Councillor J Beattie  
Councillor Mrs J Cochrane  
Councillor D Drysdale  
Councillor Mrs S Duncan

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

**APOLOGIES:-** An apology was recorded on behalf of Councillor Tosh.

### **LS/2006/105 : MINUTES**

Tabled:- Minutes of the Leisure Services Committee meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2006 (copy previously circulated).

Noted.

### **REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & LEISURE SERVICES**

#### **LS/2006/106 : TRADING ACCOUNTS**

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services drew Members' attention to the trading accounts for the three Leisure Centres for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 August 2006, attached to his report, and was pleased to report that the Robinson Centre trading figures were extremely encouraging.

The Area Manager advised that the increase in trading accounts was partly due to the price increases which had now been brought in line, or slightly below, market prices.

The Robinson Centre had also benefited from extra business whilst the Avoniel Leisure Centre, and other centres, had been closed for refurbishment and although these centres had since re-opened, the Robinson Centre had managed to retain some of this custom.

In addition, he was pleased to report that the junior and adult swimming figures had also greatly improved in the past few weeks.

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services, however, stated that the recent opening of the Andy Ward Fitness Suite in Ballynahinch had detrimentally impacted on the number of Lough Moss/Belvoir Activity Centre fitness suite users.

Councillor Duncan enquired why the EZE fitness suite at Belvoir Activity Centre had failed to perform as well as the Council's other centres.

The Director responded that the limited facilities at Belvoir had an impact on membership figures and the Council were currently looking at a possible expansion of the Belvoir Activity Centre to facilitate better changing areas, which would complement the EZE fitness service provision.

Councillor Drysdale asked if the EZE members at Lough Moss and Belvoir centres were aware that they could avail of the facilities at Robinson Centre.

The Area Manager stated that there were more special offers and promotions based in Belvoir Activity Centre, than in other centres, and these were specifically aimed at encouraging more local use. He went on to add that both the Council and EZE had advertised extensively in the area, including mailshots in the local community.

Noted.

**LS/2006/107 : MUGA GRANT – LISNASHARRAGH SPORTS PROJECT  
(Minute No: LS/2006/82 refers)**

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services advised Members that the Council had adopted the previous Leisure Services minutes in which the Committee had agreed, in principle, to support this project.

He referred to the possible closure of Lisnasharragh High School which would have an adverse effect on the proposed Business Plan, and would subsequently affect the funding application for the MUGA grant.

As this project covered all aspects of the Community, and was therefore within the remit of each of the Council's Committees, he suggested that it should be

referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee for consideration on how the Council could best secure this funding.

Councillor Beattie concurred that this would be the best way to progress this project as it benefited everyone in the community.

At this point, the Director commented that he, Councillor Beattie and Alderman Norris, had visited a MUGA project in the West Winds Estate in Newtownards to experience at first-hand the vision that MUGA was trying to create, and they had all found the visit to be extremely worthwhile.

RESOLVED:- That, the Leisure Services Committee recommends that further consideration of the MUGA grant – Lisnasharragh Sports Project, be referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee, as Members were of the view that it encompassed all aspects of the community and therefore fell within the remits of each of the Council's various Committees.

**LS/2006/108 : CONCEPT PROPOSAL FOR DEVELOPMENT OF RESERVOIR**  
**(Minute Ref No: LS/2006/83 refers)**

The Director advised Members that the Area Manager was trying to set up a meeting with the Water Service to progress this concept proposal. Once a date for this meeting had been arranged, the Council would be in a position to clarify what was involved in the transfer of land from the Water Service to the Council, to progress this matter forward.

Noted.

**LS/2006/109 : PROFIT RELATED PAY FOR ASSISTANT MANAGERS**  
**(Minute Ref No: LS/2006/86 refers)**

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services referred Members to a schedule from the Council's Internal Auditor on the final trading accounts for the 05/06 year and PRP analysis.

He stated that he would be meeting with the Assistant Managers of each of the Centres in relation to this matter and was presently working within the guidelines of the document prepared by the Trade Unions and would update the Members at the next meeting.

RESOLVED:- That, following his meeting with the Assistant Managers of each of the Centres in relation to PRP analysis, the Director of Finance & Leisure Services would update Members at the next meeting of the Committee.

**LS/2006/110 : EZE FITNESS CONTRACT  
(Minute Ref No: LS/2006/87 refers)**

The Director advised Members that he was due to meet with EZE Fitness on 10 October to firm up details of their proposal as outlined at the September meeting and would bring a completed appraisal back to the next Committee meeting.

Noted.

**REPORT FROM THE AREA MANAGER (LEISURE)**

**LS/2006/111 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM CARRYDUFF COLTS FC**

The Area Manager referred Members to correspondence from Carryduff Colts FC, attached to his report, requesting consideration to be given to the provision of floodlighting on one of the grass pitches at Lough Moss to alleviate the excess demand that is currently experienced for football sessions at Lough Moss.

He went on to state that both he, and the Client Manager, had met with the Carryduff Colts and two Gaelic Clubs in Carryduff, who had requested similar consideration, to listen to their views and requirements. As all 3 clubs had relatively high memberships, they were all experiencing an urgent need for training and competitive training grounds with floodlighting facilities.

The Area Manager suggested that there was merit in a small group of Councillors meeting with the 3 Clubs involved to progress this issue.

He added that the Client Manager had suggested that in locations, i.e. Lough Moss and Comber Road, whereby 2 football pitches were located side by side; Gaelic pitches could possibly be constructed across the breadth of these pitches.

Following discussion of the matter, it was

RESOLVED:- That, further discussion of this matter be referred to the Technical & Environmental Services Committee, as consideration of this request was within their remit.

**LS/2006/112 : LOUGH MOSS DEVELOPMENT**

The Area Manager advised that Watts and Partners had now been employed and they were carrying out the preliminary work to ascertain the suitability of the land around Lough Moss for the developments that have been mooted.

Noted.

**LS/2006/113 : CARRYDUFF COMMUNITY PLAYGROUND APPLICATION**

The Area Manager referred Members to his report, and the positive outcome of the meeting with Councillors Mr & Mrs Beattie, Hall, the relevant Officers, 2 representatives of the Carryduff Playground Association, and an Officer of the Big Lottery Fund to complete the Council's application for funding.

He went on to state that this project would be televised "live" and it will compete against another project, following which viewers will be asked to vote for their preference. Although the date of the live promotion had not yet been released, the Lottery Officer had indicated that it was likely that 4 out of the 6 final projects would receive funding, to a maximum of £50k.

Noted.

**LS/2006/114 : BELVOIR DEVELOPMENT**

The Area Manager advised that he had now received an indication of the likely costs involved and he outlined that grant funding would be available to a maximum of £25k. He stated that although the actual pitch would cost approx £23,580, additional costs in relation to ground preparation work and floodlighting requirements would increase the total cost to approx £70k, therefore requiring an approx contribution by the Council of £45k.

Councillor Beattie stated that he had viewed the site of this pitch and expressed concern at its close proximity to the Church.

The Area Manager advised Members that he could speak with the Church Officials, if required, although Councillor Beattie stated that they would be informed as part of the Neighbourhood Notification process once the planning application was submitted.

Alderman Norris asked if there was much wear and tear associated with these types of pitches, to which the Area Manager responded that although they were commonly used, there was only 1 pitch of this type located in Northern Ireland and it was still relatively new. However, he advised that since they had been offered to 16 different Councils, there had been an excellent uptake.

He stated that the multi-use nature of this pitch would increase the summer usage of the facility, but reiterated that there were time constraints in relation to the funding for this project.

Councillor Mrs Beattie urged the Council to support this pitch as there was a lack of facilities in Belvoir, and Councillor Mrs Duncan concurred that ratepayers in the area had requested a pitch for a number of years.

Although Alderman Norris concurred with the Members' comments, he was concerned that the pitch would be heavily used because of its multi-use facility. The Area Manager reiterated that the costs indicated had been supplied by Playdale and companies who would be employed on a sub contracted basis and that Officers had not had the opportunity to explore the options available that could possibly reduce the £45,000 contribution. This included possible grant funding and alternative companies who could perform the necessary works at a lower cost. The Area Manager suggested that quotations/estimates be sought for the additional works required outside of the actual installation of the pitch to compare against the cost provided by Playdale. If required this work could be tendered for to ensure that the Council was receiving value for money.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED;- That, the Leisure Services Committee recommends that the Council agrees in principal to fund the project but the Area Manager to investigate possible funding options and provide quotations/estimates for the additional work required and to report back to Committee on his findings before full approval is given.

Furthermore, that the Area Manager, in the interim, be instructed to contact the Church Officials to update them in relation to the proposal and arrange for a meeting.

#### **LS/2006/115 : SOLAR PANELS**

The Area Manager confirmed that installation of the solar panels had now commenced.

Noted.

#### **LS/2006/116 : ROBINSON CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP**

The Area Manager referred to the Robinson Centre Redevelopment Working Group which had been elected at the Council's June Meeting, namely:- Aldermen Copeland and Norris, and Councillors Bunting, J Beattie, Henderson and Cochrane. He suggested that the Working Group could convene to consider the options for the future of the Robinson Centre.

Alderman Norris referred to the existing sauna and jacuzzi at the Robinson Centre and felt that any relocation of their position would be extremely expensive to carry out. Furthermore, he expressed his concern that the works would not be carried out within the timeframe before the implementation of the RPA.

Councillor Mrs Duncan referred to the sauna which had been recently sited at the end of the swimming pool located in QUB and suggested there may be merit in visiting the facility as it was her understanding that it had neither been expensive, nor time-consuming to install.

The Area Manager, however, referred to the problems of policing the sauna, as it would have to be incorporated into the duties of the Pool Attendants.

Councillor Beattie advised that when the original Robinson Centre Redevelopment Working Group had been set up, there had been no discussion in relation to a 50m swimming pool and there were now different issues to consider. However, he assured Members that once the Group met, all recommendations would be referred back to the Leisure Services Committee.

Members discussed if substitutions for the Working Group, from the Leisure Services Committee, were required, and it was subsequently agreed that it be

RESOLVED:- That, the Director of Finance & Leisure Services will clarify if the membership of the Robinson Centre Redevelopment Working Group originated from the Leisure Services Committee and would report back to the Committee for next month's meeting.

#### **LS/2006/117 : SECURITY FENCE AT REAR OF ROBINSON CENTRE**

The Area Manager referred Members to his report in which the rear of the Robinson Centre complex was regularly being used for drinking sessions outside normal opening times and the area was often left covered in broken glass.

He reported that the current fence was a simple chain link fence with an emergency gate close to the health suite emergency exit. Whilst the gate could be locked at night, intruders simply cut through the chain link fence or alternatively scaled the fence, and despite numerous repairs being made, intruders continued to cut and breach the security fencing.

He referred Members to the recommendations made by the Technical Manager, and the 3 quotations which had been received from specialist fencing contractors to provide a new fence along the rear boundary, namely:-

1. N K Fencing Ltd, I bex Elite Fence £2646 + VAT
2. Clerk Engineering Ltd Betafence Securifor 3D £2835 + VAT

3. J P M Contracts Ltd Palisade fence £3450 + VAT

The Technical Manager had subsequently recommended that the Council accept the cheapest quotation from N K Fencing for the provision of an Ibex Elite Fence at a cost of £2646 + VAT.

The Director stated that although there was no revenue in the budget for this expenditure, he would look at capitalising the expenditure.

Due to the extent of the problem, Members asked the Area Manager if the fence being recommended by the Technical Manager was as good as the other more expensive options. Following discussion

RESOLVED:- That, the Area Manager be instructed to contact the Technical Manager to ascertain that the fencing supplied by NK Fencing Ltd was as suitable for the purpose as the other more expensive options and if this was the case, that the Officers be authorised to proceed with the purchase of the fencing, otherwise the Area Manager should raise the issue again at the next meeting.

**LS/2006/118 : BELVOIR**

The Area Manager referred Members to his report and outlined that the main hall in Belvoir Activity Centre had been replaced/refurbished approximately 4 years ago, but was currently in need of a major refurbishment and possible replacement. He listed the various options available, but added that he hoped to bring back more indicative costs in relation to those options for the next meeting of the Committee.

Noted.

**LS/2006/119 : 50 METRE POOL**

The Area Manager informed Members that, to date, there had been no further announcements or developments in relation to the 50m pool.

Noted.

**LS/2006/120 : DEFIBRILLATOR UPDATE**

The Area Manager advised that he hoped to have this matter progressed within the next few weeks.

Noted.

## **LS/2006/121 : CURRENT AND FORTHCOMING MAINTENANCE ISSUES**

The Area Manager outlined some of the major maintenance issues that each of the centres had experienced in recent months –

### **Belvoir –**

Ongoing problems with the main hall floor – broken floorboards  
Leaks in the roof following extensive rainfall – this had been investigated on many occasions and the prognosis was that there was still some unseen damage as a result of the explosion at the forensics lab.

### **Robinson Centre -**

- There had been ongoing problems with the lockers, largely due to the inconsistency of the coinage. Tokens had been introduced to some of the lockers in the male swimming pool and health suite changing rooms and this had since been rolled out to approximately 50% of the lockers in these areas, resulting in a dramatic reduction in complaints and problems. Since, many users were retaining their tokens instead of returning them, he recommended that tokens should now be formally sold on a non-return basis, but that some lockers be retained for use by coinage.
- Showers in the male health suite changing area – there was an ongoing problem with these showers, which was rectified some months ago by the installation of a booster pump. Unfortunately the showers now work so well that there is a problem with the additional condensation that they have created. However, he advised Members that the work required to resolve this problem had now been completed in-house.

### **Lough Moss -**

- Astro pitch – surface movement leading to tears/rips and uneven surface. This had been temporarily repaired but additional work maybe required, and it was anticipated that the remaining lifespan of the pitch was 2 years. However, the Area Manager advised Members that he would be bringing a detailed report to the next meeting of the Committee.
- Astro pitch floodlighting control boxes – 5 out of the 9 control boxes that were situated at the foot of the floodlights had health & safety implications, but had since been repaired.

- Recessed showers in health suite changing rooms – there is evidence that these showers had been leaking with water seepage into the squash court viewing area and stairway leading to the fitness suite.

Although the original contractor responsible for their installation was contacted by the Technical Manager, they had repudiated that this was a latent defect and there was no alternative but to effect repairs in-house which would take a few weeks to complete.

- Main hall floor – is receiving attention virtually on a weekly basis, and this will have to be considered for refurbishment in the next financial year.
- Lockers – there have been a number of problems associated with the lockers although most of these have been resolved with a recent service. However, as the service agreement with Helmsman has now ended, the Council has no option but to renew the cost for a further 12 months at a cost of £1,174 + VAT, to cover 2 visits per year plus emergency call outs, and any parts required will be free of charge unless there is evidence of misuse or vandalism.
- Water supply to sink units – the water supply to the main body of the building was established when the complex was built and installed according to legislation at that time. The hot water supply was currently too hot (to the taps) and it has been necessary to install mixer valves to each of the existing water taps to ensure that no one is scalded. Mixer valves are already in place for showers and in the fitness suite area. As there was some urgency to this matter, a plumbing contractor has been secured to undertake the necessary work to the most pressing areas such as the Arts and Crafts room and toilet areas. However, other areas, which are not used on a daily basis, will be repaired in-house and, in the interim, the taps had been isolated to ensure they cannot be used.
- Barrier at front entrance – the fulcrum post has moved either as a result of subsidence or being hit by a car. This matter is currently undergoing investigation to ascertain the best course of action.
- High level barrier – Members were informed that, due to the high winds recently experienced, the barrier was bent when in the up position and had to be removed, and a "Damage to property" incident report form was being completed and forwarded to our insurers for consideration.

Noted.

## **LS/2006/122 : FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **Belvoir**

- The Area Manager outlined that urgent consideration (within the next 12 months) had to be given to major refurbishment or replacement of the current main hall floor.

Councillor Beattie asked if the Officer could provide costings for the floor to be filled and re-floored, as the current flooring was unsuitable for music events/dances etc, and a similar new floor at the Cregagh Community Centre was also proving prone to damage.

The Area Manager assured Members that the most suitable type of flooring for the facility would be chosen. He stated that the present floor was only unsuitable for 2 events, which were held during the course of the year, when the floor was protected with mats. However, he advised that although it was an excellent multi-purpose floor, its composite nature meant that it was susceptible to damage from tables and chairs, and spilled liquids.

In response to Councillor Beattie's comments, he advised Members that he would obtain a number of quotations in relation to a variety of options for Members' consideration.

- Consideration to be given to a general refurbishment of the centre – painting programme.
- Consideration to be given to an extension to the existing changing rooms and the possible installation of a sauna/steam room to enhance the existing facilities and make it more attractive to potential customers. The changing rooms and shower provision are already inadequate for the increased business that the centre has experienced, which will be exacerbated if the outdoor multi-purpose pitch is constructed at Belvoir.

## **Robinson Centre**

- Consideration of a major refurbishment programme to the fabric of the building with concentration being on the changing areas in all areas of the building where the main body of problems and complaints arise from. A general cosmetic upgrade (some painting and tiling) is also necessary to freshen the centre, and the Area Manager advised that this was now all in hand.
- Consideration to be given to the replacement of the 2 current saunas with either new saunas or a combination of a new sauna and new steam room. Saunas would cost in the region of £6,000 each and a steam room in the region of £14,000.

- Some of the high level lights in the learner pool need replacement. The electrical contractor has indicated that the complete unit may need to be replaced. To minimise disruption, this work will be carried out close to Christmas and most work will be carried out by in-house staff with assistance from the electrical contractor.
- The Area Manager wished to inform Members that the diving club based at the centre was currently applying for funding to purchase new springboards for the centre and the Sports Development and Grants Officers were assisting in this process.

### **Lough Moss**

- Main hall floor – requires major refurbishment with repair work required to boards and the floor needs to be stripped, sanded, resurfaced and remarked.
- Astro pitch – the contractor that made the most repairs has indicated that he feels that there is probably only 2 years life left in the current pitch. This may be shorter depending on weather conditions and the amount of usage. The estimated cost of a replacement surface is £180,000 although this may increase if the material under the pitch also requires replacement.
- General painting programme throughout the centre to freshen it's appearance.

In response to the various maintenance issues and forthcoming and future recommendations detailed to Members, the Director of Finance & Leisure Services stated that the Robinson Centre Redevelopment Working Group would have to discuss the expenditure required to carry out any refurbishment works and these would need to be included in next year's estimates.

Noted.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **LS/2006/123 : REFEREE'S ROOM – LOUGH MOSS CENTRE**

Councillor Drysdale commented that he had used the Referee's Room at the Lough Moss Centre two weeks ago and he complained that, in addition to the inadequate water pressure, the temperature of the water emitting from the shower had been extremely cold.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That the Area Manager would investigate this matter further.

As there was no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.55 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
CHAIRMAN

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR

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