

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

LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE

14 APRIL 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 M Coyle (chair), L Cubitt, B Douglas, D Lowry, G Mullan, and E Stevenson.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Committee Clerk and Leisure Services Officer.

APOLOGIES:

The Town Clerk, Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer, Councillor Rankin and Councillor Brown.

CHAIR OF MEETING:

In the absence of Councillor F Brolly and Councillor Rankin, it was proposed by Alderman Dolan, seconded by Alderman Carten that Councillor Coyle chair this meeting.

CONDOLENCES:

Members extended their deepest sympathy to the Mayor Councillor A Brolly and her husband Councillor F Brolly on the death of her mother. Members requested that a letter of condolence be forwarded to the Mayor on the behalf of Councillors and their various political parties.

MINUTES:

Minutes of meeting dated 10 March 2004 were approved and signed on the proposal of Alderman Dolan, seconded by Alderman Carten.

MATTERS ARISING:

Northern Ireland Milk Cup: The Leisure Services Officer reported to members that the Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer had been in contact with other Councils regarding

their level of funding towards the Northern Ireland Milk Cup and this was condensed as follows:

Ballymoney	£7,000
Coleraine	£38,000 (included is a one off payment of £18,000)
Ballymena	£25,000
N I Tourist Board	£10,000
Causeway Health Trust	£6,000

Councillor Cubitt commented that the Borough could lose the Milk Cup due to insufficient sponsorship and suggested that amount given for sponsorship should be looked at in light of less deserving causes. He added that £5,500 was a poor reflection on the Borough. Alderman Dolan requested a feasibility study on how much revenue the event brought into the borough.

The Leisure Services Officer explained that the pitches and receptions were provided free of charge for the event and this goodwill amounted to an extra £5,000, bringing total sponsorship of cash and in kind to over £10,000.

Councillor Lowry commented that Council did not begrudge the amount set aside in the budget for the event and as the incidental costs would probably triple this amount, it was best to retain the agreed sponsorship of £5,500.

Councillor Cubitt proposed that the decision should be delayed until the next Leisure Services meeting and that the Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer would provide members with a list of all incidental costs associated with the event. Councillor Mullan seconded this proposal but pointed out that incidental costs would be hard to quantify due to the 'spin off' in terms of revenue the shops attained from the players, their families and supporters. He added that Council wanted the Milk Cup to remain in the Borough and to continue to grow as it had done in previous years.

Massey Festival Fun Day: The Leisure Services Officer informed members that the Massey Festival Committee had been contacted in an attempt to gain information regarding the Fun Day but as yet there had been no response.

Benone Tourist Complex - Ice Cream Vendor: The Leisure Services Officer stated that details were currently being drawn up regarding the franchise for the sale of ice cream at Benone Tourist Complex and that this would be advertised soon as possible. She added that Council was reviewing its policy on franchising due to problems experienced in the past but it was hoped the Beach Management Scheme would correct any future difficulties by patrolling and policing the beach area. It was agreed that the reviewed policy would be submitted to members at the next Leisure Services Meeting.

Councillor Cubitt informed members that an ice cream vendor had contacted him for an explanation as to why he had not been informed that a licence was required to sell ice cream in the caravan park and as to why he was refused admission having sold ice

cream at the park over the last few years. The Leisure Services Officer commented that she also had spoken to the vendor and explained that no one had or would have a franchise to sell ice cream in the caravan park. She added further that any franchise would be for the sale of ice cream in the car park and not at the caravan park and that this could be either advertised or submitted for public auction.

Councillor Lowry commented that it was important that the policy regarding franchising was being reviewed and that there was a complaint procedure if the vendor was still unsatisfied with the explanation given.

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

The Leisure Services Officer presented the report and enlarged thereon. The report was adopted on the proposal of Councillor Cubitt, seconded by Councillor Lowry subject to the following:

North Atlantic Salmon Fund (NI): The Leisure Services Officer informed members that the North Atlantic Salmon Fund has an Interreg III application currently under consideration to conserve salmon stocks and enable the development of an international salmon angling project in the Foyle catchment area. She explained that the project would attract a large numbers of anglers to the area and create significant employment. It was proposed by Councillor Lowry, seconded by Alderman Robinson that Council write a letter of support and invite the group to make a presentation to members at the meeting of the Leisure Services Committee in May.

Limavady United Football Club: The Leisure Services Officer informed members that a meeting was held with Limavady United Football club officials and that Council staff was looking at possible fundraising options for the club. She explained that Council had obtained legal advice regarding the options available and the consequences to Council if a financial contribution was provided to the club. She added that the club had enquired if Council could assist with ground maintenance work as they were currently having difficulties due to the lack of proper equipment.

Councillor Lowry commented that he was happy to support what was outlined in the Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer's Report and hoped that this would be of help to the club.

The Leisure Services Officer said that Limavady United Football Club expressed thanks to Council for their help and assistance in the past and offered to keep Council informed of their plans for the future. It was proposed by Alderman Robinson, seconded by Councillor Cubitt to invite the football club officials to present details of their plans to Council.

European Under 17 Cricket Championships: The Leisure Services Officer stated that the European Under 17 Cricket Championships were being staged in the North West

over the summer and that the matches being played would take place in Limavady and Drummond grounds. She added that the North West Cricket Union were organising sponsorship to raise the £11,000 required for the competition and hoped that Council would look favourably at their request for support on this occasion. Councillor Lowry proposed, seconded by Councillor Cubitt that any decision should be deferred until the next Leisure Services Meeting.

Ulster Sports Trust: The Leisure Services Officer informed members that correspondence had been received from the Ulster Sports Trust for Council to take a table at their Gala Dinner event at the cost of £500. It was proposed by Councillor Cubitt, seconded by Alderman Dolan not to support this event. (Agreed)

Proposed Foyle System Canoe Trail: The Leisure Services Officer reported that the Countryside Access & Activities Network was establishing a partnership with the Loughs Agency, Derry City, Omagh and Strabane District Councils to develop a canoe trail throughout the Foyle system and as the River Roe formed part of the system, Council had been invited to participate in the project with a trail linking Dungiven and Limavady to Lough Foyle. She added that the Countryside Access & Activities Network would apply to the Rural Development Council for funding, but they also needed to match funding from other sources, including Councils.

Members noted that the development of canoeing along the River Roe was identified in the Council's draft Countryside Recreation Strategy, the Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust Countryside Recreation Strategy and the Northern Ireland canoeing strategy.

Councillor Coyle commented that the River Roe was unsurpassed in the region for canoeing and recommended Council become involved in this proposal. This was seconded by Councillor Cubitt and agreed.

Beach Management at Benone: The Leisure Services Officer reported that the provision of police officers from Limavady District Command Unit (DCU) at Benone throughout the summer of 2003 had proved to be a successful initiative and following a meeting with Council officers, the DCU Operations Manager had indicated that he would be prepared to repeat the arrangement for summer of 2004. She added that the presence of police officers helped to increase levels of confidence amongst visitors and that there was a marked decrease in the number of vehicle incidents Council officers had to deal with.

Alderman Robinson indicated his support for the initiative, as it was a deterrent from an anti social point of view.

Councillor Cubitt suggested there should be additional signs erected indicating speed limit on the beach and that Council needed to co-operate with Coleraine Borough Council with a view to erecting gates to prevent access to the beach at night.

The Leisure Services Officer responded that signs had been pulled down the previous

week and these would be erected again as soon as possible. She added that Council already co-operating with Coleraine Borough Council and that the Beach Management would look at where signs were needed.

Review of Tourism Signing in Northern Ireland: The Leisure Services Officer stressed that members were aware that Roads Service and Northern Ireland Tourist Board have been reviewing Tourism Signing policy in Northern Ireland and a new policy was due to go to the Minister for final approval in the very near future. She added that while the majority of local authorities had fully signed up to adopting the new policy, the NITB was aware that a few Councils had a number of concerns in terms of delivering the new policy, especially in handling payments. She added further that it had been concluded that in order for the policy to work effectively, it was vital that local authorities play a full part in the process, including collecting and collating payment.

Members noted that whilst the Tourism Masterplan element focused directly on the development and implementation of signs on the coastal route, the NITB and Roads Service were working together to investigate the technical aspects of signing of this route and associated loops. The Leisure Services Officer said that each local authority in the area was to carry out signing schemes which would detail the total tourism in the area and form the basis of forming the development of the route in terms of spreading the expected benefits of tourism to the whole area.

Members queried as to bed & breakfast signs and church signs being included in the signage scheme. The Leisure Services Officer responded that the scheme was more to do with local attractions and that she would investigate this with Northern Ireland Tourist Board and report back to members at next Leisure Services Meeting.

Roe Valley Folk Festival: The Leisure Services Officer commented that an application for a £5,000 grant had been received for funding towards the 2004 Folk Festival, which was to take place from 1 - 3 October 2004. The provisional programme was outlined by the Leisure Services Officer, who added that 50% of the grant was payable prior to the festival and 50% on receipt of satisfactory accounts.

Councillor Cubitt said that publicans were the greater benefactors from hosting such a festival and suggested that this amount should be reviewed again in light of the contribution to the milk cup.

Councillor Lowry stated that Council had just adopted the Corporate Strategy and encouraged town centre growth, such festivals were a bonus to the borough and the wider community and should be encouraged. He added that the grant was in keeping with previous grants and supported the recommendation within the Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer report.

Councillor Coyle in endorsing this proposal acknowledged the benefits of such festivals to publicans but pointed out that the festival programme included events in Benedy Community Centre and street singers in towns where no alcoholic was served.

Councillor Stevenson expressed concern that if the £5,000 were to be used for employing artists, the publicans might then charge door fees for entrance to see artists.

The Leisure Services Officer reminded members that the grant requested had been included in the rates estimate and that £2,500 would come from local businesses and a similar grant from the Arts Council.

Sperrins Tourism Ltd: The Leisure Services Officer informed members that the annual contribution towards Sperrins Tourism Ltd was now due for 2004/2005 and that £7,000 had been allowed for this in the rates estimate. She also informed members that Council had been successful in obtaining grant aid of up to £10,000 over the next two years from the Sperrins Natural Resource Rural Tourism Initiative scheme, to host a Roe Valley Rural Heritage Event at the Green Lane Museum on 7 and 8 August 2004 and on a similar date in 2005. Members agreed to the payment of £7,000 for the annual contribution.

Ulster Way: The Leisure Services Officer reported that the Ulster Way Advisory Committee had agreed a preferred route for the Ulster Way and that the route would be provisionally divided into quality walking sections and links. She explained that the entire route which passed through the Limavady Borough had been designated as a quality section, with the exception the proposed on road spur from Binevenagh to Magilligan Point. She added that the Environment & Heritage Service had written to Council seeking its formal agreement to maintain this section which was within private land. She added further that the Environment & Heritage Service had decided to increase grant aid for strategic maintenance of quality sections of the Ulster Way and other routes to 100% - subject to assessment of individual applications and also to consider covering the cost of public liability insurance for quality sections on the condition that Councils agree to maintain same.

Members agreed to maintain the quality sections of the Ulster Way subject to consultation and agreement with the Chief Technical Services Officer.

Spring Festival Programme 2004: The Leisure Services Officer outlined the Spring Festival Programme for 2004 with the associated charges. She pointed out that most of the programme was free of charge or any admission fees would cover the costs of the event.

The Leisure Services Officer informed members that the estimated cost to host the Mayor's Parade for 2004 was £1,200. She added that the parade would be held on Saturday 8 May at 1 pm, leaving from Limavady High School and that the programme would include vintage/classic cars and cycles, floats, fancy dress, bands, street entertainment, clowns and other characters.

Councillor Lowry stated that he hoped that the Mayor's Parade would get bigger and better each year and thanked those who put energy and support into the festival. He added that shops and local communities should be encouraged to take part in the parade.

The Leisure Services Officer commented that Council had written or had telephoned Community Groups and shops regarding the parade and added that this year the theme was to be 'open' as having a specific theme was considered too restrictive.

Ballykelly Community & Youth Association: The Leisure Services Officer informed members that a request had been received from Ballykelly Community and Youth Association for (1) floodlights and (2) additional storage at Ballykelly pitch and that a site meeting was held to discuss the matter further.

The Leisure Services Officer explained that the Association had asked Council to lease an additional piece of land to the western side of the building on which to site a further storage section connected to the existing building. It was agreed by members that the piece of land required be leased to the Association and the existing lease be amended to reflect this transaction.

The Leisure Services Officer informed members that a discussion had taken place with the Chief Technical Services Officer in relation to the proposal of lighting and he had agreed to provide estimated costs and that the Association was willing to fund raise to assist with the defrayal of expenses.

McGuinness School of Dancing: The Leisure Services Officer explained that an application had been received from McGuinness School of Dancing for financial assistance towards their festivals for the coming year. Members highlighted that this Dancing School was supportive of all Council's events and provided entertainment at no cost and agreed to provide the £600 requested to cover three festivals.

Feeny Community Association: The Leisure Services Officer explained that an application had been received from Feeny Community Association for grant aid for their summer scheme, which contributes towards the community programme for children in the Feeny area. It was agreed by members to contribute £200 to the Association.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Playground at Blackburn Park: Councillor Cubitt requested an update on the plans for the playground at Blackburn Park. The Leisure Services Officer agreed to contact the Technical Services Department regarding planning permission for the park.

Texas Line Dancers: Councillor Lowry informed members that the Texas Line Dancing group were going to write to Council requesting an agreement to let them use the grounds at Wisners Lane for a charity event. He added that it was hoped that Council would look favourably at this request. Councillor Coyle advised waiting until the letter arrived before making any decision.

Travellers Illegally Parked at Benone: Councillor Stevenson expressed his concern that yet again, members of the travelling community had gained access to the car park at Benone. He requested that the Leisure Services Officer provide details to Council on

how this access had been achieved and what action had been taken to have the travellers move from the site.

The Leisure Services Officer pointed out that she had been attending a course and had just recently been informed of the situation. She confirmed that the travellers had gained access by manipulation of the mechanical barrier and by man handling the caravan between the barrier and the control building. She added that a bollard had been erected at the latter location and that legal action had been initiated to regain possession of the site.

The Leisure Services Officer highlighted legal difficulties concerning identities of those travellers currently on site and those named in the rite held by Council.

She also confirmed to members that there was no court sitting on Good Friday, Easter Monday or Tuesday and as both the Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer and Judy (title) were required to be in attendance at any court proceedings, this had not been possible as the Chief Recreation/Tourist Officer was unavailable at this time.

Councillor Stevenson commented that as criminal damage had been done to the barrier, the police should be undertaking action regarding this. The Leisure Services Officer explained that the Police Service of Northern Ireland was not undertaking any action on this, as there were no witnesses.

Councillor Cubitt stated that the barrier was situated in the wrong place and suggested that Council had not made proper or adequate precautions to keep these people out although promises had been made the previous year that such illegal parking would not happen again.

Councillor Lowry commented that with rights came responsibilities and that those illegally parked at the site should be prosecuted and Councillor Mullan endorsed these concerns.

The Leisure Services Officer explained to members that the barrier was located in its current position to facilitate override by staff and that there was an urgent need for Council to review its policy in this matter.

Councillor Lowry commented that it was stressful for Officers attempting to deal with this situation and hoped that an early resolution would be found. He said that there was a need for Council to work with the Housing Executive regarding space for travellers, as this would stop a reoccurrence of the situation and provide a long-term solution.

Easter Celebrations: Councillor Lowry referred to the success other Borough Councils had experienced in hosting events to celebrate Easter. He recommended that Council consider hosting such events, which could include an Easter Parade and a bunny or egg hunt.

NEXT MEETING:

12 May 2004

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS

(The meeting ended at 10.15 pm)