

**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, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 at 6.01pm**

**PRESENT:** Alderman M Henderson MBE (Chairman)

The Right Worshipful the Mayor  
Councillor Hon Nicholas Trimble

Alderman J Tinsley

Councillors D J Craig and S Hughes

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

Alderman A Grehan

Councillors N Anderson, R T Beckett, R Carlin, A Gowan, M Guy, A Gowan, A McIntyre and S Skillen

**OTHER MEMBERS** Aldermen O Gawith and S Martin

**PRESENT IN A REMOTE LOCATION:** Councillors S Lee and U Mackin

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

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

**Commencement of Meeting**

The Chairman of the Committee, Alderman M Henderson extended a welcome to all present in the Chamber and remotely and to everyone watching on the live stream. The Chairman welcomed Louise Moore to her first meeting as Acting Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing and on behalf of the Committee wished her success in the role.

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**

Apologies were accepted on behalf of the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Jenny Palmer, Councillor H Legge and Councillor R McLernon.

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 at this meeting.

During this item Councillor M Guy and R Carlin joined the meeting remotely at 6.03pm.

3. 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.

3.1 Hydebank Playing Fields – Rural Development Fund

Members were asked to recall that at the November meeting of the Leisure and Community Development Committee, permission had been given to allow officers to seek a £78,000 grant from the NI Rural Development Fund to install a two metre wide orbital tarmac path at Hydebank play fields. The Head of Parks and Amenities advised the Committee that in order to meet with the tight deadlines associated with this grant, delegated authority would be required to progress the works in January 2021.

It was proposed by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by Alderman J Tinsley and agreed to recommend to Council that delegated powers of authority be granted to the January meeting of the Leisure and Community Development Committee to award the tender for the construction of the orbital path at Hydebank Playing Fields, subject to a successful grant application from the NI Rural Development Fund.

It was further agreed to note the requirement to close Hydebank facility to the general public (Monday to Friday) for twelve weeks to minimise the health and safety risks whilst contractors would be on site.

During this course of this item Aldermen A Grehan and S Martin joined the meeting remotely at 6.07pm and 6.11pm respectively.

3.2 Pitches Strategy

Members had been provided with a tabled update report on the Council's Pitches Strategy in advance of the Committee meeting.

The Committee was reminded that a request had been received regarding an update on the Council's Pitches Strategy and were advised that following a meeting between the Head of Parks and Amenities, the Head of Sports Services and the Councillors who raised the request it was agreed that additional meetings would be required directly with local clubs to ascertain needs before a further report could be brought back on the matter. The Head of Parks and Amenities anticipated that the report may be available in March.

3.2 Pitches Strategy (cont.)

It was proposed by Councillor S Hughes, seconded by The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Hon. N Trimble and agreed to note that a report on the Council's Pitches Strategy would be brought back on this issue at a future date.

3.3 Community Horticultural Projects

The Head of Parks and Amenities reminded the Committee that during lockdown Parks and Amenities staff have been working with community groups within the Council area to encourage responsibility of the planting schemes for their towns and villages and this programme has proven to be very successful. The Head of Parks and Amenities informed the Committee that RHS and Translink Ulster in Bloom have presented recognition certificates to a number of local towns and villages and to Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council acknowledging the work undertaken.

The Head of Parks and Amenities advised that the Public Health Agency funding has enabled the installation of polytunnels across the Council area and in addition to the three locations of Maghaberry, Milltown Derriaghy and Moira Demesne referred to in his report, it was confirmed today that a location for a polytunnel had been agreed for Stoneyford. It was hoped that the Council would be able to work with other community groups to identify other possible locations for polytunnels to be installed in the future.

During the discussion of this item, Members thanked the Parks and Amenities team and the community groups for their work on this project and received further clarification regarding the location and time frame for the installation of the polytunnels.

It was proposed by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by Alderman J Tinsley and agreed to note the 2020 RHS and Translink Ulster in Bloom recognition certificates for the active 'Bloom' Groups in the Council area and the rollout of four polytunnels to encourage and enhance the capacity of active horticultural community groups.

4. Any Other Business

4.1 Opening Hours of Sports Facilities  
Head of Sports Services

The Head of Sports Services referred to the opening hours of the Council's Sports Facilities over the Christmas period which had been previously circulated as part of November's 'Items for Noting' schedule and advised the Committee that following the latest restrictions imposed by the NI Executive and due to staffing considerations these opening hours had been further amended. The Head of Sports Services advised that all facilities, with the exception of Golf Courses, would now close between the week of Christmas and New Year. It was agreed to recommend that Council note this.

4.2 Sport Lisburn and Castlereagh  
Head of Sports Services

The Head of Sports Services provided a verbal update regarding the Return to Sport Funding agreed by the Committee in October 2020. The Head of Sports Services advised that assessment of applications had just been completed that afternoon by Council officers and he could confirm that all 42 applications to this funding had been successful, however if all applicants were to receive £750 this would leave a shortfall of £1,500 in funding. Members indicated to the Head of Sports Services that ideally they would like successful applicants to receive the awards before Christmas and the Head of Sports Services stated that more information on this funding, including the clubs that benefitted, would be made available to Members in the December 'Items for Noting' Schedule. It was proposed by Councillor S Hughes, seconded by the Vice Chairman Councillor D Honeyford and agreed to recommend that Council meet the shortfall of £1,500 to allow payments to be made in advance of Christmas.

4.3 Vote of Thanks  
The Right Worshipful the Mayor

The Right Worshipful the Mayor Councillor Hon. N Trimble thanked all the staff, particularly in the Communities Unit, involved with the Community Christmas Tree Switch On events especially with the difficult circumstances of changing Covid-19 regulations and stated his appreciation for all the technical work that had gone into these events.

4.4 Community Project Officer  
Councillor N Anderson

Councillor N Anderson referred to a Council officer who before his retirement assisted community groups and officers with projects of a capital nature and asked if this post would be replaced. The Acting Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing stated she was aware of ongoing projects within Councillor Anderson's DEA and would link with the Head of Sports Services to progress a further meeting. The Acting Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing said she would look into this post and what it had covered.

Later in the meeting, Alderman J Tinsley referred to the role undertaken by this officer and queried if this vacancy would be filled. The Chief Executive acknowledged that additional support may be needed by all the Heads of Services within the Directorate and that any additional support would need to be managed through the Efficiency Steering Review Group and he further stated that this process would take time.

4.5 Anti-Social Behaviour at Wallace Park  
Councillor D J Craig

Councillor D J Craig referred to anti-social behaviour (ASB) taking place at the weekends in Wallace Park. He acknowledged that work had been done to address this issue with the installation of temporary CCTV and working in conjunction with the PSNI but stated that this approach was not able to eradicate this issue and queried if wardens could be hired to be visible in the park at the weekends. He

4.5 Anti-Social Behaviour at Wallace Park (cont.)  
Councillor D J Craig

requested that the Chairman liaise with the Chief Executive and relevant officers to ascertain the costs associated with the clean-up of Wallace Park after each weekend compared to the cost of hiring part time wardens to prevent this behaviour. The Chief Executive stated that the incident Councillor D J Craig referred to had happened very recently and that the Head of Parks and Amenities was working hard with his team to put a solution in place to address this. The Head of Parks and Amenities provided further assurance that the park was cleaned every day and ongoing initiatives were being implemented to deal with the ASB.

4.6 Removal of Trees in Carryduff  
Councillor S Lee

Councillor S Lee referred to trees that had removed from Lough Brin and Marlborough areas of Carryduff which local residents had advised him were carried out by the Council and he asked for more clarity regarding this issue. The Head of Parks and Amenities confirmed that this work was carried out by contractors on the behalf of the Council and while some trees had been thinned this was in line with good arboricultural management practices to allow growth, good shape and stability as tree canopies were merging together. The Head of Parks and Amenities advised that it was Council policy to plant two trees for every one tree felled but noted newly planted trees may not be in the same DEA.

4.7 Community Christmas Tree at Millmount  
Councillor S Skillen

Councillor S Skillen asked that a Community Christmas Tree be located in Millmount, Dundonald for 2021. The Head of Parks and Amenities stated that if the Committee agreed this, then this could be explored in conjunction with his colleagues from the Communities Unit. The Chairman, Alderman M Henderson advised that there was a policy regarding the location of Community Christmas Trees and asked that this policy and a report be brought to the Committee for consideration before this request would be progressed.

4.8 Dual Language Signage  
Councillor R Carlin

Councillor R Carlin referred to comments he made at the November Committee meeting regarding a dual language policy for Council signage and asked for an update on this issue. The Acting Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing stated that she would look at this request and following consultation with the Chief Executive, would report back in due course.

4.9 Funding to Address Local Hardship Issues  
Councillor A Gowan

Councillor A Gowan referred to the discussion that took place last month regarding the additional funding that had become available from DfC and asked for an

4.9 Funding to Address Local Hardship Issues (cont.)  
Councillor A Gowan

update on how the Council proposed to address local hardship issues prior to and over Christmas.

The Acting Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing stated that she would provide a general verbal update on this issue now and provide more detail regarding the financial assistance 'In Committee' later in the meeting.

Members were reminded that just prior to the last Committee meeting, the Council had been advised that additional funding would be made available from DfC and that this funding should be used to administer two key funds surrounding access to food and financial inclusion. Members were reminded that the funding sought to support existing partnerships developed in response to Covid-19. The Council currently has partnerships with The Resurgam Trust and Lisburn Foodbank at the last Committee meeting, Members requested that themes surrounding isolation, access to food, signposting, hardship and data poverty be central for this funding and also requested that delegated authority be granted to the Chairman and Vice Chairman in order to progress the financial assistance prior to Christmas, to support those in hardship over Christmas and the winter months.

The Acting Director stated that in line with delegated authority, the Chairman and Vice Chairman have reviewed proposals in relation supporting the Lisburn Foodbank, Resurgam Trust and Dundonald Foodbank to provide financial assistance to address issues around fuel poverty, access to food and isolation. The Acting Director advised that a fuller report would be brought back to the Committee in January. It was agreed to note this update.

4.10 Rent Relief  
Councillor S Skillen

Councillor S Skillen requested that this item be heard 'In Committee' for reasons of information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

"In Committee"

It was proposed by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by Councillor S Hughes and agreed that this item of Any Other Business and the following confidential report of the Leisure and Community Wellbeing Directorate be considered "In Committee", in the absence of members of the press and public being present.

Councillor S Skillen stated that she had been made aware of a number of units in Lisburn that had benefited from rent relief during the current Covid-19 restrictions and advised that she was aware of at least one business in Ballybeen who would benefit from this scheme. The Acting Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing agreed to look in to this and revert directly to Councillor S Skillen on this matter.

4.11 DfC Additional Funding/Funding to Address Local Hardship Issues  
Acting Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing

Further to the update provided earlier, the Acting Director of Leisure and Community Wellbeing provided the Committee with financial information regarding the proposals outlined above, which sees financial assistance of approximately £35,000 going to the Lisburn Foodbank, Resurgam Trust and Dundonald Foodbank to support the delivery of projects until the end of March 2021 and will help address hardship issues over Christmas.

It was proposed by Councillor D J Craig, seconded by Alderman J Tinsley and agreed to accept the information provided. It was further agreed that the Chairman and Vice Chairman be granted delegated authority to make any associated decisions on how to distribute this tranche of DfC funding and any additional funding that becomes available due to tight timescales and the needs of communities with regards to hardship.

5. Confidential Report from Leisure and Community Wellbeing Directorate

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

5.1 Open Space Strategy 2020-2025

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

5.2 Lisburn Rangers FC Re. Stanley Park

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

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

5.1 Open Space Strategy 2020-2025

The Head of Parks and Amenities presented his report on the Council's draft Open Space Strategy 2020-2025. During the discussion of this item, the Head of Parks and Amenities encouraged all Members of the Council respond to this draft strategy by providing their priorities from within their DEA by Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

It was proposed by The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Hon N Trimble, seconded by Councillor S Skillen and agreed to recommend that the Council approve the draft Open Space Strategy 2020-2025 as outlined in the report, prior to the final version being brought back to Members for approval.

5.2 Lisburn Rangers FC Re. Stanley Park

The Head of Parks and Amenities reminded Members that following the presentation by Lisburn Rangers FC in October 2020, Council officers engaged with the club to seek clarification regarding the request to transfer two strips of land. The Head of Parks and Amenities advised Members that prior to any transfer of land a valuation would be carried out and brought through the relevant Committee.

It was proposed by The Right Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Hon N Trimble, seconded by Councillor D J Craig and agreed to recommend that the Council confirm its agreement for Lisburn Rangers FC to submit plans for planning permission for Stanley Park (as outlined in the presentation received at the October meeting of the Committee) and approve in principle the transfer of two strips of land from the Council to the Club as outlined in the associated report, subject to planning approval and a land valuation.

“Resumption of Normal Business”

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

6. Any Other Business

6.1 Lisburn Call to Prayer  
Alderman J Tinsley

Alderman J Tinsley referred to the ‘Lisburn Call to Prayer’ discussion that occurred at Committee in November 2020 and asked for an update. The Head of Parks and Amenities advised that officers have attempted to make contact with the organiser and the Council have not yet received a reply. The Head of Parks and Amenities advised that he will keep the Committee informed regarding this request.

The Chairman, Alderman M Henderson concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for attending the meeting and took the opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a prosperous 2021.

As there was no further business, the meeting concluded at 6.55pm.

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Mayor/Chairman