

CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the Leisure Services Committee meeting held, in committee, in the Council Chamber, Civic & Administrative Offices, Bradford Court, Upper Galwally, Castlereagh, BT8 6RB, on Thursday, 6 October 2011, at 6.06 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor P O'Reilly

ALDERMEN: S Duncan
G Rice
G Robinson
M Henderson

COUNCILLORS: Mrs M Chambers
M Copeland
M Gregg (6.59 p.m.)
C Hall
B Hanvey
T Morrow
T Sandford
J Spratt (6.59 p.m.)
J White

IN ATTENDANCE: Director of Leisure Services, General Manager Leisure & Marketing, Business Manager and Member Services Officer.

APOLOGIES: Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors Jeffers, Drysdale and Vitty.

LS/2011/73: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (6.06 p.m.)

Members and officers were invited to declare any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests (including gifts and hospitality) they should have in respect of items on the agenda.

Councillor White declared an interest regarding an item which the Director of Leisure Services was going to raise later in the meeting regarding a request to use the Lough Moss Centre to host a dog show in aid of the Mayor's Charity.

Noted.

TABLED: MINUTES OF THE LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 1 SEPTEMBER 2011 (copy previously circulated) (6.07 p.m.)

Noted.

LS/2011/74: TRADING ACCOUNTS (6.08 p.m.)

Councillor Copeland left the meeting at 6.08p.m.

The Business Manager took Members through the trading accounts for the three leisure centres for the period ending 31 August 2011. She referred to the summary sheet and reported that there was a favourable variance overall in relation to net cost across the three centres, compared to profiled budgets.

Councillor Copeland re entered the meeting at 6.10 p.m.

Alderman Robinson referred to the increased expenditure at the Robinson Centre. The Business Manager clarified that part of this related to the replacement pool filters which cost £21,000.00 which would correct itself over the remaining part of the year.. She also highlighted that an additional weeks wages were included in the current years figures compared to the same period last year. Councillor Robinson then enquired as to the waste disposal costs for leisure facilities and referred to a recent site visit undertaken by the Technical & Environmental Services Committee. The General Manager reported that a full audit of waste disposal was currently being undertaken and stated that the result of the audit would be known in approximately 6 months. The Director of Leisure Services stated that she would like to take a more generic approach to waste disposal throughout the entire Council and would welcome a cross council tender at that time. Councillor Chambers also suggested that Officers should investigate a joined up approach with other local Councils to achieve better economies of scale.

Noted.

LS/2011/75: BREATHE/EZE FITNESS (6.18 p.m.)

The Director of Leisure Services advised that the Council's fitness partners Breathe/Eze Fitness had recently reviewed its operation and were considering phasing out the Breathe name and re-brand purely as Eze Fitness.

The General Manager reminded Members that Mr Sean Thornton of Eze Fitness would be making a presentation at the Special Council meeting to be held on the 20 October 2011. Alderman Robinson requested that this would be the first presentation on the agenda.

RESOLVED: - Members agreed that the presentation from Eze Fitness would be the first item on the agenda for the Special Council meeting scheduled to be held on 20 October 2011.

LS/2011/76: USER GROUP MEETINGS (6.20 p.m.)

The Director of Leisure Services advised that User Group meetings had been organised for the Robinson, Lough Moss and Belvoir Centres as follows:

- Robinson Centre – Wednesday 9 November at 7.00 p.m.
- Belvoir - Tuesday 15 November at 7.00 p.m.
- Lough Moss – Wednesday 16 November at 7.00 p.m.

Noted.

LS/2011/77: LEANDER SWIMMING CLUB/SYCERIKA MCMAHON (6.20 p.m.)

The Director of Leisure Services referred to a letter recently received from Leander Swimming Club requesting additional pool time for one of Northern Ireland's most promising swimmers. The Officer advised that Sycerika McMahon swims for the Leander Swimming Club who use the Robinson Centre on a regular basis and have a very long association with the centre. She recalled a recent feature on the BBC NI news that showed Sycerika swimming at the centre but noted that despite careful PR management, the final aired production was up to the media.

The Director detailed that Swim Ulster were requesting additional pool time for Sycerika to enable her to increase her training programme ahead of the Olympic Games in 2012. The ideal time for Sycerika would be extended swim time during her early morning sessions that currently run from 6.00 -8.00 a.m. Monday to Friday over 48 weeks. Swim Ulster has requested that Sycerika be allowed earlier access to the pool from 5.30 a.m. The Officers stated that this request could be accommodated but any increase would have cost implications due to increased staffing requirements. Options were being investigated with regard to options for reducing such costs and also determining if an element of supervising the additional use of the pool, could be met by the Club itself. The additional cost for staffing would be in the region of £18.00 per day, which would include one member of staff in a supervisory role and another in a lifeguarding role remaining adjacent to the pool. The Director also advised that there were specific operational tasks required at that time of the day which would include the removal of the pool covers.

The Director detailed that both Swim Ulster and Leander were keen to arrange additional pool time but both acknowledged that the additional costs would also be prohibitive to them. Swim Ulster had, however, indicated that they would be prepared to meet 50% of the additional cost . She also advised that Leander were in the process of changing their famous name to Castlereagh Leander, and that this would help cement the long term association with the Council and the Robinson Centre. The Director advised that accommodating the request and allowing the Leander Club access 30 minutes earlier would also be positive from a sports development perspective. She added that Sycerika was an excellent ambassador for sport in Northern Ireland, and her association with the Castlereagh facility was worthy of favourable consideration. She suggested that Leander could possibly assist with elements of the additional staffing requirements and concluded that it really came down to the level of risk that the Council was willing to accept which would obviously need to be endorsed by the insurers ultimately. The cost associated with this arrangement would be in the region of £1400.00 to each partner. Swim Ulster would meet 50% of the gross cost, which with 2 council staff would be in the region of £2800 per year. The Director advised that if the club was able to provide a suitable member to assist with the early morning supervision then this would require written validation so as to ensure

that the person was suitably qualified and experienced. She further advised that this could be worked up with the club and a satisfactory arrangement concluded.

Councillor Copeland left the meeting at 6.27 p.m.

Members were unanimous in their agreement that Syckerika was an excellent ambassador for swimming, Northern Ireland and indeed Castlereagh and agreed that Castlereagh Borough Council should support her request for additional practice time providing Swim Ulster agreed to match fund any additional running expenses, including costs associated with additional staffing requirements.

RESOLVED: - Members recommended that officers liaise with Castlereagh Leander Swimming Club to determine and meet the staffing and supervision needs for the additional early morning session. It was further recommended that members approved the additional costs associated with this additional arrangement and that 50% of these costs would be met by the Council with the remaining 50% being met by swim Ulster, with the Council contribution estimated as being in the region of approximately £1400.00.

LS/2011/78: GRANT OPPORTUNITIES (6.30 p.m.)

The Director of Leisure Services reported that Officers were currently investigating a number of possible grant opportunities at the Council's Leisure sites. She advised that these opportunities would include engagement with the private commercial sector, which may bring continued revenue opportunities to some facilities for a number of years. She undertook to keep Members updated on any progress made but sought authority to submit initial grant applications to lodge the Council's interest, so as not to miss critical deadlines on the proviso that an immediate retrospective report be brought back to Committee on the opportunity.

RESOLVED: - Members recommended that the Director of Leisure Services be authorised to submit initial grant applications, as they may arise, to lodge the Council's interest, so as not to miss critical deadlines.

LS/2011/79: HEALTH AND SAFETY AUDIT AND DISPOSAL OF OBSOLETE ITEMS (6.31 p.m.)

Councillor Copeland re entered the meeting at 6.31 p.m.

The Director of Leisure Services reported that following a recent inspection from the HSENI at the Robinson Centre a number of recommendations had been made. The report had recommended that the stores should be tidied and that all obsolete/unused equipment be disposed off. A list of all such equipment had been drafted and agreed between operation and technical staff and arrangements were being made to have the items disposed of appropriately. She continued that it was anticipated that the cost of disposal would be approximately £800.00, this included the cost of the skips and other costs associated with the disposal of electrical equipment. As there was no

specific provision made for this disposal process, Members were asked to retrospectively authorise an overspend in the waste disposal budget.

RESOLVED: - Members granted retrospective approval for the disposal of obsolete/unused equipment from the stores in the Robinson Centre and noted that this would result in an overspend of approximately £800.00 in the waste disposal budget.

LS/2011/80: UPDATE ON FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE BOREHOLES WITHIN LEISURE SERVICES FACILITIES (6.31 p.m.) (SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT CIRCULATED AT THE MEETING)

Councillor Morrow declared an interest as he had a borehole on a neighbouring property to Dundonald International Ice Bowl.

The General Manager reported that as previously agreed a desk top study into the practicality of extracting water by on-site bore holes to supply water needs to the Robinson Centre, Lough Moss and Dundonald International Ice Bowl had been completed. He referred Members to the full report and summarized that the potential was positive at all three locations.

He continued that the next stage would be to prove the desk top results by way of test bore holes and scientific testing of the samples taken. He advised that the cost of the bore holes depended upon the depth of the hole required, and advised that this could not be accurately predicated as this stage, although he did detail a estimated budget per well. The General Manager then proceeded to detail the potential savings in water charges and the payback period for each well, however, he noted that these figures were only estimates and were very much subject to the final costs of each well. In addition to this he advised that no specific budget had been set aside for this project but he felt that capital provision could be identified from elsewhere within leisure.

Councillor Duncan queried whether the costs for replacement pumps had been included in the figures. She also queried whether the creation of another well could have an impact on the water supply to existing users.

The General Manager replied that replacement pumps had not been included, but he did not anticipate that the cost of these would be excessive and would depend upon the size of pump installed, which in turn would determine the maintenance costs. He added that the report indicated that the bore holes would not impact on neighbouring or existing water supplies.

Alderman Robinson asked what had become of plans to drill a water bore hole at Castlereagh Hills Golf Course. The General Manager undertook to ask the OSU Manager to report at the next Castlereagh Hills Golf Club Board.

Following consideration it was

RESOLVED: - Members recommended to Council that they approve

- (a) progressing to Stage 2 at the Lough Moss Centre with previously agreed Consultants Pentland MacDonald at a cost of £3200.00 plus laboratory costs of approximately £1200.00;
- (b) tendering for drilling works at the Lough Moss centre at a cost of approximately £7800.00. With a scoring matrix of 70% price, 15% methodology and 15% experience & quality;
- (c) forwarding the desk top feasibility study to the DIIB Design Team for progression under DIIB development plans;
- (d) awaiting the outcome from the RC Engineering Survey and the success of the investigations at the Lough Moss Centre bore hole before progressing with stage 2 at the Robinson Centre;
- (e) the re-allocation of an existing capital budget to fund the project.
- (f) the OSU Manager to report at the next Castlereagh Hills Golf Club Board, on plans for a water bore hole at that facility.

LS/2011/81: IMPOSITION OF A BAN FROM THE FACILITY (6.44 p.m.)

The Director of Leisure Services provided the details of an incident of theft from the Robinson Centre in April 2011. She recommended that the minor involved should be banned from all of Castlereagh's leisure facilities for a minimum of 12 months beginning October 2011, with the ban to be reviewed following this period. This would be subject to the release of the youth's contact details by the PSNI.

RESOLVED: - Members agreed that the minor involved in the theft from the Robinson Centre should be banned from Castlereagh's leisure facilities for a minimum period of 12 months beginning 1 October 2011, with the ban to be reviewed following this period.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

LS/2011/82: LAND AT ROBINSON CENTRE (6.45 p.m.)

The Director of Leisure Services reported that following negotiations, the NIHE were now in a position to finalise the sale for the strip of land to the rear of the Robinson Centre at an unchanged cost of £12,000.00.

Councillor White left the meeting at 6.46 p.m.

Members agreed that this transaction should proceed as soon as possible.

RESOLVED: - Members of the Committee recommended that the purchase of the strip of land to the rear of the Robinson Centre at a cost of £12,000.00

should proceed as soon as possible, and therefore requested that the Director of Leisure Services table the matter under 'legal' on the agenda for the October meeting of full Council.

LS/2011/83: USE OF LOUGH MOSS LEISURE CENTRE (6.50 P.m.)

Councillor White re entered the meeting at 6.50 p.m.

The Director of Leisure Services advised that she had received a letter from the Mayor's wife, requesting use of the Lough Moss Leisure Centre, free of charge, during February 2012 to host a charity dog show, with proceeds going to the Mayor's Charity.

The Director of Leisure Services raised a number of concerns about the appropriateness of the facility for this type of event and suggested that other venues be investigated. Alderman Rice concurred with the Director's comments.

Councillor Hanvey left the meeting at 6.58 p.m.

Councillors Spratt and Gregg entered the meeting at 6.59 p.m.

Following detailed discussion of the issues raised Alderman Robinson proposed the use of the Lough Moss Leisure Centre, this proposal was seconded by Alderman Henderson.

Further discussion ensued, during which Councillor Hanvey re entered the meeting at 7.00 p.m. Following which a vote was taken, with 11 Members in favour and one abstention, the proposal was duly carried.

It was therefore

RESOLVED: - Members of the Committee recommended that the permission be granted for the Lough Moss Leisure Centre be used, free of charge, to host a charity dog event on behalf of the Mayor's Charity during February 2012.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 7.02 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Adopted by the Council this _____ day of

_____ 2011 with the exception of

Minute Nos. _____

MAYOR