

LISBURN & CASTLEREAGH CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Leisure and Community Development Committee held in the Island Civic Centre, The Island, Lisburn and remotely, on Tuesday 2nd February 2021 at 6.01pm

PRESENT: Alderman M Henderson MBE (Chairman)

PRESENT IN A REMOTE LOCATION: Councillor D Honeyford (Vice Chairman)

The Right Worshipful The Mayor
Councillor Hon. Nicholas Trimble

Deputy Mayor, Councillor Jenny Palmer

Aldermen A Grehan and J Tinsley

Councillors N Anderson, R T Beckett, R Carlin, D J Craig, A Gowan, M Guy, S Hughes, H Legge, A McIntyre, R McLernon and S Skillen

OTHER MEMBERS Alderman S Martin

PRESENT IN A REMOTE LOCATION: Councillors A Givan and U Mackin

IN ATTENDANCE: Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council
Acting Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing
Member Services Officers
Technicians
IT Support

IN ATTENDANCE IN A REMOTE LOCATION: Chief Executive
Head of Parks and Amenities
Head of Sports Services
Acting Head of Communities

Commencement of Meeting

The Chairman of the Committee, Alderman M Henderson extended a welcome all present in the Chamber, those attending remotely and to everyone watching on the live stream.

The Chairman outlined a number housekeeping points and then asked that any Member entering or leaving the meeting alert him accordingly so that the Member Services Officer might accurately reflect arrival and departure times in the minutes.

1. **Apologies**

No apologies were recorded.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Chairman, Alderman M Henderson invited Members to declare any interests they might have in relation to the business of the meeting and reminded them of the requirement that they complete Declaration of Interest forms in this regard which had been provided at their places. There were no declarations of interests made during the meeting.

During this item Alderman A Grehan and Alderman S Martin joined the meeting remotely at 6.02pm.

3. Report from the Head of Sports Services

It was agreed that the main report and recommendations of the Head of Sports Services be adopted, subject to any decisions recorded below.

3.1 Mary Peters Trust – Request for Funding

The Head of Sports Services referred to a letter received from the Mary Peters Trust requesting financial support so it can continue to support young people in achieving their sporting ambitions. The Head of Sports Services advised that the Trust has faced increased financial challenges this year as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, but that each year the Trust supports a number of young people across the City.

It was proposed by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Jenny Palmer and agreed to recommend that the Council provide funding of £1,000 to the Mary Peters Trust.

During this item Councillors N Anderson, R T Beckett, M Guy and Alderman J Tinsley joined the meeting remotely at 6.03pm.

4. Report from the Head of Parks and Amenities

It was agreed that the main report and recommendations of the Head of Parks and Amenities be adopted, subject to any decisions recorded below.

4.1 Comber Greenway Ownership and Management

The Head of Parks and Amenities reminded the Committee that officers attend a joint Department for Infrastructure (DfI) and stakeholder councils' working group regarding the future ownership and management of the Comber Greenway. The Council currently has an informal agreement with DfI to assist in regular grass cutting, pruning and sweeping along the approximate 3.6km which lies within the Council boundary stretching from Hanwood to Billy Neill MBE Country Park.

The Committee was provided with correspondence from DfI received following the latest meeting of the Comber Greenway Steering Group held on 9th December 2020 including a short list of options for consideration.

4.1 Comber Greenway Ownership and Management (cont.)

The Head of Parks and Amenities responded to questions regarding the options provided and the level of involvement from other councils. It was proposed by Councillor S Skillen, seconded by Councillor H Legge and agreed to note the Comber Greenway Steering Group options paper and further agreed to recommend that the Council maintain the status quo regarding ownership, management and informal support in the short term, with consideration being given to exploration of options in 2022.

During this item Councillor A Gowan and U Mackin joined the meeting remotely at 6.04pm and 6.05pm respectively.

4.2 Play Park Refurbishment 2021-2022

The Head of Parks and Amenities presented his report on the Council's Play Park Refurbishment programme and reminded Members that the Council have made provision within the capital programme for three refurbishments per year. Members were advised that in 2020-21 the Council, in addition to Hillsborough Forest play area which was separately funded, five further facilities will be completed at Tonagh, Hydebank, Grove, Halftown-Blaris and Dungoyne.

The Head of Parks and Amenities advised the Committee that Wallace Park had last been refurbished in September 2010 and should be considered as part of the Council's refurbishment programme for 2021 -2022. The Head of Parks and Amenities reminded the Committee that Wallace Park attracted a huge footfall, can be considered as a key landmark site within the Council area and attracts visitors both locally and regionally. Due to its scope and scale, the Head of Parks and Amenities advised that the Committee should expect that the full capital programme budget for 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 would be required to complete this refurbishment and indeed possibly more given the regional significance of the park. The Head of Parks and Amenities further advised that the associated policy for inclusive play would be brought to the Committee for consideration at a later date.

Members welcomed the update regarding play parks that will be completed this year and paid tribute to the Head of Parks and Amenities and his team for the high quality of play parks across the Council area.

It was proposed by Councillor H Legge, seconded Councillor S Hughes and agreed to recommend that Council approve the play park priorities for the financial year 2021-2022 as Wallace Park, noting that the Capital Programme budget for 2021-22 and 2022-23 would be required.

During this item Councillor R Carlin joined the meeting remotely at 6.10pm.

5. Report from the Acting Head of Communities

It was agreed that the main report and recommendations of the Head of Communities be adopted, subject to any decisions recorded below.

5.1 Draft Good Relations Action Plan 2021-2022

The Acting Head of Communities presented the Council's draft Good Relations Action Plan for 2021/22 and reminded Members that The Executive Office invites local Government Authorities to apply for funding toward their Good Relations Programme, with The Executive Office committing to 75% of the costs and Councils providing match funding of 25%. In 2019-2020 The Executive Office awarded indicative funding for a three year period, meaning that 2021-2022 will be the Council's final year of this cycle of funding and that a review of the plan and related activities would take place in the incoming financial year in order to inform future plans. Members were advised that due to the tight deadline to submit a response to The Executive Office, it was recommended that the Good Relations Action Plan for 2021-2022 be submitted in draft format with Council approval to follow.

During the discussion of this item, the Vice Chairman, Councillor D Honeyford, expressed his considerations regarding the plan still being current and meeting local needs. He asked if there was the opportunity to reshape the plan in year and the Acting Head of Communities stated that she welcomed feedback from all Members and that a workshop for Members regarding the Audit and review of the plan would be organised for this incoming financial year.

Members of the Committee, namely the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Jenny Palmer and Councillor D J Craig, stated that the development of the Good Relations Action Plan alongside the PEACE IV action plan, has been significant with great results. Members asked that their thanks be conveyed to the officers who have developed these plans.

Councillor N Anderson commended the work that had been carried out through the Good Relations Action Plan and asked that in future plans, the Council increased its engagement with residents from within the Castlereagh South DEA.

Alderman A Grehan further welcomed the programme and asked that more engagement was undertaken with schools for young people with disabilities.

It was proposed by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Jenny Palmer, seconded by Councillor D J Craig and agreed to recommend that the draft Good Relations Action Plan 2021/22 be approved for submission to The Executive Office, in draft format, by the 22nd February 2021 and note that Council approval will be required.

6. Any Other Business

6.1 Resurfacing Programme at Council Parks
Councillor S Skillen

Councillor S Skillen referred to a number of pot holes in Moat Park and asked if the Council have a resurfacing programme to fix pathways within parks. The Head of Parks and Amenities confirmed that he was aware of a number of paths within the Council's parks and cemeteries that needed repaired as well as at some sports sites and recycling centres. He advised that due to the significant costs associated with tarmacking these paths, it had been agreed to spread this work over a number of years, with work being prioritised according to need.

6.2 Signage at Ballybeen Pitch
Councillor S Skillen

Councillor S Skillen sought clarification regarding the Dog Control Orders signage at Ballybeen pitch. The Head of Parks and Amenities advised that the Dog Controls Orders permitted dogs onto most pitches outside of the playing season and during this time the pitch was considered an open space for all the community.

6.3 Department for Communities (DfC) Draft Budget 2021-2022 Consultation
Alderman A Grehan

Alderman A Grehan informed the Committee that the Equality Impact Assessment for the DfC draft budget for 2021-2022 had recently been published and was out for consultation. She further highlighted that as part of proposed budget controls, funding for independent advice centres would be reduced by £1.5million.

She further advised that as a result of the ongoing pandemic, independent advice services were facing new and more challenging pressures and would be needed more than ever to help those facing furlough and unemployment. Alderman A Grehan urged all councillors and parties within the Council Chamber to respond to this consultation before its closing date of 25th February 2021 requesting that this money be restored. Alderman A Grehan proposed that a letter be written to the Minister for Communities to request that no reduction be made in the DfC budget 2021/22 with regards to advice services. During this discussion of this item, Councillor N Anderson suggested that it would be useful to also write to the Finance Minister. During this discussion Members thank Alderman A Grehan for bringing this issue forward.

It was proposed by Alderman A Grehan, seconded by Councillor D J Craig and agreed to recommend that the Council write to the Minister for Communities and Minister of Finance asking that the funding for the independent advice centres be restored.

6.4 Support for Sports Club
Councillor S Hughes

Councillor S Hughes referred to the difficulties facing sports clubs during the last year and in particular, the complexities surrounding clubs' eligibility to apply for financial support from the NI Executive. Members of the Committee echoed Councillor S Hughes' concerns. Councillor S Hughes requested that a report be returned regarding the support that the Council has provided to sports clubs over the last twelve months and also outline opportunities for financial support.

7. Confidential Report from the Acting Director of Leisure & Community Wellbeing

The Chairman advised that the reasons for confidentiality were as set out in the agenda, i.e.:-

7.1 Community Support Programme, DFC Funding
(Agenda Item 6.1 Refers)

[Confidential for reason of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)]

“In Committee”

It was proposed by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Jenny Palmer, seconded by The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Hon. N Trimble and agreed that the confidential report of the Acting Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing be considered “In Committee”, in the absence of members of the press and public being present.

It was agreed that the confidential reports and recommendations of the Acting Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing be adopted, subject to any decisions recorded below and other items noted:

7.1 Community Support Programme, DfC Funding
(Agenda Item 6.1 Refers)

The Acting Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing presented her report on the Community Support Programme and funding provided from the Department for Communities (DfC). Members were provided with a table detailing this expenditure.

During the discussion of this item, Councillor R Carlin asked if any of the funding streams could be provided to assist sports clubs. The Acting Director of Leisure advised that the funding from DfC was to address the impact of Covid-19 with regards to fuel poverty, food, hardship and connectivity. She also advised that there was a funding programme within the overall programme for groups to access. It was agreed that the Acting Director would explore this consideration further with the Head of Sports Services and update Members accordingly.

Members thanked the Acting Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing and all the officers in relation to the work carried out with this funding.

It was proposed by the Vice Chairman, Councillor D Honeyford and seconded by Councillor H Legge, and agreed to note the report presented and it was further agreed to recommend to Council that should funding become available from the Department for Communities before the end of the financial year 2020/21, the Chairman and Vice Chairman be granted delegated authority to allocate the funds against any of the existing programmes under the Community Support Plan for 2020/21 as detailed in the appendix contained within the paper.

During the discussion of this item Councillor A Givan, the Chief Executive and Councillor A Gowan left the meeting remotely at 6.56pm, 6.58pm and 7.01pm respectively.

“Resumption of Normal Business”

It was proposed by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Jenny Palmer, seconded by The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Hon. N Trimble and agreed to come out of Committee and normal business was resumed.

The Chairman, Alderman M Henderson thanked the officers for their work. He further thanked everyone for attending the meeting and thanked those who had been watching on the live stream. As there was no further business, the meeting concluded at 7.04pm.

Mayor/Chairman