

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Leisure and Community Development Committee held in the Island Civic Centre, Lisburn, and remotely, on Tuesday 7th March 2023 at 6.00pm

PRESENT: Councillor A McIntyre (Chairman);
Alderman A Grehan; Councillors R T Beckett,
D J Craig, A Gowan, J Lavery BEM, H Legge
and T Mitchell.

**PRESENT IN A
REMOTE LOCATION:** The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor S Carson;
Deputy Mayor Councillor M Guy;
Aldermen M Henderson and S Martin;
Councillors R Carlin, S Mulholland, Jenny Palmer
and S Skillen.

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

1. Apology (0.00.11)

An apology was submitted on behalf of Councillor N Anderson.

(The Chairman welcomed Mr S Mackle, Acting Head of Parks and Amenities, to the meeting).

2. Declarations of Interest (0.00.20)

Regarding item 4.6, King's Coronation Grant Aid, Councillor A Gowan indicated that he was a member of a parent teacher association for a school which had applied for funding.

In respect of item 4.4, Community Festivals Funding, Deputy Mayor Councillor M Guy reported that a relative was associated with a group which had applied for funding.

3. Report of Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing

3.1 Departmental Performance Report – Quarter Three (0.01.02)

The Director outlined the principal aspects of the above-mentioned report, together with the details contained within a table of key performance indicators, which gave an overview of the Department's performance and budget summary during quarter three of the financial year 2022/2023.

The Committee, on the proposal of Councillor T Mitchell, which was seconded by Councillor D J Craig, agreed to note the following:

- the budget summary report for 1st October to 31st December;
- the outturn of operational metrics/service for 1st October to 31st December

- the performance improvement targets and KPIs for 1st October to 31st December.

4. Report of the Head of Communities

4.1 Community Support Grant Aid 2023/24 (0.01.51)

The Committee was reminded that applications for support under the Department for Communities (DfC) Community Support Grant Aid Programme had closed on 21st February. The Head of Communities reported that 83 applications had been received and assessed, of which 77 had been successful. The total amount of funding claimed had been £263,504, which was 37.4% in excess of the £165,000 grant-aid available to the Council.

The Director referred to the Committee's meeting of 6th February, during which she had been authorised to submit a proposal to DfC for additional funding, which could be used to address any shortfall. She indicated a response was still awaited and recommended that the Committee defer the matter to enable it to re-consider, at its meeting on 4th April, a revised report including options that would reflect any potential additional funding received from DfC.

It was proposed by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by Alderman A Grehan, and agreed that the Committee defer consideration of the report and that the Council, at its meeting on 28th March, be requested to delegate authority to the Committee to approve a revised report at its meeting on 4th April.

4.2 DEA Investment Programme Review & Launch of Facilities Fund 2023/24 (0.09.11)

The Head of Communities spoke to a report which reviewed the outcomes of the Council's Community Facilities Fund, which had been introduced in May 2021, with an associated budget of £280,000. In addition, the Committee was provided with an overview of key aims and objectives for the second round of the programme, which would, if approved, be delivered in line with several amendments to enhance accessibility and provide a more equitable distribution of funding across the seven Council District Electoral Areas (DEAs).

During discussion on the under-representation of applications from particular DEAs, the Head of Communities indicated that she would be happy to meet with Members within such electoral areas to examine what assistance could be provided to encourage groups to apply for funding under the programme. In addition, comments made by Councillor D J Craig regarding ensuring the inclusion of a criteria to prohibit the ability of groups or organisations who received funding in the first round in certain DEAs were noted.

It was proposed by Councillor S Skillen, seconded by Councillor D J Craig, and agreed that the Committee note the report and agreed further that the second round of the funding programme proceed in line with the recommendations arising from the review of the first round of the programme.

4.3 Minutes of the King's Coronation Working Group (0.28.17)

The Committee, on the proposal of Councillor H Legge, which was seconded by Alderman A Grehan, noted the contents of the minutes of the King's Coronation Working Group of 11th January 2023.

4.4 Communities Festivals Fund 2023/24 (0.29.41)

(Deputy Mayor Councillor M Guy withdrew from the meeting whilst this matter was under discussion).

The Committee was reminded that applications for support under the above-mentioned Fund had closed on 17th January. The Head of Communities outlined the key aspects of a Table of Outcomes which was appended to the report and indicated that 34 applications had been received and assessed against a pre-agreed criteria, of which 31 had been successful, with three ineligible. The total amount deemed eligible for support, based on a weighted score, was £72,379.96, whilst the amount available was £57,000. Accordingly, the Committee was advised that it had been necessary to reduce the amounts awarded by 21.24% in order to remain within the original budget.

It was proposed by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by Councillor R T Beckett, and agreed that the Committee defer, to its meeting on 4th April, consideration of the report to enable the Director to examine if an amount could be identified from within Council budgets to address the shortfall in funding.

4.5 Housing Liaison Forum (0.40.20)

(Deputy Mayor Councillor M Guy re-joined the meeting).

The Committee noted the contents of the minutes of the Housing Liaison Forum of 14th November 2022.

4.6 King's Coronation Grant Aid Programme (0.45.27)

(Councillor A Gowan withdrew from the meeting whilst this matter was under discussion).

Further to the Committee's decision of 6th December, when it had agreed that a sum of £45,000 be allocated to support community initiatives and events to mark the Coronation on 6th May, with a maximum amount of £500 per application, the Head of Communities outlined the principal aspects of a Table of Outcomes.

She reported that 101 applications had been deemed eligible for support and that the total amount requested had been £50,495. Since that amount was 11% in excess of budget, it had been recommended that the grants be reduced accordingly, and that the groups/events be awarded £445 each.

During discussion, Members referred to the unique nature of the King's Coronation and suggested that the Council re-examine its budgets to identify if an amount could be re-allocated to ensure that the groups received £500, rather than the reduced amount.

Other Members pointed out that, whilst the Coronation was indeed a unique occasion, a precedent would be set in providing additional funds to a grant programme, which had exceeded its budget, when such funds were not available to supplement other grant schemes which had been presented to the meeting.

Proposal

Moved by Alderman A Grehan,
Seconded by Councillor S Mulholland,

That the Committee agrees to adopt the recommendation and all eligible groups be allocated £445.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor S Skillen,
Seconded by Councillor D J Craig,

That the Committee agrees that the recommendation be adopted, subject to the proviso that each group be awarded £500, rather than £445, and that the Director undertakes to re-examine budgets with a view to identifying if an amount could be re-allocated to address the shortfall in funding.

(At the request of Councillor D J Craig, it was agreed that a recorded vote be entered into the minutes).

The amendment was put to the Committee and nine Members voted in favour, with six against, and it was declared carried.

In favour: The Right Worshipful the Mayor S Carson, Councillor R T Beckett, Councillor D J Craig, Alderman M Henderson, Councillor J Laverty, Councillor H Legge, Councillor T Mitchell, Councillor Jenny Palmer and Councillor S Skillen.

Against: Councillor R Carlin, Alderman A Grehan, Deputy Mayor Councillor M Guy, Councillor S Mulholland, Councillor A McIntyre and Alderman S Martin.

The amendment was put to the Committee as the substantive motion and passed without the requirement of a further vote.

4.7 Policing & Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) (1.23.09)

(Councillor A Gowan re-joined the meeting).

It was proposed by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by Councillor H Legge, and agreed that the Committee note the contents of the Policing & Community Safety Partnership's Action Plan for 2023/24.

Arising from discussion, Councillor D J Craig, The Right Worshipful the Mayor and Councillor Jenny Palmer referred to the success of the PCSP's most recent Participatory Budget event, which had taken place at Harmony Hill Presbyterian Church Hall on 3rd March. Members referred to the considerable numbers that had attended and paid tribute to the staff involved for delivering an excellent example of community engagement and partnership working. The Head of Communities outlined how the initiative would be built upon and undertook to convey the Members' comments to the staff involved.

5. Report of the Head of Parks and Amenities

5.1 Lisburn Baptist Church (1.31.45)

It was proposed by Alderman A Grehan, seconded by Councillor H Legge, and agreed that the Committee grant approval to Lisburn Baptist Church to hold a religious service at Wallace Park on Easter Sunday, 9th April. It was agreed also that the relevant byelaw, regarding the hosting of religious services in parks and open spaces, be temporarily set aside for this purpose.

5.2 UK Shared Prosperity Fund (1.32.32)

The Head of Parks and Amenities reported that, in response to an application submitted under the above-mentioned fund, the Council had been awarded a grant of £103,752, which was to be spent by the end of the financial year 2022/23. He explained that the funding would be used in the planting of trees at the new cemetery extension, the provision of disability-friendly paths at the Billy Neill MBE Country Park and miscellaneous improvement works at the Lough Moss Leisure Centre.

The Committee noted the information provided and paid tribute to officers for the work undertaken in securing the funds.

5.3 Live Christmas Trees (1.37.40)

The Head of Parks and Amenities reminded the Committee that the Council procured approximately 23 harvested Christmas trees for towns and villages across the district each year. He explained that a pilot project was to be introduced through the planting of four metre high sustainable trees at Annahilt, Stoneyford, Maghaberry and Moat Park for use each Christmas.

The Committee noted the information provided.

5.4 Woodland Trust – Carbon Credits (1.42.54)

Moved by Councillor M Henderson
Seconded by Councillor A Gowan and

Resolved – that the Committee agrees to recommend to the Council that the Deed of Covenant in Respect of Tree Planting and Woodland Maintenance and Carbon Sequestration between the Council and the Woodland Trust at the Billy Neill MBE Country Park be signed and sealed.

5.5 Use of Wallace Park - Lisburn Féile (1.43.33)

The Head of Parks and Amenities reported that a request had been received by the above-mentioned organisation to use Wallace Park on the afternoon of Friday 28th July for the purposes of a family fun-day event.

A number of Members expressed concern that more clarity was required regarding the impact that the event might have on the park, particularly in respect of the number of days on which it might be closed, the event's size and scope and disruption it may have on other users.

Other Members pointed out that similar requests had been approved by the Committee without the level of scrutiny outlined and it was suggested that the application be approved, as submitted, since the issues raised would be considered in due course as part of the event plan submitted.

Proposal

Moved by Councillor R Carlin,
Seconded by Councillor S Mulholland,

That the Committee agrees to grant the use of Wallace Park to Lisburn Féile for the purpose outlined.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor R T Beckett,
Seconded by Councillor D J Craig,

That the Committee agrees to defer consideration of the request for one month to enable further information to be provided regarding the size and scope of the event, together with an outline of the impact that the event could have on the park's availability and the potential disruption it may have on other users

The amendment was put to the Committee and on a vote was declared lost by seven votes to nine.

The proposal was then put to the Committee and was declared carried without the requirement for a further vote.

6. Report of the Head of Parks and Amenities

6.1 Mary Peters Trust – Request for Funding (2.13.50)

The Committee was informed that correspondence had been received from the Mary Peters Trust requesting the Council to consider making a financial contribution of £1,000 to the Trust to assist in its work with young people through sport across Northern Ireland and the Council area.

It was proposed by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by Councillor J Laverty, and agreed that the Committee approve a donation of £1,000 to the Mary Peters Trust, provision for which had been included within the departmental budgets.

7.0 Any Other Business - Non-Confidential Matters

7.1 Dance World Cup – Portugal (2.19.25)

At the request of Councillor S Skillen, the Director undertook to examine the feasibility of the Council making a financial contribution to a young person from Dundonald who would be representing Northern Ireland at the 2023 Dance World Cup in Portugal.

7.2 World Drumming Record (2.15.55)

Councillor T Mitchell advised the Committee that Lisburn resident Alistair Brown would be attempting to break the world drumming record in May and he was hoping to secure a public space for this purpose. In response, the Director undertook to consult with officers to consider if a suitable Council venue could be identified.

7.3 Seymour Hill Play Park (2.23.30)

The Head of Parks and Amenities provided further clarity to Councillor D J Craig regarding the upkeep of a play park and BMX track in the Seymour Hill estate and on the future maintenance of the site.

7.4 Mr Ross Gillanders (2.37.30)

The Committee was reminded that the meeting was the last that would be attended by Mr Ross Gillanders, Head of Parks and Amenities, before he retired from the Council. The Chairman and several other Members, on behalf of the political parties, paid tribute to Mr Gillanders and thanked him for the valuable contribution he had made during his time with the Council and wished him a long and happy retirement.

The Head of Parks and Amenities thanked the Members for their kind remarks.

(Councillors R T Beckett and H Legge left the meeting at 19:34 and returned at 19:37).

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

The Chairman advised that the reason for confidentiality for the following matters 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 H Legge, 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.

8.1 Procurement of Cemetery Equipment

Proposed by Alderman A Grehan,
Seconded by Councillor D J Craig and

Resolved – that the Committee notes award of contract in respect of the above-mentioned tendering exercise.

8.2 Golfing Business Appraisals

Proposed by Councillor A Gowan,
Seconded by Councillor D J Craig and

Resolved – that the Committee approve the business cases for the work outlined at the Council's golf courses.

9. Resumption of Normal Business

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

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 20:45.

Chairman