

CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the Central Services Committee meeting held, in committee, in the Function Suite, Civic & Administrative Offices, Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Castlereagh, BT8 6RB, on Monday 8 January 2007 at 7.30 p.m.

PRESENT:- Councillor Mrs M Chambers (in the chair)

Alderman J Norris MBE
Councillor J Beattie
Councillor J Cochrane
Councillor D Drysdale
Councillor R Hughes MBE
Councillor T Jeffers
Councillor M Long
Councillor G Robinson
Councillor J Spratt

IN ATTENDANCE:- Director of Administration & Community Services,
Assistant Members' Services Officer

APOLOGIES:- Apologies were recorded on behalf of Councillor
Hanvey.

CS/2007/01 : BELVOIR PLAYERS

The Director reported that the Belvoir Players now had their own Studio which was run on a voluntary basis. She advised that the Players had employed an Arts Consultant, Ms Imelda Foley, who was engaged to look at the development of the Studio to include the appointment of a Development Officer. The Director stated that most of the funding for this post would come from other sources but that the group required anchor funding from a statutory body to enable it to access other funding sources. The Chair reminded Members that the Council had previously supported the group with funding of £45,000 to enable them to purchase the land required to develop the Studio.

The Chair then welcomed representatives of Belvoir Players, Ms Imelda Foley and Mr Roger Dane, to the meeting. Mr Dane stated that Richard Mills had been unable to attend as he was opening in the Baby Grand in Belfast that evening. He reported that Belvoir Players had been in existence for about thirty-five years. They had started off in church halls and had then obtained a shed in Drumbo and

in 2000 they were successful in obtaining Arts Council funding of approximately half a million pounds to develop the Studio. Mr Dane reported that since 2000 the players had worked hard to update the facilities and make them available to the local community and the Council.

Ms Foley reported that she had been appointed as a temporary part-time Development Consultant to report on future development of the Studio including analysing the need for a Development Officer. She reported that the Studio had originally been developed as a rehearsal space for the players but its role had changed and it was now used as a performance venue. She advised that Belvoir Players and Belvoir Studio were to become two separate entities in accountancy terms and that the Studio would be registered with Companies House from March 2007.

Ms Foley reported on the level of commitment by the Players to maintain, manage and develop the Studio. She stated that she could not find a comparative model in the whole of the UK run on this scale by volunteers. She reported on very favourable feedback from user groups and hirers with regard to ease of access, lack of bureaucracy and friendly atmosphere.

Ms Foley reported that Belvoir Player's annual turnover was £70,000 - £80,000. This included some one off grants; 25% of income came from hirers and user groups; and the remainder was contributed by the Players who invested box office receipts. Ms Foley stated that there had been 56 performances at the Studio last year and that this would increase in the current year. She reported that there were 124 young people in the group with a waiting list of young people wishing to join. She advised that NISRA had identified Belvoir as having the lowest academic achievement for 16 year olds in Northern Ireland and she considered that this would be something that a Development Officer would need to take into account when developing programmes for young people.

Ms Foley identified marketing as an area that required development and expertise and referred to the need for rebranding in terms of design and signage.

Ms Foley indicated that the Belvoir Players should know by the end of March whether the Arts Council would agreed to the funding request. She stated that the contribution from the Council was needed to secure the Arts Council funding and had been kept as low as possible. In response to a query from Councillor Long, Ms Foley clarified the amount of funding being requested from the Council as £3,900 over a three year period.

Councillor Spratt and other members referred to very successful and enjoyable productions they had attended at the Studio. Mr Dane reported on the installation of electronic retractable seating which improved the facilities and added to the comfort of the venue.

The representatives of Belvoir Players then left the meeting.

After discussion it was proposed by Councillor Robinson, seconded by Councillor Long and

RESOLVED: That the Committee recommend that the Council agree to the request from Belvoir Players for financial assistance in the sum of £3,953 over a three year period, as follows

Year 1	£1,500
Year 2	£1,174
Year 3	£1,279

and that this be referred to the Estimates Sub Committee for inclusion in the relevant budget.

CS/2007/02 : MINUTES

TABLED:

- (a) Minutes of the Central Services Committee meeting held on 4 December 2006 (copy previously circulated)
- (b) Minutes of the Moneyreagh Working Group meeting held on 7 December 2006 (copy previously circulated)

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

CS/2007/03 : AMENDMENT TO MINUTES

Councillor Hughes indicated that her name had been omitted from the list of apologies for the Central Services Committee meeting on 4 December 2006.

Noted.

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION & COMMUNITY SERVICES –COMMUNITY SERVICES MATTERS

CS/2007/04 : SPECIAL CS MEETING (CS/2006/351 refers)

The Director of Administration & Community Services reported that the Chair had agreed to hold a Special Central Services meeting on Wednesday 17 January 2007 at 7.30 pm to deal with the following matters:

- (a) Presentation by Mr Darren Curtis, Community Safety Partnership

- (b) Consideration of the tender proposals by the Moneyreagh Community Facility.

The Director reported that the deadline for receipt of tenders in respect of Moneyreagh Community Facility was 12 January 2007 and that the Consultants had been asked to prepare a report on the tenders for the Committee's special meeting. The Consultants had indicated that there might be a problem in having the bill of quantities reviewed in time. Members felt that, given the urgency of this project and the fact that it had had to be retendered, the Consultants should be instructed that it was imperative that the meeting went ahead on 17 January 2007 as arranged.

Noted

CS/2007/05 : COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION FOR BELVOIR, MILLTOWN AND NEWTOWNBREDA

The Director of Administration and Community Services reported that two funding requests had been received from the above Association in respect of a seeding grant application and a top up grant for the use of Belvoir Activity Centre. She reported that the Association had been formally constituted with effect from 2 October 2006 and Members might wish to consider awarding a £100 seeding grant on this basis.

The Director reminded Members that, in order to encourage a community development ethos at a local level, the Council had adopted a charging policy for community centres which supported community groups and organisations to develop and flourish. However, as inconsistencies within Leisure Services charges remained, a top up scheme had been adopted. The Director reported that the Council's Capacity Building Officer had been asked to obtain further information about the group membership, etc and had hoped to attend the meeting to report on whether the Association met the Council's criteria for a top up grant; unfortunately she was unable to do so due to a car accident.

After discussion it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the matter be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee to enable the Capacity Building Officer to review the details and report back to the Committee.
- (b) that the Association's letter requesting Council assistance be copied to PSNI requesting their comments and, in particular, that PSNI be asked to comment on the assertion that complaints from residents in relation to anti-social behaviour were at their lowest for some time.

CS/2007/06 : UPDATE ON ASTROTURF PITCH AT CREGAGH YOUTH & COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Director of Administration & Community Services reported that the astro turf pitch at Cregagh Youth & Community Centre remained closed and that she had written again to Mrs Irene Knox, Chief Executive of SEELB, asking for an update on the independent arbitrator's report and whether the Board would be pursuing the matter through legal channels. The Director reported that she had been advised that an arbitrator had been appointed and had visited the Centre in late December. However, when she phoned earlier that day seeking an update from the Board on progress made, she had been advised that the appointed arbitrator had withdrawn as they were involved in other work for the Council. She stated that the Board had advised that another independent arbitrator would now have to be identified and appointed.

In response to a query from Alderman Norris, the Director confirmed that the Council was losing revenue of approximately £400 - £500 per week due to the continued closure of the pitch. She also stated that, if teams using the pitch found alternative accommodation, there was a possibility that they would not return when the Council reopened the facility.

Alderman Norris and other Members expressed concern that the Board had done nothing to address the problem. The Chair reminded Members that at last month's meeting a decision had been taken that the Council would indicate to the Board that it was considering the option of replacing the pitch direct and deducting the costs involved from outstanding monies owed to the Board for the original contract. After discussion it was

RESOLVED: that the Council seek legal advice as to the consequences of following this course of action and report back to the Special Central Services meeting on 17 January 2007.

CS/2007/07: DRAFT STRATEGY FOR VOLUNTARY & COMMUNITY SECTOR SUPPORT SERVICES

The Director of Administration & Community Services tabled a letter received from the DSD outlining advance information regarding research being commissioned in order to inform the development of a new strategy for the Voluntary & Community Sector Support Services. She advised that, as a funder of support organisations, the Council would be asked to comment on the development of the strategy. The Director undertook to keep Members advised of any further correspondence received.

Noted.

CS/2007/08 : LETTER FROM CARRYDUFF CEATHRU AODHA DHUIBH – CARRYDUFF FAMILY FUN DAY

The Director of Administration & Community Services referred to a request for Council support for a fun day festival through the provision of a marquee at a cost of £1,200 (copy previously circulated). She advised that Community Services staff had been asked to investigate possible sources of funding through the Northern Ireland Events Company (NIEC) who, it was understood, would be continuing to administer community festival funding for 2007/2008. She stated that the Community Relations Officer was also looking into whether the group would meet the Community Relations Small Grants criteria. The Director undertook to update Members on progress in this regard.

RESOLVED: that officers continue to work with the group to source funding and also process a Community Relations Small Grant application for consideration by the Committee.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

CS/2007/09 : BELVOIR THURSDAY CLUB

(Councillors J Beattie and Hughes declared an interest in this matter)

The Director of Administration & Community Services reported that the Thursday Club had been meeting once a week in Belvoir Activity Centre for 35 years and had a current membership of 40 people plus. She stated that the members were mainly women and were all senior citizens and that the aim of the group was to provide facilities for mental and recreational purposes in the interests of the social welfare of persons aged 55+ in the Belvoir area.

The Director reported that the project for which grant aid had been applied for was a cross community St Patrick's Day celebration on 15th March 2007. She advised that the project would involve the Belvoir group inviting a group of senior citizens from the Ormeau Road area to come along to Belvoir and have a joint celebration that would include dancing demonstrations from two cultures – Irish dancing and Ulster Scots Highland Dancing.

The Director reported that this project had received funding from the Community Relations Programme last year and it was hoped that this year's project would build on the success of it.

Costs applied for

Bright Lights Dancers	£50.00
Irish Dancers	£50.00
Refreshments and food	£355.00

Contribution towards - piper and keyboard player	£45.00
TOTAL	£500.00

RESOLVED: that the Belvoir Thursday Club receive £500.00 towards the cost of a 'joint St Patrick's Day celebration' as the project met the aims and objectives of the Community Relations Programme.

**CS/2007/10 : PROPOSAL FOR CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITY FUNDING SPEED NETWORKING EVENT**

The Director of Administration & Community Services reported that the aim of the event was to provide an intimate, informal opportunity for approx 30 community groups to find out about possible sources of funding and to give them a real opportunity to discuss their project ideas with funding bodies, hopefully matching the project with the most suitable possible funding body. She advised that the following funding bodies would be in attendance:

- Heritage Lottery Fund
- Big Lottery Fund – to include Awards for All, Peoples Millions, Reaching Communities and many other lottery funded programmes.
- Northern Ireland Events Company – community festivals fund.
- Castlereagh Enterprises – small grants programme.
- Castlereagh Borough Council – community relations, community arts and Castlereagh Sports Development Association.

The Director stated that it was envisaged that, with Members' approval, the event would take place on Tuesday 7th February 2007 at 6.30pm.

The Director reported that the financial cost of the event would be for the catering which would be soup and sandwiches @ £5.50 per head for 30 people, totalling £165.00. The Director advised that the course would be 100% funded by the DSD and would be of no cost to Castlereagh Council.

RESOLVED: that the Council contribute towards the catering costs in the sum of £165.00.

CS/2007/11 : SEEDING GRANT POLICY

The Director of Administration & Community Services tabled for Members' information a copy of a draft Seeding Grant Policy which Members were being asked to consider and approve (copy previously circulated). Councillor Long queried whether the clause stating that grants could not be used for the

promotion of religious interests would preclude all church groups from applying for seeding grants. After discussion it was

RESOLVED: that the Council adopt the draft Seeding Grant Policy with an amendment to allow discretion in offering seeding grants to church groups working at local community level outside the scope of their normal pastoral care.

ARTS OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

CS/2007/12 : VERBAL ARTS FESTIVAL 14TH TO 28TH FEBRUARY 2007

The Director of Administration & Community Services reminded Members that they had approved the draft Verbal Arts Programme at the December meeting of the Central Services Committee (CS/2006/342). She reported that the Arts Officer would like to add the following events to the programme:

'18 Miles to Freedom' performed by Valhalla Street Theatre
Belvoir Players Studio
7.30pm Thursday 15th February

Description:

18 Miles to Freedom is a historical drama written by Tom Croft to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the Plantation of Ards and North Down. It tells the story of the Border Reivers who under attack from King James fled Scotland to settle in Ireland in the year 1606 through the medium of drama and song.

Cost: £500 plus donation to Belvoir Players for hire and technical costs (£150).

Community Drama by Open arts
Forestsides Shopping Centre
2pm, Saturday 24th February

Description:

Drama performance by a group of disabled and able-bodied teenagers in Forestsides Shopping Centre.

Cost: £100

RESOLVED: That the Council approve expenditure on the above projects from the Arts Council grant element of the Arts Projects Budget.

CS/2007/13 : SEASONAL SOUNDS SPRING/SUMMER 2007 CONCERT SERIES

The Director of Administration & Community Services reported that the Arts Officer would like to present the following draft programme of concerts for Members' approval:

Performance 1: 'Chopin's Last Tour' Performed by Kim and Robin Colville

Date: Friday 2nd March 2007, 1pm

Location: Castlereagh Civic Centre

Cost: £400 plus hire of Piano (£200)

Description: A piano recital and narration in period costume which tells the story of Chopin's visit to England and Scotland in 1848. The narration includes extracts from his letters, newspaper reviews and tales of Chopin's last travels. The musical content includes Nocturnes, Preludes, Etudes, Fantasy Impromptu, Polonaise in A and Scherzo No 2.

Performance 2: The Open arts Choir and Attic Orchestra

Date: Friday 4th May 2007, 7.30pm

Location: Castlereagh Civic Centre

Cost: £650 plus hire of piano (£200)

Description: The Open arts Choir and Attic Orchestra are an award-winning group of talented disabled and able-bodied musicians who come together to enjoy the experience of music. They will perform an eclectic mix of popular, classic, folk and jazz music and are sure to draw a large crowd.

Performance 3: Kevin Morrow and the Linley Hamilton Quartet

Date: Friday 1st June 2007

Location: Castlereagh Civic Centre

Cost: £550

Description: Kevin Morrow is an up and coming jazz star from Dublin, who has been named as the one to watch in Jazz. Kevin will be accompanied by the acclaimed Linley Hamilton Quartet. The audience can look forward to an evening of soulful blues and jazz delivered in a unique style.

RESOLVED: That the Council approve expenditure on the above concerts from the Arts Projects Budget.

CS/2007/14 : REPORTS FROM OFFICERS – COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Tabled: Reports from the Part-time Community Relations Officer, Community Development Workers, Arts Development Officer and Community Sports Development Officer (copies previously circulated.) The Director of Administration & Community Services drew Members' attention to each of the Community Services Officers' reports attached to her own report.

Noted.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

CS/2007/15 : BAD DEBT

The Director of Administration & Community Services drew Members' attention to an outstanding amount of £56 owed by Greengraves Drama Group and requested approval for writing the sum off as a bad debt. Councillor Jeffers however advised that the outstanding sum had been paid in full and asked officers to investigate why this was still being raised.

RESOLVED: that officers be asked to check into the matter and report back to the Committee.

CS/2007/16 : ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Director of Administration & Community Services indicated that the next quarterly round of advisory committee meetings was coming up and referred to previous discussions of the Committee about changing the format of the meetings in order to encourage greater participation by community groups and not just Centre users. Members noted that, with the possible exception of Cregagh Community Centre, attendance at the advisory committee meetings had always been poor. After discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that Community Services staff be asked to investigate changes to the format of advisory committee meetings that would encourage greater participation by the local community and report back to the Committee.

CS/2007/17: INSURANCE FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

The Director reminded Members that the Council had agreed to look at insurance cover for Community Groups using Council facilities. She reported that, of 120 Community Groups contacted, only 4 responded to indicate an interest in meeting with the Council's insurance broker.

Noted

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm

CHAIRMAN

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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

MAYOR

CHIEF EXECUTIVE