

Some information is excluded under FOI

## **CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the proceedings of the Leisure Services Committee meeting held, in committee, in the Committee Room, Members' Corridor, Civic & Administrative Offices, Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Castlereagh, BT8 6RB, on Thursday, 3 December 2009, at 7.00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Councillor D Drysdale  
(in the Chair)

**ALDERMEN:** J Norris MBE

**COUNCILLORS:** Mrs A M Beattie (from 7.10 pm)  
J Beattie (from 7.10 pm)  
M Copeland  
Mrs S Duncan  
B Hanvey (until 7.30 pm)  
Mrs V McCoy  
C Tosh  
L Walker

**IN ATTENDANCE:** General Manager Leisure & Marketing, Business Manager, Area Manager Leisure and Members' Services Officer

**APOLOGIES:** Apologies were received on behalf of the Acting Director of Leisure Services and Alderman White

**TABLED : MINUTES OF THE LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5 NOVEMBER 2009 (copy previously circulated)**

### **MATTERS ARISING**

**LS/2009/166 : ECONOMIC APPRAISAL FOR THE ROBINSON CENTRE AND LIFTING OF RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS (Minute LS/2009/162 refers)**

Councillor Drysdale stated that consideration of the economic appraisal for the Robinson Centre and the lifting of restrictive covenants had been passed by Council, subject to referral to the Finance & General Purposes Committee to determine if funding was available.

Noted.

**LS/2009/167 : WIND TURBINE (Minute LS/2009/146 refers)**

The General Manager Leisure & Marketing tabled graphs showing consumption of electricity and savings achieved since the installation of the wind turbine at the Lough Moss Centre. For comparison, he provided the

statistics from 2008 and 2009, and he stated that particularly during the winter the wind turbine was beneficial.

Noted.

**LS/2009/168 : STATUTORY CHARGE AT LOUGH MOSS (Minute LS/2009/160 refers)**

The General Manager Leisure & Manager tabled a map and an aerial view of the area around the Lough Moss Centre and showing the land under consideration. He advised that the statutory charge on this land was £1,100. If the Council decided to pay this sum, there would be no future charges appearing in future planning searches and would remove any legal restrictions.

Following some discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That the Council be recommended to grant approval for the payment of statutory charge relating to land around the Lough Moss Centre in order to avoid charges appearing in planning searches and to remove any legal restrictions.

**LS/2009/169 : REPAINTING OF LOUGH MOSS (Minute LS/2009/143 refers)**

The General Manager Leisure & Marketing advised that some quotations had been received in respect of repainting Lough Moss Centre, although he was awaiting some further quotations. He estimated the total cost of the work at approximately.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That approval be granted for the repainting of Lough Moss Centre once all quotations had been obtained.

**REPORT FROM THE ACTING DIRECTOR OF LEISURE SERVICES  
(copy previously circulated)**

**LS/2009/170 : TRADING ACCOUNTS**

The Business Manager took Members through the trading results for the three Leisure Centres up to the period ending 31 October 2009. She reported an overall favourable variance in comparison to the year-to-date profiled budget. She also added that there was a 27% reduction in actual net cost to the same period last year in relation to the Robinson Centre. This had been achieved by an increase in income and a reduction in expenditure, which was largely due to the inflated cost of utilities in 2008-2009 and increased efficiencies gained during the current financial year in relation to the combined heat and power plant.

The Business Manager highlighted the current under-achievement in relation to income at the Belvoir Activity Centre and Lough Moss, which had largely been a result of down time in relation to the replacement of the floor surface in the Sports Hall at Belvoir and resurfacing of the artificial pitch at the Lough Moss Centre.

The Area Manager Leisure reported that, since the resurfacing of the artificial pitch in Lough Moss, there had been fewer cancellations.

Councillor Walker congratulated staff at the Robinson Centre for achieving the current level of net cost, particularly as this was a wet facility that was costly to maintain.

Noted.

#### **LS/2009/171 : UPDATE ON LEISURE ESTIMATES 2010-2011**

The General Manager Leisure & Marketing advised that he had nothing further to report since the previous meeting.

Noted.

### **REPORT FROM THE AREA MANAGER LEISURE**

#### **LS/2009/172 : LOCKER BREAK-IN AT THE ROBINSON CENTRE**

The Area Manager Leisure advised that he had met with the gentleman concerned to discuss his lost possessions and to offer apologies for the delay in resolving the matter. The gentleman had indicated that, after taking legal advice, he had been advised that he had a very strong case and should take the matter through the small claims court. However, he agreed to defer further action until after the Leisure Services Committee meeting.

Members were also updated on the outcome of a recent Small Claims Court action.

Following some discussion, Members decided to take a vote in respect of whether to pay compensation to the gentleman. The result of the vote was as follows:

In favour	1
Against	7
Abstain	2

Therefore it was

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee with its delegated powers agree not to offer compensation to the gentleman who lost some personal possessions during a locker break-in at the Robinson Centre.

## **LS/2009/173 : CLOSURE OF ROBINSON CENTRE MAIN / DIVING / PADDLING POOL FOR ESSENTIAL MAINTENANCE**

The Area Manager Leisure advised that the main/diving/paddling pools would be closed for up to five days, beginning on 14 December 2009 to allow for some essential maintenance to be undertaken in the pool areas and changing rooms. A deep clean of the pool sides and changing rooms would also be carried out. The Area Manager Leisure added that every effort would be made to minimise business interruption and, where possible, the pools would be made available to the public at certain times.

Noted.

## **LS/2009/174 : COMPLAINT ABOUT CAR PARKING AVAILABILITY AT THE ROBINSON CENTRE**

The Area Manager Leisure advised that a number of complaints had been received in respect of car parking availability at the Robinson Centre, particularly during the day Monday to Friday. He further stated that car parking within the facility itself was limited and there were only two designated disabled spaces. The Road Service Eastern Division had been contacted to ascertain if there was any way of alleviating the situation, particularly as there had been a suggestion that the car parking area was being used by commuters into Belfast on a park-and-ride basis. The suggestions to alleviate the situation included:

- Re-mark the car parking bays along Montgomery Road to maximise the spaces available and minimise poor parking.
- Designate disabled only spaces along Montgomery Road at regular intervals, including in front of the Robinson Centre.
- Look at the possibility of having a number of time banded spaces (two hours maximum) to minimise the use of spaces for park-and-ride use.

The PSNI at Lisnasharragh opposite the Robinson Centre had also been contacted and an email had been issued to all those within the station asking them not to use the Robinson Centre car parking area. In addition to this, Leisure Centre staff had been monitoring the use of the centre car parking spaces, and where there was evidence that the vehicle driver was not using the centre facilities, he/she had been diplomatically asked to park outside the centre car park. This was, however, not implemented on a daily basis, due to the associated staff costs.

Councillor Beattie enquired whether the land at the back of the Robinson Centre would be suitable for staff car parking. The General Manager Leisure & Marketing replied that this area was not fenced off, therefore there could be a security risk to staff cars.

Councillor Drysdale requested that Officers investigate whether the area at the back of the Robinson Centre could be made more suitable for car parking and report back to Committee when the information is available.

RESOLVED: That Officers investigate whether the land at the back of the Robinson Centre could be made suitable for car parking.

#### **LS/2009/175 : TOUR OF THE NORTH 2010**

The Area Manager Leisure referred to a previous request from the organisers of the 2010 Tour of the North to host the Saturday stage of the event rather than the customary Easter Monday stage. As both the Billy Neill Centre and the Lough Moss Centre anticipate normal business activity on Easter Saturday, Officers had recommended that it would not be suitable to host the event, given the interruption to normal business by way of cancellation of long-term bookings. Due to a logistics issue, the organisers were still keen to have the Castlereagh-based stage on the Saturday and they had suggested that the event base could be staged in a local sports club or school, both of which should provide adequate car parking and shower facilities. As the event had been operating at a loss for a number of years, the organisers still required the support of all of its supporters and sponsors and to this end they had asked for financial support to help meet the event costs. The Mayor would still play a part in the event at the start and finish, although this would be at a non-Council location and the Council's contribution would be fully publicised as in previous years.

During the ensuing discussion, Councillor Drysdale suggested to offer Moat Park, as it would be suitable to host the event. He further sought Members' views in respect of sponsorship.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Council be recommended to suggest the use of Moat Park for the Castlereagh-based stage of the 2010 Tour of the North and financial sponsorship.
- (b) That Officers ascertain that the Council's contribution will be publicised as in previous years.

#### **LS/2009/176 : ARTIFICIAL PITCH AT LOUGH MOSS AND BELVOIR**

The Area Manager Leisure sought Members' views regarding an amendment to the current artificial pitch pricing policy at Belvoir and Lough Moss. He advised that Sunday was perceived as being a peak period and was priced accordingly, although it was one of the least popular days for bookings. The Area Manager Leisure sought approval to reduce the current peak prices on Sundays to off-peak prices in an attempt to increase bookings.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That the Council be recommended to grant approval to reduce the current peak prices on Sundays to off-peak prices in the Belvoir Activity

Centre and the Lough Moss Centre, in an attempt to increase bookings and report back to the Committee at a later date once the new policy had been publicised and established.

### **LS/2009/177 : UPDATE IN RESPECT OF PROPOSALS TO TRANSFER SITES POST-RPA**

The General Manager Leisure & Marketing referred to previous consideration by the Committee that the Acting Chief Executive write to the Minister for the Environment in respect of clarity over the transfer of assets and liabilities. However, the Acting Chief Executive had suggested that the matter should be deferred to the Transition Committee for consideration and correspondence issued from that body.

Councillor Beattie was not in favour of writing to the Minister. He felt that, as the Transition Committee would soon receive statutory powers, any issues relating to the transfer of assets and liabilities should be dealt with then. Furthermore, he felt that more clarification was needed.

Councillor Walker agreed that the correct procedure would be to defer consideration of the transfer of assets and liabilities to the Transition Committee.

Following further discussion, it was

**RESOLVED:** That the Acting Chief Executive prepare a report in respect of the Council's concerns regarding the transfer of assets and liabilities for the next Transition Committee meeting with a view to the Transition Committee seeking clarification from the Minister.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **LS/2009/178 : JANUARY 2010 LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING**

The General Manager Leisure & Marketing sought approval to table some reports at the January Committee meeting rather than send them along with the agenda, due to time restrictions during the holiday period.

**RESOLVED:** That approval be granted to Officers to table reports at the January Committee meeting rather than send them along with the agenda, due to time restrictions during the holiday period.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.05 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
CHAIRMAN

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

Adopted by the Council this \_\_\_\_\_ day of  
\_\_\_\_\_ 2009 with the exception of

Minute Nos. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR