

CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the Leisure Services Committee meeting held, in committee, in the Function Suite, Civic & Administrative Offices, Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Castlereagh, BT8 6RB, on Thursday, 6 September 2007, at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT:-

Alderman J Norris MBE	
Councillor Mrs A M Beattie	(until 6.35 pm)
Councillor J Beattie	
Councillor Ms J Bunting	(from 7.00 pm)
Councillor Mrs M Chambers	
Councillor Mrs S Duncan	
Councillor C Hall	(until 7.55 pm)
Councillor M Long	(in the Chair)

IN ATTENDANCE:- Director of Leisure Services, General Manager of Leisure & Marketing, Business Manager, Technical Manager, Capital Project Manager and Assistant Members' Services Officer

APOLOGIES:- Apologies were recorded on behalf of Councillors Drysdale, Hanvey, Mrs McCoy and Tosh

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF LEISURE

LS/2007/103 : TRADING ACCOUNTS

The Business Manager took Members through the trading accounts for the three leisure centres. She advised that the Robinson Centre had experienced a reduction in income compared to the same period last year, although expenditure had remained the same, therefore the net cost of running this facility is slightly behind the estimate to date. Lough Moss and Belvoir, however, whilst showing an underachievement in income is also showing an underspend in expenditure, and are therefore remaining ahead of budget.

Noted.

LS/2007/104 : PITCH AT BELVOIR – ENABLING WORKS AND FLOODLIGHTING FOR SYNTHETIC PITCH

The Capital Projects Officer went through the details of tenders received, and he referred to the scoring criteria to demonstrate how each company had scored. All companies except one had provided evidence of Constructionline registration, a condition of tendering. All companies except one had provided evidence of third-party health and safety accreditation. References had been checked with Roads Service and

Colin Glen Trust.

Following careful consideration, the tender submitted by Maurice Flynn & Sons Ltd, at a sum of £63,700 plus VAT, was recommended for acceptance.

The Capital Projects Officer advised that a pre-contract meeting had been proposed for 13 September, and work was scheduled to commence on 17 September 2007.

Following some discussion, Councillor Duncan proposed and Councillor Beattie seconded, and it was

RERSOLVED:

- (a) That the tender submitted by Maurice Flynn & Sons Ltd for the sum of £63,700 plus VAT be accepted to carry out enabling works and floodlighting for a synthetic pitch adjacent to Belvoir Activity Centre
- (b) That the tender submitted by John McQuillan (Contracts) Ltd. for the sum of £67,378.20 plus Vat is designated first reserve.
- (c) That Members recommend that the Mayor sign the contract documents.

LS/2007/105 : LEISURE SERVICES ESTIMATES 2008-2009

The Director of Leisure took Members through the first draft of the Estimates for 2008-2009. She advised that increases related mainly to salaries and wages, although savings had been calculated where possible. Existing and additional projects had been categorised into statutory, highly desirable and desirable.

Councillor J Beattie stressed the importance to keep costs to a minimum.

Noted.

LS/2007/106 : MINUTES OF THE LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7 JUNE 2007

Noted.

LS/2007/107 : UPDATE ON THE WIND TURBINE AT LOUGH MOSS FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER LEISURE & MARKETING

The General Manager Leisure & Marketing tabled a report following the recent closure date for tenders. He advised that an advertisement for tenders for the wind turbine project had been placed in the European Journal, and three tenders had been received by 31 August 2007. However, none of the three tenders demonstrated sufficient experience in the construction of similar sized projects to be recommended. The

General Manager Leisure & Marketing recommended that they be rejected and that a new tender document be prepared. The General Manager advised that the Department of Finance & Personnel had still not confirmed if the grant for £107k could be carried over. A number of dilemmas and options were presented including the fact that this grant would now only cover approx 60% of the cost of the project. He suggested a meeting with Officers from the Department of Finance & Personnel to discuss a possible extension of the deadline. Should it not be possible to carry the grant forward, the Council could re-apply for a 100% grant in November 2007, based on newly drawn up tender, should this be necessary. However, there was no guarantee that the application would be successful. The General Manager Leisure & Marketing also agreed to provide a cost benefit analysis in respect of savings to the Council. He concluded his report by advising that any change to the make, model or location of the wind turbine will require either an amendment or new planning application.

Following some discussion, it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Council reject the tenders received in respect of the wind turbine and that the tender be re-advertised, specifying capability not make or model.
- (b) That a meeting be arranged with representatives from the Department of Finance & Personnel to seek an extension for the deadline of the grant to March 2009 and request permission to change make and model if necessary.
- (c) That the General Manager Leisure & Marketing draw up a cost benefit analysis in respect of savings to the Council.

REPORT FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER LEISURE & MARKETING

LS/2007/108 : SAUNAS AT THE ROBINSON CENTRE (Minute LS/2007/89 refers)

The Director of Leisure referred to the above Minute, when it was resolved to provide the cost of replacement of the saunas as well as quotations to repair the existing ones for comparison. A quotation had been received from Sven Saunas to supply new benches at a cost of £213.85 plus VAT each plus carriage. The total cost for replacement of all eight benches would be £1,710.80 plus VAT and carriage. A replacement sauna with under-bench heating system (no open oven) and additional windows would cost approximately £7,850 plus VAT. A steam room of similar size would cost approximately £18,000 plus VAT. The Director also pointed out that the committed budget to date for Buildings Repairs and Maintenance stood at £7,800 out of an annual budget of £15,000, and for Fixed Plant the committed budget to date stood at £4,300 out of an annual budget of £10,000.

The Area Manager Leisure and the Technical Manager had inspected the saunas, and

both felt that the lower areas were capable of supporting new benches, provided that new panels were purchased in the next financial year to ensure the safety of users.

Sven Saunas had indicated that new benches could be utilised if the Council purchased new saunas within the next 12 months, which would reduce the overall cost.

Following some discussion, it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) That eight new benches be purchased at a cost of £1,710.80 plus VAT and carriage from Sven Saunas
- (b) That the Leisure Services Committee consider the purchase of new saunas (excluding eight benches) or a sauna/steam room combination in the new financial year.

LS/2007/109 : VANDALISM AT THE ROBINSON CENTRE

The Director of Leisure advised that a new security fence at the rear of the complex had been installed.

Noted.

LS/2007/110 : STAFF INCENTIVE SCHEME

The Director of Leisure outlined details of discounts for staff to complement existing arrangements at DIIB and the Golf Course intended to encourage Members and staff to adopt a healthier lifestyle:

Robinson Centre

- Free swimming for all CBC staff and Members during normal operating times
- Free use of the sauna/spa pools during normal operating times
- General 20% discount on food/beverages from the Dolphin Café, with the exception of fruit, confectionary, crisps, muffins etc, and tea/coffee hot chocolate at 30p

Lough Moss

- Free use of the sauna/steam room during normal operating times

These offers would only be available to Members and CBC staff. The General Manager Leisure & Marketing commented that swimming was a resource which was unlikely to be fully exhausted and therefore there was no opportunity cost to the Council.

Following some discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That Officers prepare a report detailing discounts available to staff at all Council facilities for the next Leisure Services Committee meeting.

LS/2007/111 : COACHING RATES

The Director of Leisure outlined the difficulties experienced by the Council's leisure centres in attracting coaches, as the rates paid were lower than those paid by other Councils. For comparison, she presented a chart showing the rates paid by other Councils, and she further provided a chart showing proposed increases in coaching rates:

	Current rate	Proposed rate
Swim Coaching/Teaching	£7.50	£10.00
Assistant Swim Coach	£6.41	£8.00
Aerobics-based activity	£20.00	£25.00
Martial Arts/Trampolining/ Canoeing	£10.00	£15.00
Gymnastics Coach	£10.00	£15.00
Assistant Gym Coach	£7.50	£8.00

If implemented, these rate increases would result in the following additional cost when based on the current number of classes being held:

Robinson Centre	£11,500
Lough Moss	£9,500
Belvoir	£9,200

Following some discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That approval be granted for the implementation of the coaching rate increases as outlined by the Director of Leisure, when operationally appropriate to do so, and that provision be made in the Estimates for 2008-2009.

LS/2007/112 : SHOKK YOUTH FITNESS SYSTEMS

The Director of Leisure stated that Shokk had indicated that they would like to give a presentation to the Committee to highlight their products and services and provide a business case and costs regarding fitness systems for the 8-16 age group. She continued to say that the current provision from Breathe was designed predominantly for the 16+ age group, and the introduction of the products and services provided by Shokk would assist in encouraging young people in the area to adopt a healthier lifestyle.

Following some discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That Shokk Youth Fitness Systems be invited to give a presentation to the Committee at its November meeting.

LS/2007/113 : ANNADALE HOCKEY CLUB

The Director of Leisure referred to correspondence received from Annadale Hockey Club regarding the provision of an artificial pitch at the Lough Moss Leisure Centre. Officers had replied that the Committee wished to visit several sites at different locations before reaching a decision. The following sites had been suggested:

3rd generation rubber-based pitch – Olympia Leisure Centre or Ashfield Boys' School – suitable for football, rugby and Gaelic training

Sand-dressed – Campbell College – favoured by Annadale HC (aside from a water-based pitch), but predominantly suitable for hockey and not football, rugby or Gaelic

Following some discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That Members' Services liaise with Members to arrange visits to the abovementioned venues.

LS/2007/114 : OPPORTUNITY YOUTH

The Director of Leisure advised that Opportunity Youth, a registered charity working in conjunction with the Department for Employment & Learning, which had recently been awarded the contract to initiate the 'JOB READY' programme across 11 areas in Northern Ireland. The scheme was due to begin in September 2007, and the charity had asked whether the Council would be prepared to grant approval for the use of the meeting room in Belvoir Activity Centre at a discounted charge of £5,000 for a 40-week period. Opportunity Youth had indicated a willingness to sign up to any Service Level Agreement the Council considered appropriate and that funding had been secured until 2010 with a possibility that this would be extended.

Following some discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That approval be granted to Opportunity Youth to use the meeting room in Belvoir Activity Centre at a discounted charge of £5,000 for a 40-week period.

LS/2007/115 : LETTER FROM IFA

The Director of Leisure referred to correspondence received from the IFA, advising that the IFA had been successful in securing funding from the Department of Culture, Arts & Leisure to assist in a facility development programme. Funding will be available to clubs to undertake ground/facility improvements according to UEFA and IFA ground criteria, with maximum funding available of £300,000, £200,000 and £75,000 respectively.

These amounts represent 85% of total project costs, with clubs expected to contribute the remaining 15%. The IFA were asking whether the Council would consider becoming a partner in this programme, as clubs within the Borough might approach the Council for funding.

The Director stated that she would investigate further and report back to the Committee at a future meeting.

Noted.

LS/2007/116 : ESTIMATES PROCESS 2008-2009

The Director of Leisure provided a list of costs for possible inclusion in the 2008-2009 Estimates, which had been tabled at the June Committee meeting, and which had now been prioritised for Members' consideration.

During the ensuing discussion, Members raised concerns in respect of expenditure relating to maintenance/refurbishment of the Robinson Centre, and Councillor Chambers suggested that discussion regarding the Robinson Centre be referred to Council.

RESOLVED: That discussion regarding maintenance/refurbishment of the Robinson Centre and its long-term future, be referred to Council.

LS/2007/117 : COVENANT AT THE ROBINSON CENTRE SITE

The Director of Leisure stated that in order to facilitate the contract with EZE Fitness covenants which should have been lifted a number of years ago, were now being addressed. Several other covenants remained in place on the site of the Robinson Centre, which restrict the options for future use. The Director now recommended that the Council contact NIHE, the original land owner, to request removal of these covenants. In 2002 the VLA had estimated a cost of £37,000 to lift all covenants. However, this would need to be revised by the VLA.

Following some discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That the Director of Leisure progress the lifting of the remaining covenants on the site of the Robinson Centre and report back at a future meeting on this matter.

REPORT FROM THE TECHNICAL MANAGER

LS/2007/118 : ELECTRICITY CONTRACT FOR ROBINSON CENTRE

The Technical Manager advised that the electricity contract for the Robinson Centre was due for renewal in June 2007. Quotations had been received from ESB and Energia,

with Energia being more competitive. Temporary approval had been granted in June, provided that this matter was brought to the Leisure Services Committee in September 2007 for retrospective approval of renewal of the contract with Energia.

Furthermore, the Technical Manager indicated a possible overspend in the Electricity budget for the Robinson Centre, due to an increase in electricity tariff.

Following some discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That retrospective approval be granted for the renewal of the contract with Energia for the supply of electricity to the Robinson Centre.

LS/2007/119 : OVERSPEND ON SERVICE CONTRACT CODE FOR ROBINSON CENTRE

The Technical Manager advised that at 24 June 2007 the committed spend in the Service Contract budget for 2007-2008 was £4,310. Since then £5,330 had been allocated for servicing of the UVAZONE plant, resulting in a total spend of £9,640. The total amount allocated in the Estimates to the Service Contract budget was £6,000 for 2007-2008. The Technical Manager further stated that a further £2,144 would be committed at a later stage of the current financial year, resulting in an overspend in the budget.

It had previously been estimated that servicing costs of the UVAZONE would be £5,330. However, due to a leaking vessel, an additional cost of £2,276 had arisen, bringing the total to approximately £6,600 out of the total of £10,000 allocated to the Fixed Plant R&M budget.

Noted.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

LS/2007/120 : SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

The Director of Leisure reported that a meeting had taken place with Tesco regarding sponsorship opportunities. She indicated that Tesco were supportive of a proposal to run a 'Tesco' league, whereby funding for the whole project would be provided by Tesco, which would include pitch hire, referee costs, prizes etc. Although there would be no income for the Council, this sponsorship would provide a service to the community at no cost to the Council.

Noted.

LS/2007/121 : INCREASED ANNUAL LEAVE FOR RELIEF WORKERS

The Director of Leisure advised that in line with the Working Time (Amendment) Regulations the minimum number of days annual leave entitlement for relief workers had been increased from 20 days to 24 days, effective from 1 October 2007. She stated that she would provide Members with a cost analysis at the October Committee meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Director of Leisure provide Members with a cost analysis in respect of the increased annual leave for Relief Workers at the October Committee meeting.

As there was no further business, the meeting concluded at 8.30 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Adopted by the Council this _____ day of

_____ 2007 with the exception of

Minute Nos. _____

MAYOR

CHIEF EXECUTIVE