

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Leisure and Community Development Committee held in the Island Civic Centre, Lisburn, and remotely, on Tuesday 4th April 2023 at 6.00pm

PRESENT: Councillor A McIntyre (Chairman);
The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor S Carson;
Aldermen A Grehan, M Henderson MBE and S Martin;
Councillors R T Beckett, D J Craig, A Gowan,
J Lavery BEM, H Legge and S Skillen.

PRESENT IN A REMOTE LOCATION: Deputy Mayor Councillor M Guy and
Councillor Jenny Palmer.

OTHER MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Alderman J Tinsley.

IN ATTENDANCE: Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing
Head of Communities
Acting Head of Parks and Amenities
Head of Sports Services
Member Services Officers (BF and RN).

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors N Anderson, R Carlin and T Mitchell.

1.1 Sian Mulholland MLA (2.10)

The Chairman paid tribute to the former Councillor, Sian Mulholland, who earlier that day had been co-opted to the Northern Ireland Assembly and thanked her for her contribution to the work of the Committee.

2. Declarations of Interest (2.35)

None.

3. Report of the Head of Communities

3.1 Community Support Grant and Community Festivals' Fund

3.1.1 Community Support Grant (2.55)

At its meeting on 7th March, the Committee had deferred consideration of a report on the outcome on the 2023/24 Community Support Grant to enable a response to be received from the Department for Communities (DfC) on a Council application for additional funding to address a £93,504 shortfall in the amount available. The Head of Communities reported that confirmation had since been received and the Council had been awarded a sum of £313,573, £100,000 of which could be utilised to address the shortfall.

It was moved by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by Alderman M Henderson, and agreed that the Committee exercise its delegated authority, as granted by the Council at its meeting on 28th March, and that a sum of £93,504 be used from the additional funding to ensure that all successful applicants be awarded the full amount based on their weighted score.

3.1.2 Community Festivals' Fund (6.25)

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 7th March, it had deferred consideration of a report in respect of the outcome of the 2023/24 Community Festivals' Fund to enable the Director to ascertain if a shortfall of £15,379 could be sourced within the department's budgets. The Head of Communities reminded Members that DfC contributed 50% towards the fund, but that no confirmation had, as yet, been received on its contribution in 2023/24. However, officials had notified DfC of the outcome of the assessment process and had requested that additional funds be made available to address the shortfall.

The Committee, in the absence of confirmation from DfC regarding its contribution to the Fund in 2023/24, agreed that an additional amount of £15,379 be earmarked from within departmental programmes to enable groups to be funded in accordance with their weighted allocation.

3.2 Former Hilden Primary School (9.22)

At its meeting on 6th September, the Committee had agreed that an application be submitted to The National Lottery Heritage Fund seeking financial support for the redevelopment of the former Hilden Primary School. The Head of Communities reported that correspondence had since been received indicating that £833,846 had been formally offered to support the project. She added that legal advice was being sought on the terms and conditions of the offer.

A number of Members congratulated the officers involved for the work which had been undertaken in progressing the project.

(The Right Worshipful the Mayor joined the meeting at 18:12).

It was moved by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by Alderman S Martin, and agreed that the Committee note the information provided and agree that delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive to sign a formal agreement once legal advice had been considered.

4.0 Any Other Business - Non-Confidential Matters

4.1 Outlying Community Centres (17.45)

Councillor Jenny Palmer proposed that the level of funding available to the Council's outlying community centres be re-examined with a view to increasing the amounts available. The proposal was seconded by Councillor A Gowan.

In response, the Chairman and the Director indicated that this matter would be considered as part of the Council's overall strategic planning process in advance of the new Council term.

Noted.

4.2 Lough Moss Community Garden (22.50)

Both the Deputy Mayor Councillor M Guy and Alderman M Henderson placed on the record their gratitude to Parks and Amenities staff for the work which had been undertaken in the creation of the community garden at the above-mentioned site. In response, the Director outlined the next steps in the project.

4.3 Derriaghy Glen Linear Park (24.30)

Alderman S Martin and Councillor D J Craig, on behalf of the Committee, expressed appreciation to staff from within the Parks and Amenities Section for the work which had been undertaken in restoring Derriaghy Glen Linear Park.

Arising from discussion, Councillor D J Craig referred to the future maintenance of a number of areas within the Linear Park which fell under the remit of Belfast City Council (BCC). In response, the Acting Head of Parks and Amenities confirmed that the issue had been drawn to the attention of BCC officers and that clarity had been sought regarding that Council's responsibilities, as well as a request submitted for an action plan to resolve the matter.

4.4 BMX Track at Seymour Hill (25.22)

Councillor D J Craig sought further information in relation to work which was to be undertaken at the BMX track in Seymour Hill. The Acting Head of Parks and Amenities indicated that work was due to commence in the spring with a view to completion by mid-summer, subject to prevailing ground and weather conditions.

4.5 Billy Neill MBE Country Park (26.30)

Councillor S Skillen thanked the Acting Head of Parks and Amenities for facilitating a meeting at the Billy Neill MBE Country Park with Castlereagh East Members regarding the provision of an entrance to the facility. It was noted that a consultation exercise would be undertaken as part of the progression of that project.

4.6 Department for Communities - Hardship Funding (26.55)

The Head of Communities clarified a matter for Alderman S Martin regarding the various programmes that would be delivered by the Council in respect of the above-mentioned funding stream.

4.7 West Winds Terrace, Annahilt (27.00)

The Vice-Chairperson, Councillor A Gowan, expressed his gratitude to the acting and former Head of Parks and Amenities for the work which had been carried in in the provision a community garden in West Wind Terrace, Annahilt.

5. Confidential Report of the Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing

The Chairman advised that the reason for confidentiality for the following matter was by virtue of the Local Government Act (2014) Northern Ireland, i.e., 'information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council holding that information)'.

It was proposed by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by Councillor T Mitchell, and agreed that the confidential report of the Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing be considered 'in committee', in the absence of members of the press and public.

5.1 Provision of Top Dressing Sand, Top Soil and Associated Products

Proposed by Alderman A Grehan,
Seconded by Alderman S Martin and

Resolved – that the Committee approve the financial appraisal for the above-mentioned materials.

9. Resumption of Normal Business

It was proposed by Councillor A Gowan, seconded by Councillor H Legge and agreed that normal business be resumed.

10. Last Meeting (38.30)

The outgoing Chairman placed on the record his thanks to those who had supported him throughout his period in the Chair, particularly the Members of the Committee, specifically the Vice-Chairman, together with officers from within the Department.

A number of Members congratulated the Chairman for the manner in which he had conducted meetings and promoted the work of the Committee throughout his term.

Councillor H Legge expressed her thanks to the Chairman and to the Committee for the support which they had provided to her in undertaking the roles of Chairperson of the Diamond Jubilee and the King's Coronation Working Group.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 18:47.

Chairman