

## **CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the proceedings of the Special Council meeting held in the Council Chamber, Civic & Administrative Offices, Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Castlereagh, BT8 6RB, on Thursday, 18 November 2010, at 7.10 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor V McCoy  
(in the Chair)

**ALDERMEN:** J Beattie  
J Norris MBE  
J White

**COUNCILLORS:** AM Beattie  
M Copeland  
D Drysdale  
S Duncan  
C Hall  
T Jeffers  
M Long  
G Robinson  
J Spratt MLA

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Director of Leisure Services, General Manager Leisure & Marketing, Client Manager and Members' Services Officer

**APOLOGIES:-** Apologies were received on behalf of Aldermen Henderson and Rice, Councillors Chambers, Cochrane, Skillen and Tosh and the Acting Chief Executive

### **2010/787 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no expressions of interest.

Noted.

### **2010/788 : PRESENTATION BY THE SALVATION ARMY TRADING CO LTD RE: RECYCLING AND ENVIRONMENTAL WORK**

The Mayor welcomed Mr Trevor Shaw, Operations Manager for Salvation Army Trading Company, to the meeting.

Mr Shaw stated that the Salvation Army's work centred around recycling and environmental work, with the main focus being on working with other charities

and the provision of, for example, shelter for the homeless, residential homes for elderly people in the early stages of dementia, provision of Christmas dinners and gifts for children etc. He went on to outline the work of Sack Call, the Salvation Army's recycling operations, as follows:

- 100 retail shops throughout the UK
- Separate from other shops
- Commenced in 1991, with a remit to generate funding for the Salvation Army
- Operate with 340 local authorities
- Provision of clothing banks in the UK
- Collection schemes have generated £16 million
- No payment to public or local authorities for donated clothing
- Donation of £400,000 to Children in Need, £150,000 to Hospice and cancer charities
- Has undergone risk assessments
- Collections are monitored and information transmitted to Head Office
- Easy access to the website for collection details
- Dedicated helpline to assist the public
- Robust company with financial stability
- Collections began in Northern Ireland in 1992
- Are currently working with 21 local authorities in Northern Ireland
- Approximately 14 bins in Castlereagh
- Clothing is exported and sold in Eastern Europe
- Awareness of responsibility for the future of the environment
- 96% of sorting is carried out in Eastern Europe
- As a result of the decline of manufacturing in the UK, procurement had to be sought overseas
- In 2004, 18,000 tonnes of clothing were processed, out of which approximately 200 tonnes of waste materials were sent to landfill due to non-availability of suitable sorting facility
- Only two to three tonnes go to landfill now, with the aim of achieving zero
- Items donated include CDs, DVDs, toys, electrical goods, books etc
- Many items go to shops for resale, others are separated and recycled
- Clothing is sold overseas at affordable prices
- Monitoring of items unsuitable for reuse, ie items are shredded and manufactured into something else, ie cement
- Assistance available for environmental causes
- Work closely in local communities, ie Christmas dinners, gifts for children etc
- Provision of four community centres, with accommodation for 150 men, emergency beds and a further 28 residential homes
- Programmes to reintroduce people into the community
- Residential homes for the elderly, ie early stages of dementia

- Clothing collection scheme helps to support the schemes in Northern Ireland

Following the presentation, Councillor Robinson enquired how the Council could help the Salvation Army. He continued to say that there were some collection banks in the Castlereagh area as well as Bryson House collections. Councillor Robinson asked whether there could be some collaboration. Mr Shaw stated that the Salvation Army had good financial stability but would be grateful to continue clothing collections in the area. He added that there were two Salvation Army sites in Castlereagh, namely in Cregagh and Carryduff. There were also some bring sites in Belvoir and Ballybeen that were shared with other charities.

The Client Manager advised that clothing collection was part of the Arc 21 contract, with the tender being up for renewal soon. He added that competitive tenders were expected and the Arc 21 contract required the successful tender to have exclusive rights.

Mr Shaw also stated that Sack Call processed all items that were collected and ensured that everything was recycled. Approximately 18 tonnes of VHS recorders were collected every month in the UK. The Salvation Army was present in 120 countries and any funds raised, including overseas, was for use in the UK. However, the Salvation Army did not pay for any items collected.

Councillor Long stated that he appreciated the work carried out by the Salvation Army, and he hoped that the Council would be able to accommodate them in more places throughout the Borough.

Councillor Spratt also acknowledged the work done by the Salvation Army through shelters etc, which was not often advertised. He went on to say that the Council was currently bound to the Arc 21 contract, but he would be dismayed if other charity collections were not permitted, eg in Carryduff and Cregagh. He felt that ratepayers would also be dismayed.

Councillor Beattie stated that she was a supporter of the Salvation Army. She then enquired how many people were employed to collect donated items. She went on to say that, if these collections were stopped, those people employed by the Salvation Army would become unemployed. Mr Shaw advised that 20 people were employed locally. He agreed that if Arc 21 had an impact on collections, this would affect the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army did not carry out door-to-door collections due to theft of items. In the previous year, damage to collection banks had incurred expenditure of £768,000, which was a huge concern.

The Mayor sought Members' views regarding more ways in which the Council could assist the Salvation Army and following some discussion, it was

RESOLVED: That the Client Manager prepare a report in respect of ways to assist the Salvation Army in their recycling and environmental work for a future Committee meeting.

Councillor Jeffers left the meeting at 7.47 pm.

## **2010/790 : ECONOMIC OPTIONS APPRAISAL FOR THE ROBINSON CENTRE – FINAL REPORT**

The Director of Leisure Services referred to her report and reiterated the options considered in the economic appraisal carried out by KPMG. She stated that a further engineering study would need to be carried out to examine the site and to assess the recommendations contained in the report from KPMG. She noted Members' views that complete closure of the Robinson Centre for a period of time so as to facilitate any refurbishment work, would not be considered. The preferred option was to phase refurbishment. However, she advised that the report outlined options which were best value for the Northern Ireland economy as a whole and the estimated public expenditure but that the Council also needed to consider the best way forward for the Council.

Councillor Copeland stated that Members needed to examine the financial implications. Although the Council was in a position to commit to this capital investment, ultimately, ratepayers would be asked to pay for the refurbishment. Councillor Copeland felt that consideration of the financial aspects of the refurbishment of the Robinson Centre should be deferred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

The Director of Leisure Services recalled that Members had previously cautioned against nugatory expenditure at the Robinson Centre until the outcome of the economic appraisal was known. Following their report, KPMG were recommending that full detailed design and costings be developed, based on the report:

- A number of anomalies at the Robinson Centre had resulted from piecemeal additions over the years that had not been looked at holistically. It was believed that heat was being dumped from the pool area into the squash courts and subsequently being expelled by air conditions. This did not make economic sense and there was also the possibility that such corrosive chlorinated air could damage other parts of the centre.
- A detailed survey would look at the entire centre, ie 35-year-old electrical wiring, the roof and heat loss, heating and ventilation etc, and propose a logical and cost-efficient way forward. It would also be possible that such

works could investigate the possibility of appropriate grant funding and could ultimately result in significant efficiencies through energy savings.

- As such expertise does not exist in-house, specialist engineering assistance would need to be sought to progress the outcomes of the report.

Alderman White agreed that a specialist engineering report and structure report in respect of the overall building should be obtained. He added that Members would need an indication of how best to phase the refurbishment, as this would be important in order to maintain an income stream.

Councillor Duncan enquired whether the refurbishment would affect the Council's relationship with Eze Fitness. The Director of Leisure Services replied that it was anticipated that Eze Fitness could be accommodated.

Councillor Spratt left the meeting at this point, 8.33 pm.

Alderman Beattie also felt that it was imperative to obtain exact costings and the length of time it would take to carry out the refurbishment. Furthermore, as the building may not meet current statutory requirements due to its age, he asked whether this would also be addressed. The Director of Leisure Services replied that the specifications would be on a legislative basis. Furthermore, she stated that the sum of £10.23 million included the optimism bias but there was no detailed report to support that sum, therefore a detailed breakdown would be required. A further engineering study could also provide more efficient ways of carrying out the refurbishment, i.e. a five-year packaged phasing.

Councillor Long felt that the recommendations provided were reasonable and he agreed that the Council should move forward and obtain further, more detailed information in respect of phasing of the project, technical issues etc.

Alderman White commented that he would feel uneasy about making an outright decision straightaway. He felt that consideration should be referred to the Leisure Services Committee in the first instance and then to the Finance & General Purposes Committee to consider the financial implications.

The Director of Leisure Services recalled that members of the Estimates Working Group had requested a capital projects schedule for the next five years, which would give specific information to assist prioritising works and provide definitive finance requirements. She advised that the cost for the tender advertisement in the Belfast Telegraph would be approximately £600, therefore she suggested that the advertisement be placed on the Government e-site for tenders at no cost.

The Director of Leisure Services went on to state that the Council's leisure centres required investment for refurbishments. Without this, she added, the Council could incur loss of revenue. Furthermore, some elements of the refurbishments were necessary due to statutory requirements. She sought approval to move on to the next stage, ie an architectural engineering survey, which would ascertain full details of expenditure to the Council. The survey report would then assist Members in considering how to prioritise various elements of the work.

The General Manager Leisure & Marketing then suggested a scoring matrix of suggested tender cost 50%, project understanding/methodology 25% and experience of proposed project team 25%.

Following some further discussion, it was

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That Members note the content of the KPMG Economics Options Appraisal report for the Robinson Centre and accept the findings in it.
- (b) That Members note that the period required to refurbish the Robinson Centre was not specified in the report and, therefore, could be phased over a number of years in order to minimise downtime and ensure business continuity as well as to ensure that no nugatory expenditure would be a consequence of work sequencing.
- (c) That the Council be recommended to commission a specialist architectural and engineering report by tender via website to obtain full detailed design and costings, investigate grant opportunities and present a logical and cost-efficient way forward.
- (d) That the Council be recommended to grant approval for a scoring matrix of suggested tender cost 50%, project understanding/methodology 25% and experience of proposed project team 25%.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 9.00 p.m.

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**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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**MAYOR**