

## **ARDS BOROUGH COUNCIL**

A meeting of the Council Services Committee was held in the Boardroom, 2 Church Street, Newtownards on Tuesday, 18 November 2008 at 7.00 p.m.

### **PRESENT:-**

**In the Chair:** Councillor Elliot

**Aldermen:** Craig  
Gibson  
McCarthy  
Shannon

**Councillors:** Bell T Hamilton  
Boyle Magill  
Carson (7.01pm) McBriar  
Ferguson (7.11pm) McDowell (7.06pm)  
Fletcher Montgomery  
Gregory Oswald  
S Hamilton (7.16pm) Smyth

**In Attendance:** Chief Executive, Director of Environmental Services, Director of Leisure Services  
Borough Inspector, Project Officer, Public Relations Officer & Committee Administrator

**Apologies:** Councillor Drysdale & McIlveen  
Councillors Gregory & S Hamilton for lateness

CG 2618

### **REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPARTMENT** (Appendix I)

Report of the Chief Executive's Department (copy previously circulated) was tabled.

(Councillor Carson entered the meeting at 7.01pm)

### **CG 4297 - Page 7 – Consultation on the determination of fees for entertainment licences**

One member referred to the significant increase in some of the recommended fees. He expressed concern that the Council would be blamed for the rise.

The Borough Inspector stated that he would be happy to issue a press release on the matter when the consultation was completed. He added that the current recovery rate was approximately 14%, and the new fees would only increase that to approximately 50-52%.

Alderman McCarthy asked that he be recorded as being opposed to the significant rise in entertainment licence fees.

**Noted.**

### **CG 4629 Part V – Page 5 – Newtownards Town Centre CCTV**

One member welcomed the significant drop in recorded rates of crime. He referred to the only area of increase, which was robbery, and asked why that was the case.

The Borough Inspector stated that the increase, while high in percentage terms, involved a very low number of offences. He added that a 125% increase was equivalent to six or seven cases.

(Councillor McDowell entered the meeting at 7.06pm)

Another member referred to the issue of monitoring the CCTV in Newtownards PSNI station and asked if this was likely to be addressed.

The Borough Inspector stated that he had discussed the matter with representatives of the PSNI, who hoped to have a slave monitor in the police station by Christmas, or soon after.

**Noted.**

It was **AGREED TO RECOMMEND**, on the proposal of Councillor Oswald, seconded by Councillor Smyth, **THAT** the report be adopted.

### **GOOD RELATIONS REPORT** (Appendix II)

Good Relations Report (copy previously circulated) was tabled.

### **GREL 7B – Page 2 – English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) Classes for Poles**

One member suggested that some type of liaison with the Citizens Advice Bureau could be entered into, as it employed a Polish-speaking Officer.

The Project Officer undertook to check on the matter.

(Councillor Ferguson entered the meeting at 7.11pm)

**Noted.**

**GREL 141 – Page 1 – Ards Rugby Club – proposed event with the GAA**

One member particularly welcomed the event and stated that it was important to encourage that type of activity.

**Noted.**

**GREL 119 – Page 1 – Murals in the Glen Estate**

One member welcomed the re-imaging of the paramilitary murals and asked what had replaced them.

The Public Relations Officer stated that one of the murals had been replaced by sixteen panels depicting historical scenes from the area over the past eight centuries, while the other mural had been replaced by depictions of World War I soldiers, and the recognising the training of soldiers which had taken place at Helen's Tower.

The member suggested that images addressing environmental issues could be utilised in the next stage of the process.

(Councillor S Hamilton entered the meeting at 7.16pm)

It was **AGREED TO RECOMMEND**, on the proposal of Councillor Oswald, seconded by Alderman Shannon, **THAT** the report be adopted.

**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES REPORTS**

CG 2620 **Technical Services** (Appendix III)

Technical Services Report (copy previously circulated) was tabled.

**Page 2 – Blue & Brown Bins**

One member asked if the Council was on target with the supply of blue and brown bins.

The Director of Environmental Services confirmed that the uptake for both blue and brown bins had continued to increase, there was continued support for the new collection regime and targets were being met.

The member referred to the difficulties in providing blue bins, asking if those had been resolved.

The Director of Environmental Services acknowledged there had been a delay, outside of the Council's control, which had been caused by a change of regulations in Germany which meant the supplier had provided bins for its home market first. However, this had been almost completely addressed and work was ongoing.

Another member commented that the market for recycled paper and plastic was at an all-time low. He asked how this impacted upon the Council.

The Director of Environmental Services stated that Arc21 was actively dealing with the matter. He stated that the market for paper was holding up well which accounted for approximately 60% of the Council's blue bin waste. He added that until such times as the economic situation settled, storage of some materials would be required, but that landfill would be avoided.

He commented, in response to a further query, that recycling was monitored over the year, therefore if a householder only put out their blue bin out for collection once a month instead of fortnightly, it would have no significant impact upon the figures.

**Noted.**

It was **AGREED TO RECOMMEND**, on the proposal of Alderman Shannon, seconded by Alderman Craig, **THAT** the report be adopted.

CG 2619 **Environmental Health** (Appendix IV)

Environmental Health Report (copy previously circulated) was tabled.

**Page 4 – Planning Consultations**

One member referred to the exceptionally quick turnaround time for the planning consultations, and congratulated officers. He added that Planning Service itself, should strive to match those turnaround times.

**Noted.**

It was **AGREED TO RECOMMEND**, on the proposal of Alderman Shannon, seconded by Councillor Oswald, **THAT** the report be adopted.

CG 2621 **Building Control** (Appendix V)

Building Control Report (copy previously circulated) was tabled.

It was **AGREED TO RECOMMEND**, on the proposal of Alderman McCarthy, seconded by Alderman Craig, **THAT** the report be adopted.

CG 3241G **PROPOSAL TO REDUCE COST OF LIGHTING IN COUNCIL OFFICES** (Appendix VI)

Report dated 10 November 2008 (copy previously circulated) from the Director of Environmental Services was tabled stating that a report from the Council's Mechanical/Electrical Engineer as attached, indicated how significant savings could be made on lighting the Council Offices at Church Street, Newtownards. The proposal involved an initial capital spend of £14,000 resulting in a pay back period of between 2 and 2 ½ years. There was also the possibility that funding could be obtained for the work from Central Government. However the decision on any application would not be known until February 2009.

With the increasing cost of energy and in particular electricity, and in compliance with the Council's Environmental Management System (BS 14001) and energy policy, it was recommended that the Council:-

- Agrees to invest up to £14,000 in this project if an application for Central Government funding was unsuccessful,
- Includes provision for that amount in the budget for the year 2009 – 2010.

One member enquired how such significant savings could be made.

The Director of Environmental Services reported that the new efficient fluorescent light strips would generate the savings as outlined in the report.

One member enquired if there was any plan to roll-out the exercise out to Community Centres and other Council facilities.

The Director of Environmental Services stated that the biggest savings would be made in the Council Offices as it was the most intensely used building. Other facilities would have a much longer pay-back period.

Another member referred to the automatic lighting which had been installed in some areas, asking if there had been much saving through that initiative.

The Director of Environmental Services stated that there had been, and the programme was monitored to assess the time from leaving a room, until the lights switched off. The Mechanical/Electrical Engineer would continue to evaluate the work.

It was **AGREED TO RECOMMEND**, on the proposal of Councillor McBriar, seconded by Councillor Boyle, **THAT** the recommendation contained in the report be adopted.

CG 2616 **LEISURE SERVICES REPORT** (Appendix VIII)

Leisure Services Report (copy previously circulated) was tabled.

**CG 9046 – Page 4 – Construction of Multi-use Stadium at Portaferry Road, Newtownards**

Councillor T Hamilton proposed, seconded by Alderman McCarthy, that a report be prepared, seeking a more detailed estimate, to ascertain the exact costs of building a multi-use stadium at either Portaferry Road, Newtownards or Londonderry Park, Newtownards.

The proposer felt that the facility would provide a significant legacy to the residents of the Borough.

The seconder concurred with the proposer, stating that the development of a multi-use sports arena would be of great benefit to the community.

One member enquired what the “site abnormal costs” entailed.

The Director of Leisure Services reported that this was to address groundwork and the methane gas issue on the Portaferry Road site.

The Chief Executive added that it was significantly lower than the cost involved in providing a Leisure Centre on the site as less engineering was required.

The member referred to the grant aid application for the development of Londonderry Park and asked if this could be utilised in the development of a multi-use stadium of the type described in Londonderry Park.

The Director of Leisure Services reported that the grant aid application had not yet been submitted as the fund had not been launched. He added that in anticipation of the fund's launch he had asked the technical staff to consider scoping a facility of the type referred to.

The member referred to the Mid-Tyrone Sports Centre at Killymoon and suggested it could be an example of what could be provided.

Another member welcomed the report, and asked if the stadium described would meet IFA standard.

The Director of Leisure Services stated that the stadium which was tentatively priced in the report would comfortably meet Irish League standards.

One member welcomed the proposal, but acknowledged there were significant costs involved. He asked if it would meet UEFA standard.

The Director of Leisure Services advised that he would have to consider further and report back on the matter. He reminded members that the pitch in question was a third generation pitch.

(Councillor Gregory entered the meeting at 7.45pm)

Another member expressed concern with the proposal. He did not feel there was a need for a facility such as the one outlined in the report. He felt only one sports club in the Borough would benefit, and did not believe the facility could be described as multi-use.

He added that members only had to look at the cost incurred on the last occasion the Council ran a concert, to see that it was not feasible.

He added that there was a further issue of affordability. If the Council proceeded with the development of such a facility, then it was required to borrow more funding, which in turn would have a significant impact upon the rates.

A number of further members opposed the proposal, particularly due to the significant cost to the ratepayer and the provision of a facility primarily for the use of one sports club within the Borough.

One member referred to an e-mail which he had received which implied that if the Council agreed to the facility, then Ards Football Club could 'come home.' He objected to the significant cost to satisfy one sports club.

The Director of Leisure services referred to the previous comments about Mid-Tyrone Sports Centre. He expressed the view that it would not necessarily cater for Irish Premier League football.

One member enquired if the Mid-Tyrone Sports Centre could be replicated on a larger scale at Londonderry Park.

The Director of Leisure Services stated that when re-developed, a number of issues would have to be addressed at Londonderry Park to meet that requirement.

Another member suggested that if the same facility could be provided at Londonderry Park, it could cost significantly less than on the Portaferry Road site as there would be no abnormal site costs and less pitch work. He estimated it could be delivered on that site for £1,300,000.

The Director of Leisure Services believed a further report would be required to satisfy the issues on the table.

One member asked if the amendment on the table addressed the viability of a facility.

The Chief Executive confirmed that it did not address viability.

The member enquired if any other sports club had come forward about involvement in such a facility.

The Chief Executive commented that the report on the table only addressed costings. He added that the only club which had approached him was Ards Football Club.

Another member referred to a number of Council owned facilities used by football clubs. He acknowledged that a number of issues had to be addressed, and felt the positive and negative aspects of each site should be considered in the report.

The proposer summed up, stating that the report contained an estimate while the proposal was to obtain an accurate figure and to progress the type of facility being discussed in order to leave a substantial legacy to the residents of the Borough.

It was **AGREED TO RECOMMEND**, on the proposal of Councillor T Hamilton, seconded by Alderman McCarthy, with 13 Voting **FOR**, 6 Voting **AGAINST**, **THAT** a report be prepared, seeking a more detailed estimate, to ascertain the exact costs of building a multi-use stadium at either Portaferry Road, Newtownards or Londonderry Park, Newtownards.

Councillor T Hamilton having requested a recorded vote, the voting was as follows:-

<b>FOR</b>	<b>AGAINST</b>	<b>ABSTENTIONS</b>
<b>Aldermen</b>	<b>Alderman</b>	
Craig	Gibson	
McCarthy	<b>Councillors</b>	
Shannon	Bell	
<b>Councillors</b>	Elliott	
Boyle	Gregory	
Carson	S Hamilton	
Ferguson	Oswald	
Fletcher		
T Hamilton		
Magill		
McBriar		
McDowell		
Montgomery		
Smyth		

One member enquired if there was an issue if a member had previously held a directorship in an interested party or group.

The Chief Executive reminded members that any declaration of interest was a responsibility for members under the 1972 local government legislation.

**Noted.**

It was **AGREED TO RECOMMEND**, on the proposal of Councillor T Hamilton, seconded by Alderman Shannon, **THAT** the report be adopted, subject to the above decision.

## **CONFERENCES**

### **Affirmative action models to increase Travellers employment – Can this work?**

2 December 2008 – Lillian Reeve Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Castle Court, Belfast – 10.00am to 1.00pm  
Mileage Cost £12

It was **AGREED TO RECOMMEND**, on the proposal of Alderman Gibson, seconded by Alderman Shannon, **THAT** the conference be noted.

### **ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS**

#### **Local Government Boundaries Review**

The Chief Executive reminded members that the Committee Room in the Council Offices had been made available for those members who wished to meet and prepare a response to the Review as agreed at the Policy & Resources Committee meeting the previous week. The Room would be available on Thursday 20 November between 2.00pm and 4.00pm.

**Noted.**

**THAT CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS**  
**(The meeting terminated at 8.26 p.m.)**