

**LIMAVADY BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMHAIRLE BHUIRG LÉIM AN MHADAIDH**

LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE

12 MAY 2004

Minutes of meeting held in the Council Offices, 7 Connell Street, Limavady at 7.30 pm on the above date.

PRESENT:

Alderman Carten, J Dolan and G Robinson. Councillors F Brolly (chair), B Brown, M Coyle, L Cubitt, M Donaghy, B Douglas, G Mullan, M. McGuigan and E Stevenson.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Committee Clerk and Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer.

APOLOGIES:

The Town Clerk, Councillors A Brolly, D Lowry and J Rankin.

MINUTES:

Minutes of meeting dated 14 April 2004 were approved and signed on the proposal of Councillor Coyle, seconded by Councillor McGuigan.

MATTERS ARISING:

Northern Ireland Milk Cup: The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer detailed incidental costs associated with hosting the Northern Ireland Milk Cup matches as being approximately £3,320 and said that when the amount of £5,150 allocated from the rates budget was added, this gave a total contribution of approximately £8,500, which was similar to what Ballymoney Borough Council was contributing towards the Milk Cup.

The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer explained to Councillor Cubitt that if Council increased the contribution, this would have to be taken from the tourist budget and recommended that the matter be dealt with at the next Leisure Services Meeting.

Signage - Churches and Bed & Breakfast: The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer explained to members that signs in relation to the location of churches was not the responsibility of the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, however, if the church had historical sites, such as Saint Ann's Cathedral, signage would be provided.

The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer said that the proprietor of bed and breakfast

establishments was responsible for paying for signs and that these were typically brown and cream. He added that whilst this was likely to continue, urban signage was to change slightly in an effort to tidy up the system and do away with home made signs.

NORTH ATLANTIC SALMON FUND:

The Chair welcomed Mr Newell McCreight and Mr Pat McLaughlin from the North Atlantic Salmon Fund to the meeting.

Mr McCreight explained that the number of fish returning to the rivers has been in decline over the past 20-30 years and that each year an average of two-thirds of the salmon returning to the rivers were caught by commercial nets around the coast. He added that in 2001, the Assembly (DCAL committee report) warned that native Atlantic Salmon would disappear from Northern Ireland's rivers unless urgent action was taken to tackle offshore fishing and pollution. He further added that the government was urged to end commercial netting by compensating salmon fishermen operating around the coastline and river estuaries and that a voluntary buy-out scheme was introduced in the Fisheries Conservancy Board area of Northern Ireland in 2001, with 90% of fishermen opting for the buy out scheme.

Mr McCreight highlighted that whilst salmon stocks were not critically low in the Foyle area, the decision to introduce a buy out scheme would be more an economic issue due to the increased numbers of visiting anglers, who would require accommodation, hospitality and related services in the region. He added that the North Atlantic Salmon Fund had applied for INTERREG funding of £2 million to fund the project to maximise the economic benefit from salmon through tourism angling in the Foyle area, with the aim to reduce commercial netting and to introduce voluntary buy-out schemes for 50 draft nets operating in the Foyle estuary.

Mr McCreight said that DARD and the Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs were showing a high degree of interest and it was important that the North Atlantic Salmon Fund could demonstrate support for the project in the target areas, such as River Roe by involving Council and fishing clubs.

Mr McCreight responded to Councillor Cubitt that there was an ongoing campaign to introduce legislation regarding pollution on the rivers and it was hoped this would be introduced in the near future. He added that poaching was a problem along rivers in the Foyle area and that this was the responsibility of the Lough Agency, Police Service of Northern Ireland and bailiffs employed by local clubs.

Mr McCreight clarified to Councillor Mullan that it was a possible that seals could colonise on the platforms of the wind turbines and thereby present a threat to migratory salmon.

It was agreed by members that Council support the project and forward a letter indicating Council support of tourist angling in preference to commercial netting in the

Foyle area.

**CHIEF RECREATION/TOURIST OFFICER'S REPORT – MAY
(see appendix)**

The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer presented the report and enlarged thereon. The report was adopted on the proposal of Councillor Cubitt, seconded by Alderman Dolan subject to the following:

Roe Valley Leisure Centre - Fitness Suite: The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer informed members that following scrutiny of submissions received for the operation of a fitness suite at Roe Valley Leisure Centre, the Project Management team's unanimous opinion was to recommend to Council that the proposal submitted by 'Competition Line' was the most beneficial in terms of value for money and the least risk to Council.

It was proposed by Councillor Brown, seconded by Alderman Robinson that on the basis of the project management recommendations, that Competition Line be appointed as the preferred partner on an invitation to negotiate basis with a view to delivering the project subject to agreement on the finer details.

Limavady Jazz & Blues Festival - Grant Aid Application: The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer highlighted that Limavady Jazz & Blues Committee had written requesting Council to consider giving a grant of £5,000 for the current year's festival to be held 10 - 13 June 2004. He added that as in previous years, the event would bring music and culture to the area and would appeal to a wide audience, with the programme of events to include 20 acts over 13 venues and 33 performances.

It was agreed by members that as Council had supported this event in past years, that a grant of £5,000 be awarded, 50% prior to the event and the balance on receipt of audited accounts.

Limavady Twinning Association: The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer provided members with a copy of Limavady Twinning Association's financial accounts for year ending 31 March 2004. Members noted that once again a wide and varied programme of Twinning events and exchanges had taken place over the last year. Members agreed to the Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer recommendation for a grant of £4,300 for 2004/05 as set aside in the rates estimate for the year. It was further agreed on the proposal of Councillor F Brolly, seconded by Alderman Carten that the Mayor, Councillor A Brolly and the Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer visit Vigneux Sur Seine from 16 - 23 June for the Committee Jumelage Festival Week and schools exchange programme.

Dogleap Forest Stages Rally 2004: The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer informed members that the Maiden City Motor Club Limited had made a formal application to Council for £4,000 financial assistance for the above event. He added that the event would be promoted both by the Maiden City Motor Club and by Northern Ireland

Championship organisers and that the rally would be televised by UTV, TV3 and Sky Sports. He added further that the event was expected to attract over 3000 plus spectators.

The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer said that the rally contributed to both tourism and economic development within the Borough and recommended that Council support the event as requested. Agreed.

Roe Valley Women's Network: The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer explained to members that the Roe Valley Women's Network had been in existence for 5 years and had managed to secure money to facilitate some services, including salaries until 2005. He added that the group was in the process of examining its long-term sustainability and devising a strategy to address the ongoing and increasing demands being placed on it by women's groups and the wider community.

Members noted that the group had made applications to various funders for support but that it would be a number of months before they learned of any outcome, therefore, they had applied to Council for an urgent grant award of £20,000.

The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer reminded members that no allowance had been made for this in the rates estimates and that as the group received funding through the Department of Social Development (DSD), it might not be eligible for a community services grant. Members agreed that the Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer investigate a number of queries in relation to shared ownership and that he write to the network advising discussions with the Community Developing & Community Support Officer and that he would provide an update to members at a future meeting.

Advice Services: The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer informed members that the Advice Services Co-ordinator had forwarded to him a copy of statistics for period January to March 2004 and that during this period a total of 2,111 enquiries, clients, letters, visits and attendance at tribunals had been dealt with through the Limavady Advice Centre. He added that the service was administrated through LCDI, who currently received £16,000 from Council plus an £8,000 grant that Council drew down from the Voluntary and Community Unit.

The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer reminded members that it was imperative that the current service be supported and maintained and recommended that Council contribute £16,500 plus the DSD grant (not yet confirmed) for 2004/05. Agreed.

Feeny Summer Festival: The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer said that Feeny Community Association were organising 2 weekend summer festivals for July and August and that the cost of staging the festivals was estimated to be in the region of £14,000.

The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer informed members that the Association was asking for financial assistance but advised that to assist voluntary clubs without a

defined tourism element would open the floodgates and set a dangerous precedent. He added that if both festivals were amalgamated, with the lead partner being the Feeny Community Association, he would recommend that Council assist by way of a grant of £500.

Councillor F Brolly suggested that Council should consider the festival as occurring on 2 separate weekends and suggested that Council contribute £500 for each weekend. It was proposed by Councillor Brown, seconded by Alderman Carten that Council approve the £1,000 grant.

Massey Festival 2004: The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer informed members that the Massey Festival Committee had provided details of the programme for the 2004 festival which included an Ulster Scots Heritage Exhibition, Football Competition and Children's Fun Day. He added that having obtained the commendation of the New Zealand Consul for their efforts in 2003, the Committee was anxious to build upon their initial festival and requested a grant of £1,000 from Council.

Councillor Coyle commented that he would have difficulty supporting the Committee without verification of Committee members, their Constitution and the previous year's audited accounts. He added that if the Committee was compiled by Orange Order members, he would have no choice but to vote against the approval of a grant.

Alderman Robinson responded that the Orange Order was a religious organisation and the perception that it was anti-Catholic was propaganda and offensive to him. He added that he would have no hesitation in proposing that Council provide the grant requested. This was seconded by Councillor Cubitt.

Councillor Mullan proposed an amendment, seconded by Councillor Coyle that the decision regarding supporting the festival be deferred until information on the Committee was provided by the Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer.

A recorded vote was requested by Councillor Cubitt. On being put to the meeting (5) Alderman Carten, Councillor Mullan, Councillor Coyle, Councillor Donaghy and Councillor McGuigan voting for and (6) Councillor Douglas, Councillor Stevenson, Alderman Dolan, Councillor Cubitt, Alderman Robinson and Councillor Brown voting against the amended proposal.

At this point the substantive motion was put to the meeting with (7) Councillor Douglas, Councillor Stevenson, Alderman Dolan, Councillor Cubitt, Alderman Robinson, Councillor Donaghy and Councillor Brown voting for the proposal and (3) Alderman Carten, Councillor Coyle, Councillor McGuigan voting against, with (2) Councillor F Brolly and Councillor Mullan abstaining from the vote. Carried.

Councillor Donaghy left the meeting at 9.30 pm.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Lough Foyle Ferry Company: The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer informed members that the Lough Foyle Ferry Service would be unavailable between 13 May 2004 until 2 pm on 15 May 2004 due to essential maintenance. The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer also explained to Councillor Brown that when the schools closed and subject to statutory insurance and maritime regulations approval, a student would be employed to advertise Council events on Lough Foyle Ferry Service.

Anthony Nolan Bone Marrow Trust: The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer explained that the above named Trust had requested permission for a box collection at Benone Tourist Complex and that this had been cleared by the Police Service of Northern Ireland. Members expressed their sympathy to the cause but were reluctant to grant permission for any collection at the Complex.

Dungiven Community Hall - Disability Discrimination Act: Councillor Coyle reminded members that the final part of the DDA would come into effect in October 2004 and that Council had a responsibility that premises had no physical barriers stopping or making it unreasonably difficult for those with a disability to get to use services. The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer responded that the Technical Services Department was undertaking an audit on Council buildings for compliance with the Act in October 2004.

Drumavally Playing Field: Councillor Mullan requested remedial work be carried out on the open space at Drumavally to include drainage improvement. The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer undertook to liaise with the Chief Technical Services Officer regarding this matter.

Burnfoot Football Field: Councillor Douglas commented that the toilets at Burnfoot Football field were blocked and requested that remedial work be carried out to enable football matches to resume at the field, which had been postponed for a 6 week period. The Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer agreed to inform the Technical Services Department of this problem.

NEXT MEETING:

9 June 2004

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS

(The meeting ended at 10.10 pm)