

LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE
30 JUNE 1998

Present: Councillor North (Chairman), Councillors Blatchford, Egan, Fawcett, Finnie, Good, Grayson, Miss Haydon, Mrs Hayes, Mrs Keene and Thompson

Substitute Members: Councillors Jones, Mrs Pile and Wade

Apologies for Absence were received from:
Councillors Bettison, Flood, McCormack, Taylor and Wheaton

Substitutions

Councillor Jones for Councillor Wheaton
Councillor Mrs Pile for Councillor Flood
Councillor Wade for Councillor Bettison

129. Chairman's Announcement's

The Chairman commenced the meeting by highlighting some particularly good examples of good practice and successes within the Leisure Services programme area across the Borough held since the last Committee meeting.

130. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 24 February 1998 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

131. Leisure Strategy (Item 1)

The Director of Leisure Services introduced a report giving details of the Leisure Strategy document and the recommendations contained therein relating to the Leisure Services programme area and its future detailed work programmes. The Committee considered the recommendations and suggested minor amendments to recommendations nos: 9, 10, 28, 29, 30, 45, 53, 54, 57 and 58. The Director agreed to include the Committee's further proposals.

RECOMMENDED that:

- (i) the Leisure Strategy as detailed in the officer's report be adopted; and
- (ii) all relevant operational recommendations detailed in the annexe to the report be considered as future work programmes are developed.

132. Quarterly Summary Report (Item 2)

The Director of Leisure Services introduced the first volume of the quarterly summary report for Leisure Services which gave details of current key operational issues affecting the department, significant events occurring, the main activities of individual sections within the department, and the resources available for the work undertaken. The report included details of performance indicators for the department and proposed key tasks and developments for the municipal year 1998/99 for the sections within the department. The report concluded with details of the revenue and capital budgets for 1998/99.

RESOLVED that the quarterly operations report, detailing work undertaken by the Leisure Services Department be received.

133. Performance Indicators 1996/97 (Item 3)

The Committee received a report giving details of the Leisure Performance Indicators for the 1996/97 municipal year. The performance indicators were considered to give an overview of the work undertaken and form a basis by which year to year comparisons could be made.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the report be noted;
- (ii) the Leisure Services DSO be congratulated on an excellent financial performance; and
- (ii) further work be undertaken to assess the background to the relatively low spend per head in parks and open spaces.

134. Brakenhale School Grant (Item 4)

The Committee considered a report giving details of the request for grant aid towards the cost of new sports facilities at Brakenhale School. The report proposed amendments to the two previous grant offers which had totalled almost £19,000. The financial request of up to £15,000 was required due to the reduction in actual project costs compared to those estimated since the original resolutions to give a grant had been made on 30 July 1996 and 17 September 1997.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) a grant of up to £15,000 be made towards the cost of new sports facilities at Brakenhale School; and
- (ii) the proposal to appoint a Leisure Officer to the Brakenhale Management Committee be not further progressed.

135. Public Access to Information Communication Technology Facilities for Bracknell Forest Library and Information Service (Item 5)

The Committee considered a report giving details of a proposal to introduce a longer term approach to providing ICT facilities for public users. The proposal would

include providing full access to PC based office facilities on a pay to use basis via a pilot project to be run for six months including both the Bracknell main library and the Birch Hill library. In addition to including access to the Internet, the project would enable the Library and Information Service to assess how selected services such as the BFBC PIN could be introduced into non library locations.

RESOLVED that £20,000 be released from the capital programme to provide two different means of accessing public information at Bracknell and Birch Hill libraries.

136. Replacement Archives Building (Item 6)

The Committee considered a report giving details of the working arrangements necessary to secure the rebuilding of the County Records Office and effect the removal of the local archives from Shire Hall to Yeomanry House in Reading.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the Director of Leisure Services and the Director of Corporate Services be given delegated authority to approve payments required under the Joint Arrangements for the replacement archives building, subject to the costs being contained within estimates; and
- (ii) the Director of Leisure Services and the Borough Surveyor be given delegated authority to approve terms of the lease between West Berkshire District Council and Reading Borough Council in respect of the Yeomanry House site.

137. CD ROM for Loan Service at Sandhurst Library (Item 7)

The Head of Libraries, Arts and Information gave details of a proposal to operate a pilot CD ROM for loan service at Sandhurst Library. It was proposed that Ramesis CD ROMs be used to supply the CD ROMs due to their being the sole providers of this service at the current time.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) a pilot CD ROM to lend service be established at Sandhurst Library;
- (ii) as in view of the specialist nature of the contract, supply of CD ROMs to be by Ramesis (CD ROMs to Lend) and in accordance with Standing Order 67, the requirements of Standing Order 65 be waived;
- (iii) the Director of Leisure Services be authorised to expand the CD ROM for loan service if the pilot is successful by virement of existing resources; and
- (iv) the Director of Leisure Services, in consultation with the Borough Solicitor, enter into an appropriate contract.

138. BSLC/Coral Reef - Proposed Capital Works (Item 8)

The Committee considered a report giving details of the proposed capital works at Coral Reef involving the creation of a screen to form a barrier to stop warm air circulating into the restaurant area, the installation of a combined heat and power unit

within the Coconut Grove Restaurant and of automatic lighting controls in the Sports Hall, Squash Courts, 3M Hall, changing rooms and plant room at the Sport & Leisure Centre thus creating energy savings.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) £105,000 be released from the capital programme to install a barrier screen at Coral Reef, and that the Borough Surveyor be authorised in consultation with the Chairman to accept the lowest tender for this work; and
- (ii) £11,000 be released from the capital programme to install automatic lighting controls at Bracknell Sports & Leisure Centre.

139. Worldsend and Whitegrove Basketball Posts (Item 9)

The Committee received a report giving details of the proposal to introduce basketball posts at Worldsend open space, Forest Park and to provide alternative provision to that the post currently provided at Whitegrove Youth Centre in order to alleviate problems caused by the current facility.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) a basketball post be installed at Worldsend Open Space, Forest Park;
- (ii) up to £7,000 be funded from the capital budget of £25,000 allocated for "Open Access Youth provision"; and
- (iii) up to £14,000 be spent from the Whitegrove Youth Centre revenue budget on alterations to the existing basketball area at the centre.

140. Sandhurst Town Boys & Girls Football Club Grant (Item 10)

The Head of Recreation and Amenities introduced a report giving details of variations to a grant previously approved by the Leisure Committee in May 1996 at £25,000 to Sandhurst Boys & Girls Football Club. It was noted that two conditions had been attached to the offer of the grant: namely confirmation of Lottery funding and the grant of a long term lease.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the original grant offer be withdrawn;
- (ii) the lower figure of either 42% of the project cost or £25,000 be awarded as a grant to Sandhurst Boys and Girls Football Club;
- (iii) the grant be paid to Sandhurst Town Council;
- (iv) the Director of Leisure Services be authorised to agree variations to the scheme and stipulate any further conditions he deems appropriate; and
- (v) the conditions of the grant to be:
 - a lease of 35 years for the changing area from Sandhurst Town Council;
 - the remaining funding being secured from sources other than the Borough Council;

- all necessary permissions are obtained;
- this offer be time limited until 31 March 1999, and
- any changes to the approved scheme must be agreed in advance by the Director of Leisure Services.

141. General Upgrade of Youth Centre (Item 10b)

The Director of Leisure Services introduced a report regarding a partnership project opportunity proposed with Edgbarrow School in order to upgrade the Sixth Form Unit and involving the allocation of £20,000 from the capital programme to be matched by Edgbarrow School. The Edgbarrow Youth & Community provision was based on the Edgbarrow School site in Crowthorne, sharing the Sixth Form Unit at the school and was in need of refurbishment.

RESOLVED that an allocation of £20,000 from this years approved capital programme be allocated to Edgbarrow Youth Centre, Crowthorne for the purposes of a general upgrade to the premises.

142. Land Adjacent to Sandhurst School (Item 11)

The Committee received a report regarding a plan to provide an integrated scheme at the land adjacent to Sandhurst School which involved some parcels of land managed by the Leisure Services Department as play area open space. The proposed scheme would involve provision of the safe route to school, a new multipurpose sports area, improved drainage, improvements to the car parking entrance to the Sports Centre, improvements to informal recreation facilities and provision of a warden's flat to improve community supervision. The report gave details of the feasibility of the proposals and the way in which the scheme could progress.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the schemes identified in paragraph. 4.2 of the report be noted;
- (ii) the feasibility of the proposals be developed further as detailed in paragraph. 4.4;
- (iii) if required, a consultant be appointed to develop the project; and
- (iv) the Education Budget Sub Committee be informed of the potential development.

143. Request for Grant Aid - Crowthorne Residents Association (Item 12)

In accordance with Standing Order 25, Councillor Wade declared a non pecuniary interest in this item. He remained in the Council Chamber and was able to speak but not to vote thereon.

The Director of Leisure Services introduced a report detailing a request from Crowthorne Residents Association for grant aid to construct a midi ramp for wheeled sports activities. The preferred site for this being the Morgan Recreation Ground. It was noted that there were several matters to be confirmed regarding the request, although it was hoped that these would be resolved within a short time scale.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) up to £12,000 be allocated from the 1998/99 Capital Programme to install a "midi Ramp" in Crowthorne;
- (ii) the Crowthorne Residents Association ensure that all necessary planning permissions are sought; and
- (iii) the Director of Leisure Services be authorised to withdraw the grant offer by 30 September 1998 if the scheme has not progressed adequately.

144. Dance Development Programme (Item 13)

The Committee received a detailed report regarding the Dance Development Programme, working throughout the County with children and adults in a wide range of dance activities. Details were given regarding the varied achievements that the programme had made since its start and the recent development of a dance service and programme for the people of Bracknell Forest, as well as acting in an advisory and information capacity to the other unitary authorities and providing dance services to them for financial remuneration. It was noted that the focus of the programme would remain for young people between the ages of 14 and 21 whilst also developing opportunities for children under 14 and creating strong links with the Bracknell Education Department.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the development programme identified at paragraph 6.3 be approved;
- (ii) the Berkshire Youth Dance Company be maintained and the Dance Development Officer undertake further work to refine its work within the unitary context; and
- (iii) the Director of Leisure Services writes to Southern Arts thanking it for its support in the current financial year.

145. Blackwater Valley Recreation & Countryside Management Service (Item 14)

Consideration was given to a report giving details of proposed funding arrangements for the Blackwater Valley Recreation & Countryside Management Service following the disaggregation of the Berkshire County Council budget. The Committee considered the work undertaken by the Management Service and proposed funding and reporting arrangements to be adopted.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) a contribution of £20,574 be paid to the Blackwater Valley Recreation and Countryside Management Service in 1998/99;
- (ii) future funding be determined as part of the revenue budget process;
- (iii) the Countryside Service Annual Report continue to include a section on the BVRCMS so as to keep members aware of current matters;

- (iv) the number of representatives on the Joint Management Committee should remain at two; and
- (v) a letter be sent to Surrey Heath Borough Council requesting that they review their financial support for the Blackwater Valley Recreation and Countryside Management Service.

146. Naming of Land South of Cabbage Hill (Item 15)

The Committee received a report giving details of the proposal to give a name to the new open space on land south of Cabbage Hill, to be opened officially on 16 July 1998.

RESOLVED that the land south of Cabbage Hill be named Garth Meadows.

147. Dog Fouling Scheme - Zoning of Open Spaces (Item 16)

The Committee received a report giving details of the new proposed dog fouling scheme and the traffic light scheme to apply to various zones of open spaces throughout the Borough. Three categories of land were proposed within the scheme and different rules regarding dog-fouling applied to each. The Committee considered it would be important to ensure information dissemination of the scheme throughout the Borough.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the dog zones as identified in the annexe to the officer's report be approved; and
- (ii) the Director of Leisure Services be authorised to make minor amendments to these in future as the scheme develops.

148. Horseshoe Lake - Recreational Use (Item 17)

The Committee considered a report giving a brief review of recreational activities carried out at Horseshoe Lake and assessing the extension of the range of activities which could be provided there including the development of fishing, cycling, horse-riding, beach volleyball, archery, camping and a climbing wall.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) fishing be allowed on the stretch of the Blackwater River at Horseshoe Lake, owned by this Council and that this be administered through this Council's existing fishing permit scheme;
- (ii) the Council permit cycling along the Blackwater Valley Footpath at Horseshoe Lake where it is situated on land owned by this Council;
- (iii) horse-riding around the lake be investigated further, with a view to extending facilities for riding when ground conditions are suitable; and

- (iv) further discussions take place about introducing some additional outdoor activities at Horseshoe lake and, if appropriate planning permission be sought.

149. Great Hollands Community Centre (Item 18)

The Director of Leisure Services introduced a report regarding the progress made in resolving management issues at the Great Hollands Community Centre and proposing a future course of action involving the current existing association operating under a new lease with the Borough Council involving the bar area only whilst a new community association would sign a new lease for the remaining community area. It was proposed that the Borough Valuer give a written guarantee to the existing association that proposed works would be carried out on condition that they and the new association sign these leases.

RESOLVED that the Borough Valuer be authorised to undertake the action as detailed in paragraph 4.6 of the officer's report.

150. Wheeled Sports (Item 19)

The Committee considered a report giving details of the results of the results of the small research project undertaken into the provision of wheeled sports within the Borough and future action suggested. The project showed that there was similar demand for additional facilities within the Borough on a small scale basis to be provided at a local level and also for larger scale facilities at Borough level. It was noted that some provision existed for BMX within the Borough and for skateboarding although there were no facilities for rollerblading.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the Director of Leisure Services seek opportunities to provide an indoor skate park in Bracknell Forest; and
- (ii) the Council continue to work in partnership with Town and Parish Council so as to ensure adequate provision for wheeled sports.

151. Management Arrangements - Youth Centres (Item 20)

The Director of Leisure Services introduced a report giving details of the need to review the effectiveness and role of the former management committees at Youth Centres. The need for such reassessment was required in light of the Council becoming a unitary authority, taking on a youth and community role and in light of its new management structure and overall scheme of delegation to officers which had been approved with the intention of allowing operational decisions to be made efficiently and to create transparent accountability. The aim of the process of change would be to clarify staff management and financial accountability through the development of appropriate consultation mechanisms with the community and young people.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the existing management committees of Youth Centres in the Borough be dissolved; and

- (ii) the Head of Youth & Community Services develop appropriate consultation mechanisms with the community and young people as soon as is practical.

152. Member Appointments to Outside Organisations (Item 21)

The Committee considered a report regarding the request from Southern Arts Board for an additional Council Member to attend their meetings and an similar request from the Berkshire Association of Youth Clubs for a Member to serve on their Management Committee.

RECOMMENDED to Strategy and Policy Committee that the request from Southern Arts Board and the Berkshire Association of Youth Clubs for member representation be accepted.

153. South Hill Park Trust - Activities Report (Item 22)

The Committee considered the activity report submitted by South Hill Park Trust on the activities and challenges undertaken and experienced in delivering arts opportunities to the area between February and May 1998. This included a wide range of activities throughout the Trust developed to encourage and appeal to many different requirements.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the report be noted; and
- (ii) the Director of Leisure Services develops a mechanism by which the Council's needs can be made clear to South Hill Park Trust and that this be subsequently presented to both this Committee and the Board of South Hill Park Trust for consideration.

154. Items for Information (Items 23, 24 and 25)

The Committee noted the following items which were submitted for information only:

The Look Out - Annual Report 1997/98 (Item 23)

The Committee congratulated The Look Out on its performance during the year 1997/98.

New Library: The People's Network (Item 24)

Joint Golf Course Committee Minutes 12 March 1998 (Item 25)

155. Exclusion of Public and Press

RESOLVED that pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration

of Item 26 which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of that Act:

(9) Terms Proposed for a Contract

156. Horseshoe Lake Watersports Centre - Management Contract (Item 26)

In a report containing exempt information the Director of Leisure Services gave details of the proposals to negotiate a new agreement regarding the Horseshoe Lake Watersports Centre Management Contract.

RESOLVED that

- (i) in accordance with Standing Order 67, the requirements of Standing Order 65 be waived; and
- (ii) the officers be authorised to negotiate a new agreement with the existing management contract.

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm and concluded at 10.05pm.

CHAIRMAN