

LEISURE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 20 July 1999 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Darmody (Vice-Chair in the Chair); Councillors Aujla, Butler, Byrd, Caborn, Cockburn, Copping, Davis, Dove, Dray, Mrs Edwards, Mrs Goode, Hammon, Mrs Hodgetts, Mrs Pavier Shilton, Talbot

(Councillor Byrd substituted for Councillor Ms Flanagan)

212. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 19 May and 8 June 1999 having been printed and circulated were taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

PART I

(Matters not the subject of powers delegated to the Committee by the Council)

NIL

PART II

(Matters delegated to the Committee by the Council)

213. YOUTH SPORT DEVELOPMENT

The Head of Leisure and Amenities submitted a report on the work that had been carried out by Manoj Sonecha (Senior Youth Sport Development Officer) and Suzy Longland (Youth Sport Development Officer).

Mr Sonecha and Miss Longland attended the meeting and addressed members on the work carried out to date and the future plans.

RESOLVED that the report and presentation be noted and the Committee's appreciation for the work being done by these two officers be recorded.

(Mr Sonecha and Miss Longland then left the meeting)

214. FUTURE OF THE YOUTH SPORT DEVELOPMENT

The Head of Leisure and Amenities submitted a report on the future of the post of Youth Sport Development Officer when the postholder's current contract expired next year.

A national youth sport development programme had been started in the early 1990s and this Council had

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appointed Manoj Sonecha to the position of Senior Youth Sport Development Officer on a permanent contract which was being part funded by the Sports Council for the first three years. As part of the programme it had also been possible to appoint a Youth Sport Development Officer and Suzy Longland had been appointed to this position in March 1997 on a three year contract which would expire in March 2000. Both posts had been part funded by the Sport Council and they were therefore only able to carry out works specifically related to Youth Sport Development. This restriction would no longer apply, although the District Council had a moral obligation to continue with youth sports development as a major part of the programme. However it might be possible to use the posts for development of other disadvantage groups, particularly older people in conjunction with the Better Government for Older People initiative.

Whilst the officers would like to retain the services of the Youth Sport Development Officer there was no doubt that a robust sport development programme could continue to be offered. However the programme would lose some of its impetus if the post of Youth Sport Development Officer were not continued. If the post were to be continued a sum of approximately £30,000 would be needed to be added to the annual revenue estimates to include the post salary, on costs and approximately £8,000 for promotional work.

RESOLVED that the retention of the post of Youth Sport Development Officer be supported and the Officers look at the service plan to see if resources can be made available from the existing budget to cover the cost and if this is not possible, a bid be made for additional resources.

215. **PARK PATROLS**

The Head of Leisure and Amenities submitted a report on park patrols by Mayfair which had been operating since the Whitsun Bank Holiday at the end of May.

George Elworthy of Mayfair Security attended the meeting and addressed members on the work his company had undertaken in the parks over the past three months. He then answered questions from members.

RESOLVED that the report and the contents of the presentation be noted.

216. **FARMERS MARKET**

A report was submitted from the Commissioning Team seeking approval for sites for the introduction of farmers markets in the district.

The Rural Forum, a Sub-Committee of Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership had been looking at ways of supporting the rural economy. One initiative had been the development of a series of Warwickshire farmers markets. The first such market had been held in Stratford in June and had proved highly successful in bringing

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significant numbers of customers into the town centre.

There was now considerable pressure to extend farmers markets across the country. To guarantee a farmers market in the Warwick District a location needed to be identified at the earliest opportunity. This would be a positive way to support the farming community and would attract visitors to the district's town centres.

It was pointed out that if a site were chosen which required a road closure it would be a minimum six week delay before it could operate.

The following three sites had been considered by the officers and details of such sites were set out in the report:-

1. Clements Street, Leamington between High Street and the access to Kwik Save.
2. Regent Street East, Leamington between Parade and Park Street.
3. Area at the front of Abbey End, Kenilworth.

For the period of the trial it was not expected that any income would be generated. Promotional funding would be provided from the Town Centre Management budget. Funding to cover the cost for the road closure and temporary signage if required could be secured from Key Issues and a number of budget headings.

RESOLVED that

- (1) farmers markets in the district be supported;
- (2) a trial farmers market be held in each of the locations mentioned above over the next three months prior to the availability of Warwick Market Place in order to access the potential of farmers markets in the district; and
- (3) a farmers market be held in Warwick as soon as possible.

217. ST. NICHOLAS PARK LEISURE CENTRE - EARLY CLOSURE 13-14 AUGUST 1999

A report was submitted from the Sports Facilities Business Unit seeking approval for the closure of the Leisure Centre early on the above dates when Simply Red concerts were taking place at Warwick Castle.

RESOLVED that St. Nicholas Park Leisure Centre be closed at 6.30pm on 13 and 14 August 1999.

218. SPORTS GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

A report from Leisure and Amenities was submitted on applications for grant aid which had been received from Eathorpe Table Tennis Club and the Leamington Cricket Club.

The report set out the financial factors previously adopted by the Recreation and Amenities Committee as being

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relevant in considering grant applications.

The report referred to the Committee's decision at its last meeting for a report to be submitted on the possible increase in the Committee's budget for sports grants to take into account the assistance given to clubs whose rent had been increased by the Council. The overall level of grants needed reviewing apart from the rent issue. Officers of the Finance and Leisure Business Units were to meet shortly to review the current level of applications and consider the adequacy of the current level of grant provision to meet those applications. A report would be submitted to members on the outcome of this review.

RESOLVED that the following grants be awarded:-

- (1) £100 to the Eathorpe Table Tennis Club towards general running costs; and
- (2) £150 to Leamington Cricket Club towards upgrading water and toilet facilities.

219. **CULTURAL GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS**

(Councillor Mrs Goode declared a non-pecuniary non substantial interest in the application from the Warwick Folk Festival).

A report was submitted from Leisure and Amenities and Finance on applications for grant aid from the Warwick Folk Festival and the Leamington Spa Opera Group.

A report set out the policy adopted by the Committee for considering grant requests which was based on financial information on the organisations and how the services provided by the organisation fitted the Council's Art Strategy. The application before the Committee from the Warwick Folk Festival complied with the Council's criteria. However, although the Leamington Spa Opera Group was a long established part of the district's cultural activity, their financial position would appear to be quiet secure and no major losses on productions had occurred last year. It was, therefore, difficult to justify a grant on financial grounds.

RESOLVED that

- (1) a grant of £400 be awarded to the Warwick Folk Festival; and
- (2) the application from Leamington Spa Opera Group be not approved.

220. **JEPHSON GARDENS LOTTERY APPLICATION**

(Councillor Mrs Hodgetts declared a pecuniary interest in this item and left the room).

A report from the Head of Leisure and Amenities was submitted informing members of the present position with regard to the application for lottery funding as part of the Urban Parks Programme in the Jephson and Mill Gardens. At the last meeting reference had been made to a letter from the Heritage Lottery confirming

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approval of the Council's application and the offer of a grant of £2,889,000 (66% of the project cost). As explained in the report to the last meeting it was now necessary for the Council to enter into a contract with the trustees of the National Heritage Memorial Fund. No work could be carried out until this contract had been signed.

The final contract had now been supplied and was being circulated to the projects team for their comments. It had been the intention, had the information on the contract been available sooner, to present it to this Committee for approval. This was not now possible, but it was important that authority was available to sign the contract at the appropriate time.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the Head of Leisure and Amenities in consultation with the Head of Legal Services and the Chair or Vice-Chair and spokespersons be authorised to enter into a contract with the trustees of the National Heritage Memorial Fund for the restoration and renewal of the Jephson and Mill Gardens; and
- (2) a report be submitted to the Committee for information on the terms of the contract.

221. MILLBANK OPEN SPACE, WARWICK

(Councillor Mrs Hodgetts declared a non-pecuniary substantial interest in this item and remained out of the room).

A report from Leisure and Amenities was submitted which sought members views on proposals for the Millbank open space.

The Council had funded a community shop in the Chantry as a pilot scheme for three years. Part of this initiative had been the funding of a Youth Worker (by the County Council) to identify and provide activities for youngsters. The Youth Worker had been in post since January of this year and extensive use was being made of the Millbank open space area by large numbers of teenagers and the following improvements to the area had been sought:-

- (1) The upgrading of the current kick about area to a full size senior pitch with posts;
- (2) The re-siting of the current kick about area to the end of the site so that the area could be available for training and for younger people;
- (3) The inclusion of a cycle track/BMX track around the area;
- (4) The upgrading of the playground equipment and surface;
- (5) A tarmac area for basketball and street hockey, to include a disabled access to the area; and
- (6) The provision of bench seating and lighting.

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No finances were currently available for the levelling of the pitch, but the main potholes could be filled and if this were undertaken it would make the area suitable for football. The work could be undertaken as part of the normal ground maintenance programme. However, the policy to date had been to concentrate league football into central areas to accommodate changing facilities and general maintenance on one site. If teenagers were to enter a team in the league then matches could be considered at St. Nicholas Park. The area would make a full size pitch but the maintenance and marking would be costly. It was suggested that the Youth Worker should be asked to arrange for the marking out to be undertaken with the Council supplying the initial equipment and paint. The kick about area could be re-sited behind the proposed full size pitch as part of the general maintenance programme.

The inclusion of a mini BMX area would be costly and with the other site requests it would be difficult to identify other suitable areas and no funding was currently available. The upgrading of the play equipment and surface would be undertaken as part of the normal parks replacement programme, although no timescale for this was available. The inclusion of a tarmac area for basketball at a cost of approximately £1300 was the subject of current fundraising by the Youth Worker. The addition of a basketball training post could be provided once the tarmac surface was available. If the tarmac area for street hockey were to be considered, this would cost an additional £2,500, although it was difficult to identify the suitable area of the land by the basketball area and this could lead to a conflict of interest.

The provision of a tarmac path for the disabled to the area would cost £1,500. The provision of bench seating, possibly five around the site would cost £200 each and there were currently no finances identified within the 1999/2000 budget.

The addition of lighting for the area was not considered appropriate.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the pot holes be filled in to enable a full size pitch to be marked on the area for casual play and the Youth Worker be asked to undertake the marking of the area as appropriate with the initial equipment and paint being supplied by the Council; and
- (2) any organised games be considered for available pitches at St. Nicholas Park or other venues within the district;
- (3) the kick about area be re-sited towards the end of the site;
- (4) the upgrading of the play equipment and surface be undertaken as part of the normal parks replacement programme;
- (5) initially two benches be installed;
- (6) all the above work be provided from within existing budgets;

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- (7) the following be included in the Service Plan and subsequently a bid for additional resources as no finances were currently available:
 - (a) £2,500 for the provision of a tarmac hockey area;
 - (b) £1,500 for a tarmac path for disabled access to the basketball area and proposed hockey area.
- (8) no action be taken to site a BMX track or provide lighting at the site; and
- (9) no action be taken on any of the above matters until full details have been submitted to the Ward Councillors.

222. CLIMBING WALL, ST. NICHOLAS PARK LEISURE CENTRE

A report from Leisure and Amenities and Property Services was submitted on the refurbishment of the climbing wall at St. Nicholas Park Leisure Centre, Warwick.

The Warwick Climbing Club, who were the main users of the wall, had indicated that the wall had deteriorated rapidly and was in need of urgent refurbishment and without it the Club would not survive. If the Club folded then the use of the wall would virtually be nil and in the region of £3,000 per annum would be lost in revenue to the Sports and Leisure Contractor.

The cost of refurbishing the wall was £6,700 and so far the Club had raised £3,000 and they were continuing to try to raised additional funds. The Club had applied to this Committee in June for financial assistance from the Sports Grants to Voluntary Organisations Fund. However, the Committee had requested that the Head of Property Services be asked to consider if the balance of the funding required (£3,700) could be found from within his budget for this work to be undertaken. The Head of Property Services had indicated that it was possible to include this scheme within the current year's programme and, subject to agreement by this committee, it would be progressed as a high priority.

RESOLVED that the refurbishment of the climbing wall at St. Nicholas Park be progressed as a high priority during the current year, such work to be funded from £3,000 raised by Warwick Climbing Club and the balance from the Property Maintenance Budget.

223. NEWBOLD COMYN GOLF COURSE PROMOTIONAL PRICING ACTIVITIES

A report from the Head of Leisure and Amenities was submitted which sought approval for promotional pricing activities for the Newbold Comyn Golf Course during the year 1999/2000.

Specific periods had been identified when the Golf Course was at its lowest usage and it was suggested that promotional pricing activity could be targeted at these periods to increase usage.

The following proposals were suggested:-

- (1) Four for the price of three on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday until 1.30 pm. A group of four players will be able to play for the price of three. Where the group was made up of a mixed priced

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- group, the most expensive charge due would not be charged.
- (2) Educational Establishment Prices

On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday until 1.30 pm students, tutors or visiting exchange students/teachers to educational establishments in the area be charged student rates for the use of the course; and

- (3) Societies Bookings

Societies bookings be made available at a discount of 25% on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday subject to a minimum of one week's notice and a minimum of 16 persons in the group.

- (4) Junior Holiday Fee

A junior season ticket for weekdays before 1.00 pm during the summer holidays and other holiday breaks be made available at a cost of £32 and a weekly ticket of £10 for use from Monday to Friday be offered throughout the period of the holiday provided play commences before 1.00 pm. The Officers were investigating the provision of an annual season ticket and the question of sponsorship. A further report would be submitted to the September meeting.

Details of the proposed method of advertising and promoting the offers were set out in the report.

RESOLVED that the above promotional pricing activities be approved to take effect from 26 July 1999.

224. **COMMUNITY FACILITIES AT HEATHCOTE HOME FARM**

A report from the Head of Leisure and Amenities was submitted updating members on the position with regards to the community facilities which were included as part of the Heathcote Home Farm development.

Under the Section 106 Agreement the developer at Heathcote Home Farm was required to provide community facilities and make space available for a freestanding Ecumenical Centre if this was required. Community facilities would be provided by the developer without charge although the Ecumenical Group would have to purchase the land for the Church Centre and pay for its construction which was estimated to be £60,000. The developer had agreed to waive any charges for the land. Meetings had taken place with various church leaders in the area and an alternative proposal had now been made to extend the Community Centre to include an Ecumenical Centre for worship and other church based activities. Plans of the proposal were submitted which showed the Community Centre remaining largely the same but a Church Hall being added.

There were various advantages to having the Ecumenical Centre and the Community Centre enclosed as one building. It was hoped that the District Council or the Community Management Group might be able to make use of the hall that had been provided for ecumenical purposes when not required for religious services. It was suggested that the District Council or the Community Management Group run the entire building and lease the Ecumenical Centre back to the ecumenical fraternity at a break even cost.

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Once an agreement has been reached to proceed on this basis between the developer and the Ecumenical Group it would be necessary for the developer to seek formal amendment to the existing planning Section 106 Agreement or to obtain planning permission for the detailed siting and design of the enlarged community facility.

RESOLVED that the concept of the enlarged community facility at Heathcote Home Farm to include additional facilities for worship and other church based activities as shown on the plans submitted be supported.

225. CHARTER FOR THE BEREAVED

A report from the Head of Leisure and Amenities was submitted giving information on the Charter for the Bereaved. The Charter had been produced by the Institute of Burial and Cremation Administration specifically to improve funerals. The contents of the Charter were based on the experiences of Cemetery and Crematorium Managers in dealing with bereaved families. Professional and charitable groups involved with the bereaved had also been consulted. The Charter had not been supported by organisations representing Funeral Directors and Embalmers. It was hoped that their support could be obtained at some stage in the future to enable rights to be offered when these professionals were employed. The Charter identified 33 rights which could be expected by the bereaved at any cemetery or crematorium whose management had formally adopted the Charter. A copy of the Charter was supplied to each member.

RESOLVED that the Council meet the needs of the bereaved by adopting the Charter for the Bereaved.

226. FLOODING - SALTISFORD COMMON, WARWICK

A report from Engineering, Leisure and Amenities and Property Services was submitted seeking approval to proposals to alleviate the problem of regular flooding of properties in the Antelope Gardens area of Warwick.

To prevent the overspilling of storm water from the open ditch watercourse it was proposed to construct an earth bund within the Saltisford Common amenity area. This would increase the storage capacity of the brook during times of heavy and intense rainfall, effectively acting as a dam to contain storm water long enough to allow their natural percolation through the piped culvert without overspilling into the adjacent residential area. It was also proposed to reconstruct the existing culverts headwall and install a safety screen which would prevent debris and large objects from entering the culvert and creating blockages. The safety screen would also prevent children from entering the culvert. Initial consultations with the Environment Agency on these outline proposals had been undertaken and it was understood that subject to confirmation of hydraulic design calculations and construction designs the Agency would approve the scheme proposals.

If this committee were to give support to the project it would be considered by Health and Control Committee who were ultimately responsible for improvement schemes to watercourses.

RESOLVED that the scheme as submitted be supported.

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227. GENERAL REPORT

(A) GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

RESOLVED that the report from the Head of Leisure and Amenities on the current situation with regard to the grounds maintenance contract and the performance of Glendale Grounds Maintenance be noted.

(B) MONITORING OF SPORTS AND LEISURE CONTRACT

RESOLVED that the report from Leisure and Amenities on the contract monitoring and performance levels of the sports and leisure contract be noted.

(C) AMIKARO 2001

RESOLVED that the Council host Amikaro 2001 at Newbold Comyn with provisional dates from 20 July to 8 August 2001.

(D) PLANNING PERMISSION - ST. NICHOLAS PARK LEISURE CENTRE

RESOLVED that authority be given for an application to be made for planning permission to install a new illuminated sign outside the Leisure Centre 3.7m long by 0.4m wide fixed on to metal posts 1.2 metres above the ground.

(E) ROYAL PUMP ROOMS - UPDATE OF OPENING OF FIRST PHASE

RESOLVED that the report from the Head of Leisure and Amenities on the outcome of the First Phase of the opening to the public of the Royal Pump Rooms including the Leamington Jazz weekend of the 26-27 June and on the proposed opening programme for the rest of the building be noted.

(The meeting ended at 8.05 p.m)

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