

**LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**15 JUNE 1999**

Present: Councillors North (Chairman), Blatchford, Egan, Fawcett, Finnie, Flood, Good, Miss Haydon, Mrs Hayes, Jones, Mrs Keene, Simonds, Taylor and Thompson

**71. Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Councillors Jones and Simonds who had been recently appointed as members of the Leisure Services Committee. The Chairman also welcomed to the meeting Tim Brinkman, the Director of South Hill Park, and Sheila Ogden, the recently appointed Manager of Youth Services.

**72. Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 8 April 1999 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**73. Quarterly Operations Report (Item 1)**

The Committee considered the Quarterly Operations Report which advised Members of the key developments relating to Leisure Services since the Committee's last meeting in April. The report included performance indicators for the whole of the 1998/99 year against annual targets. The Committee considered and agreed proposed Key Tasks for 1999/2000 for each of the Department's four service areas.

The Committee was also pleased to note that the Countryside Agency had commended the Council's work on footpaths and public rights of way and complimented the Council's 'Milestones Statement' as the best produced by a new unitary authority. The Committee put on record its gratitude to Anthony Hurst, Countryside Officer and Helen Tranter, Head of Countryside and Heritage for their work in this area. In addition, in recognition of her expertise in this area, Helen Tranter was being considered for appointment to the Countryside Agency.

**RESOLVED** that

- (i) the Quarterly Operations Report of the Director of Leisure Services be noted; and
- (ii) the Key Objectives for the Leisure Services Department outlined in Annexes B, C, D and E to the report be approved, subject to in the case of Section 10 of Annexe E, the insertion of the following words: "seek venues where appropriate".

74. **Provisional Outturn 1998/1999 and Commitment Budget 2000/2001 - 2002/2003 (Item 2)**

The Committee noted the latest projected outturn position for the financial year 1998/99, which showed expenditure £3.635 million compared to an approved budget of £3.855 million. Expenditure totalling £59,000 had been identified as potential budget carried forwards in accordance with the Council's financial regulations and these carry forwards would be considered for approval by the Strategy and Policy Committee. The Committee also considered its commitment budget for the coming three year period. This was based upon the approved 1999/2000 budget adjusted to exclude the effects of use of balances, existing commitments and one off pressures.

**RESOLVED** that

- (i) the provisional outturn expenditure for 1998/99 of £3.635 million be noted;
- (ii) the Strategy and Policy Committee be requested to approve the budget carry forwards totalling £.059 million, as detailed in paragraph 4.4 of the report; and
- (iii) the Committee's commitment budget for the period 2000/01 – 2002/03 be noted.

75. **South Hill Park Partnership Agreement (Item 12)**

The Director of Leisure Services reported on several issues that had been raised by the Board of South Hill Park Trust relating to the Partnership Agreement previously agreed by this Committee. The Committee agreed several modifications to the Agreement, such as clarification of the link between the Council's grant and the programme of events; and an amendment to the statement of 'foregone rental', which subsequently could be considered by the Board.

**RESOLVED** that

- (i) the amendments to the Partnership Agreement with South Hill Park Trust, as detailed in Annexe A to the report, be approved; and
- (ii) the Board of South Hill Park Trust be asked to consider and approve the Partnership Agreement as now presented.

76. **South Hill Park (Item 17)**

The Committee was invited to consider a proposal by the Board of South Hill Park Trust whereby the Trust's form of governance would be amended with the effect that the Borough Council would nominate four Members (from 1 June 2000) instead of the current five. (A reduction in Bracknell Town Council representation on the Board was also proposed by the South Hill Park Board.) The terms of office of these four Members would be staggered with the aim of ensuring continuity on the Board. Following discussion the Committee agreed to note this proposal.

The Committee was also advised of the activity details for South Hill Park which included information on items such as events, performances and attendances for the period in question.

**RESOLVED** that

- (i) the proposals of the Board of South Hill Park Trust to change its form of governance be noted; and
- (ii) the activity details for South Hill Park for the period be noted.

**77. Downshire Golf Course Business Plan (Item 3)**

The Committee considered a draft Business Plan for Downshire Golf Course, which detailed how the golf course would operate after 17 August 1999, when the Council assumed direct responsibility for the management and operation of the course. Against a background of a downward trend in course roundages over the last ten years, the Committee acknowledged the key task for the Direct Service Organisation, and, in particular, the new Golf Facility Manager, would be to stabilise the usage of the course. The Committee agreed that total investment of £217,000 was required to achieve optimum standards at the course from the outset, including £70,000 to purchase stock for the golf course shop. The Committee thus requested the Strategy and Policy Committee for this funding in the form of a capital allocation (£87,000); cash reserves (£70,000) and the balance of the Joint Golf Course Committee's renewals fund (£50,000).

**RESOLVED** that

- (i) the draft Business Plan be endorsed;
- (ii) the Director of Leisure Services be authorised to agree with the Direct Services Board that the Direct Service Organisation operate the facility on the basis of being reimbursed approved expenditure; and
- (iii) the Strategy and Policy Committee be requested to approve:
  - (a) additional capital resources of £87,000 to purchase the necessary plant and equipment, as detailed in Appendix 3 of the Business Plan;
  - (b) the purchase of £70,000 of stock from the Council's cash reserves to enable the golf shop to operate; and
  - (c) the utilisation of this Council's share of the balances remaining in the Joint Golf Course Committee renewals funds to purchase plant and equipment, as detailed in Appendix 3 of the Business Plan.

**78. Community Sports and Greenway Project (Item 4)**

The Director of Leisure Services reported on the results of the consultation exercise on the Community Sports and Greenway Project. These showed that overall there was strong support for the project and on this basis the Committee agreed to submit a planning application both for the project itself and for the small area of housing which could provide a contribution to the funding of the scheme overall. A petition from residents in Blackcap Place and the surrounding roads expressed concerns relating to the long standing anti-social behaviour on the site, which the Committee agreed would be addressed by the scheme.

**RESOLVED** that

- (i) the strong support within the local community for the Community Sports and Greenway Project be noted;
- (ii) a planning application be submitted for the Community Sports and Greenway Project and for the small area of housing;
- (iii) the Director of Leisure Services in consultation with the Chairman, be authorised to make amendments to the original proposals in view of the comments received; and
- (iv) the petition from residents in Blackcap Place and the surrounding area be noted.

**79. Capital Projects 1999/2000 (Item 5)**

The Committee was advised that its Capital Programme for 1999/2000 included a sum of £230,000 for general improvements to leisure facilities. Details of five schemes totalling £137,000 were considered. These included additional shower heating at Coral Reef (£17,000); the provision of soft play equipment at the Edgbarrow and Sandhurst Sports Centres (£8,000); improvements to Crowthorne Library (£17,000); and refurbishments to the Savernake Park Play Area (£50,000). The Committee also approved funding of £45,000 for the replacement of the rubberised running track at the Bracknell Sport and Leisure Centre which would be part funded by a contribution of £55,000 from the relevant Trust Fund.

**RESOLVED** that the five schemes identified in the report proceed.

**80. Westmorland Drive Open Space (Item 6)**

The Director of Leisure Services reported that previously £456,767 had been allocated from Section 106 funds for the design and construction of a sports pavilion at the open space at Westmorland Drive and following preliminary estimates from the architect there was a shortfall in funding of £63,233. The Committee agreed to seek a further allocation of Section 106 funding from Strategy and Policy Committee to cover this shortfall.

The Committee also considered the name for the Westmorland Drive Open Space and agreed that Warfield Parish Council should be asked to consider two further options "Strawberry Hill Fields" and "Strawberry Park" in addition to the Parish Council's original choice of "Strawberry Fields".

**RESOLVED** that

- (i) it be confirmed that the Committee wish to proceed with the sports pavilion as currently designed and to find the necessary finance;
- (ii) the Strategy and Policy Committee be requested to release a further £63,233 of Section 106 Funds for the pavilion; and

- (iii) Warfield Parish Council be asked to consider "Strawberry Hill Fields", "Strawberry Park" or "Strawberry Fields" as possible names for Westmorland Drive Open Space.

**81. Brownlow Memorial Hall (Item 7)**

The Director of Leisure Services reported that Brownlow Memorial Hall in Warfield was currently managed by Trustees who were in negotiation with Warfield Parish Council to transfer management responsibilities to a new registered charity. The Parish Council was seeking support from the Borough to undertake improvements to the hall. The modernisation of the facilities would include additional meeting rooms, improved access for wheelchairs whilst at the same time retaining the original character of the building. The Committee agreed to seek a contribution of Section 106 funding for the project and for the remainder agreed to make a loan to Warfield Parish Council in the form of an investment.

**RESOLVED** that the Strategy and Policy Committee be requested to:

- (i) allocate £90,687 from Section 106 Agreement funding, as detailed in Annexe A of the report, for the improvements to Brownlow Memorial Hall;
- (ii) approve an investment of up to £300,000 to Warfield Parish Council at a variable interest rate equal to the repo rate plus one eighth of one percent, repayable over a period of 25 years;
- (iii) agree the following conditions:
  - (a) the grant and investment may only be utilised for the project detailed in the report, subject to the Director of Leisure Services being given delegated authority to agree minor variations;
  - (b) the project is begun by 31 March 2001;
  - (c) any other conditions proposed by the Borough Solicitor or Borough Finance Officer to protect the Council's interest.

**82. Lily Hill Park (Item 8)**

The Committee was advised that a Restoration Management Plan for Lily Hill Park had been prepared which sought the restoration of the Park to its original design as an informal recreation facility with historic parkland. In the short to medium term a number of restoration and replanting works would be undertaken, including some tree removal. The Committee agreed to the proposals and in order to ascertain the extent of the restoration works agreed that it would be beneficial to visit the Park. Funding for these improvements could be made available from Section 106 funds and the Committee agreed to request Strategy and Policy Committee accordingly. Other sources of finance such as the Heritage Lottery Fund would be explored.

**RESOLVED** that

- (i) the Restoration Management Plan for Lily Hill Park be adopted as a guideline for the future management of the Park;
- (ii) the Strategy and Policy Committee be requested to release Section 106 funds of £22,158 for expenditure on the Park; and

- (iii) applications be made to external funding sources, including the Heritage Lottery Fund, as appropriate.

**83. Youth Service – Framework for Strategic Review (Item 9)**

The Director of Leisure Services reported that it was appropriate to consider a Framework for a Strategic Review of the service. Eight key areas had been identified where a full strategic review would be beneficial and these were: Facilities; Services; Lifelong Learning; Targeted Work; Partnership/Advocacy; Information/Access to Information; Communication; and Performance Indicators.

**RESOLVED** that the framework for review of the youth services, as identified in paragraphs 4.8 and 4.9 of the report, be approved.

**84. Youth Service Audit (Item 10)**

The Committee considered a report outlining the main findings of the Youth Service Audit which had been undertaken between March and May 1999. The Committee noted that the audit had identified nine key findings, which would be considered alongside the strategic review of the service and would provide a model for the ongoing development of services for young people across the Borough.

**RESOLVED** that

- (i) the results of the Youth Service Audit be noted;
- (ii) the main findings be considered in the future planning of the Youth Service; and
- (iii) the commissioning of the second phase of the audit be approved.

**85. Library Membership Reciprocal Arrangements (Item 11)**

The Committee considered a report seeking its approval to the proposed library membership reciprocal arrangements with the unitary authorities in Berkshire and the adjoining authorities of Hampshire, Oxfordshire and Surrey.

**RESOLVED** that the reciprocal extension of library membership to anyone who lives, works or studies anywhere within the former County of Berkshire or its adjoining authorities be approved.

**86. New Open Spaces (Item 13)**

The Committee was advised that during 1998/99 nine new open spaces had been acquired by the Countryside Service from developers, with a total of £343,580 received as commuted maintenance payments from the developers. As a rule commuted payments were added to a committee's budgets as they became effective. However as the variations to revenue budgets were in excess of £50,000 approval would be required from the Strategy and Policy Committee.

**RESOLVED** that the Strategy and Policy Committee be requested to release the commuted maintenance sums held by the Finance and Property Sub Committee to cover the additional cost of parks and open spaces, with £68,720 to be added to the Leisure Services revenue budget for these costs in 1999/2000.

**87. Sandhurst Boys and Girls Football Club Grant (Item 14)**

The Director of Leisure Services reported that Sandhurst Town Council had provided further information for the Committee on proposals for the new changing facilities for Sandhurst Boys and Girls Football Club, for which a grant had originally been offered in 1996. Three options had now been proposed, with each requiring a contribution from the Borough to enable it to go ahead. On the basis that it seemed likely that work would commence this financial year, the Committee agreed to renew the grant offer to Sandhurst Town Council.

**RESOLVED** that

- (i) the offer of grant aid of £25,000 to Sandhurst Town Council to construct changing facilities be renewed; and
- (ii) the grant be withdrawn if work on the project has not begun before 31 March 2000.

**88. Millennium Opening (Item 15)**

The Director of Leisure Services reported on the planned opening times for the leisure facilities in the Borough over the 1999/2000 Christmas and New Year period. The Committee agreed to the proposals shown in the report subject to further consideration being given to the proposals for Downshire Golf Course.

**RESOLVED** that the proposals as set out in the report be approved, subject to a report to the next meeting of the Committee on the proposed opening times for the Downshire Golf Course.

**89. Scheme of Delegation (Item 16)**

The Committee considered proposals for delegations to the Director of Leisure Services which would form part of Volume 3 of the Scheme of Council and Committee Management.

**RECOMMENDED** that the delegations set out in the Annexe hereto be approved for inclusion in Volume 3 of the Scheme of Council and Committee Management.

**90. Items Submitted for Information**

The Committee noted the following items submitted for information only:

Customer Service Reports	(Item 18)
Summer Fun Activities 1999	(Item 19)
Longhill Park Pumping Trials	(Item 20)

91. **Exclusion of Public and Press**

**RESOLVED** that pursuant to Section 108 of the Local Government Act 1972, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of Item 21, which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of that Act.

(8) Terms of a Proposed Contract (Item 21)

92. **Appendices 3, 4 and 5 of the Downshire Golf Course Business Plan (Item 21)**

**RESOLVED** that the exempt information contained in Appendices 3, 4 and 5 of the Downshire Golf Course Business Plan be noted.

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm and concluded at 10.35pm

**CHAIRMAN**

**The Director of Leisure Services is authorised to take the following action and discharge the following functions of the Council:-**

1. All steps in the day to day management of leisure and recreational facilities, including Sports Centres, The Look Out, play areas, countryside areas and recreational routes.
2. Deal with bookings of land and premises (including bookings of open spaces which call for formal closure under any public or local Act) including the fixing of a charge for hire of premises not covered by an approved scale of fees.
3. Determine hours of operation of the Council's leisure facilities having regard to customer needs costs and desirability of maintaining an appropriate service level.
4. Determine playing seasons for all sports.
5. Enter into partnership and management agreements with clubs and organisations.
6. Enter into shared takings agreements with private sector providers using facilities for which the Leisure Services Committee is responsible.
7. Liaise with clubs, community groups, governing bodies, associations and statutory bodies to determine needs and priority areas for assistance.
8. Discharge the Leisure Services Committee's functions under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, Highways Act 1980, the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 and the Open Spaces Act 1906.
9. Apply to the Local Planning Authority for work in respect of trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders on land administered by the Committee.
10. Make recommendations to the Finance and Property Sub Committee on the acquisition or disposal of amenity land not exceeding 0.1 hectares.
11. Authorise Park Rangers to issue fixed penalty notices under Section 88 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
12. Close parks or sections of parks for reasons of public safety or for the staging of special events.
13. Apply for the grant, renewal and transfer of a Justices On Licence in respect of licensed premises for which the Leisure Services Committee is responsible.
14. Apply for the grant of occasional licences in respect of functions and events as necessary.
15. Apply for the grant of music and dance licences in respect of leisure facilities provided by the Council.
16. Approve or refuse the use of land and premises (and equipment within those premises) for fêtes, social events, arts, cultural activities and other short term uses.

17. Book concerts and other events (both major and minor) to take place at land or premises in accordance with policy guidelines where the financial outcome will not have significant impact on the revenue budget of the Committee.
18. Permit or refuse the distribution or publicity material and agree charges where appropriate.
19. Decide upon the times of closure of land or premises for which the Leisure Services Committee is responsible when they are not fit for use.
20. Reduce the charges for group use of premises by up to 50% when this is in the interests of the group and in order to encourage the use of the facilities.
21. Negotiate appropriate charges for the hire of land or premises by commercial organisations and for commercial events.
22. Enter into arrangements on appropriate terms for the display of advertising panels and electronic displays at land or premises and agree the payment terms.
23. Determine applications for the use of land or premises which may exclude their use by the general public (i.e. major events) and authorise the closure of such facilities to the general public where applicable.
24. Determine applications for use of land or premises at less than the set charge.
25. Approve/refuse proposals for the letting/granting of licences for use for cafes, catering and similar functions.
26. Accept or refuse gifts and to seek or accept sponsorship.
27. Promote courses, events, workshops, play-schemes, open days and other like activities in order to promote a wide range of sporting artistic and recreational opportunities for residents of the Borough and to promote the services and facilities provided by the Council.
28. Fix charges for any new service or vary charges for existing services (provided that such variations shall be reported to the next meeting of the Committee).
29. Vary charges from time to time for limited periods for the purposes of promoting the service.
30. Determine applications for the refund of any charges paid.
31. Agree suitable arrangements for the use of minibus and other Leisure Services assets by third parties.
32. Select and purchase pictures and prints of historical local interest and other relevant material.
33. Vary ticketing arrangements.
34. Authorise and agree the terms of amendments of grants including any extension of time (not exceeding one year) in which to claim a grant within policies and limits established by the Committee.

35. Determine request for grant aid within policies and limits established by the Committee and to impose appropriate conditions or terms of the grant.
36. Apply for grant aid for the Council from appropriate bodies and organisations.
37. In respect of Libraries and Museums:-
  - (i) select and purchase books and audio visual material.
  - (ii) select and purchase newspapers and periodicals for public use within agreed policies.
  - (iii) determine the cost of replacement of library items and authorise the issue of legal proceedings for the recovery of the value of items not returned.
  - (iv) determine the method of disposal of withdrawn library items including sale charges.
  - (v) control the number of books reserved and the number of books on loan.
  - (vi) set the fixed fees and charges for all loan services.