

Community and Recreational Services Committee
28 April 1998

Irvine, 28 April 1998 - At a Meeting of the Community and Recreational Services Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 2.00 p.m.

Present

Stewart Dewar, Jane Gorman, James Clements, John Donn, James Jennings, Elizabeth McLardy, Peter McNamara, Margaret Munn, Robert Reilly and George Steven.

In Attendance

The Director of Community and Recreational Services; The Head of Sport and Horticultural Services; The Head of Cultural and Community Services (Community and Recreational Services); D Nibloe, Principal Officer, Accountancy (Financial Services); M Hewitt, Corporate Policy Officer and S Paxton Administration Officer (Chief Executive).

Chair

Mr Dewar in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

John Sillars

1. Minutes Confirmed

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 17 March 1998, copies of which had previously been circulated, were confirmed.

2. Fairlie: Bowling Club

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on the outcome of a meeting between the Council and Fairlie Bowling Club to discuss the future provision of bowling at the Club's rink which is currently leased from Lord Glasgow. The Club, which is in a sound financial position, has made successful application to the Lottery Sports Fund to purchase the site to prevent alternative development and is seeking a loan of up to £40,000 from the Council and contributions from other bodies to allow this.

The Committee agreed to offer a loan of up to £40,000 to Fairlie Bowling Club, subject to terms and conditions to be agreed with the Director of Financial Services.

3. Kilbirnie: Garnock Rugby Club

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on the outcome of a meeting between the Council and Garnock Rugby Club to discuss the future provision of rugby at Lochshore, Kilbirnie.

The Rugby Club has used the sports pitches and accommodation at Lochshore since the early 1980s although temporary changing units had to be provided by the former District Council in 1992 because the original Clubhouse and changing facilities operated by the Garnock Valley Community Sports Club had become structurally unsound as a result of ground conditions. The condition of the pitches has also deteriorated over time and the original premises remain closed because of structural movement. As a result, litigation is in progress and may result in compensation.

The Rugby Club has a strong development programme and is seeking to further expand its junior activities in partnership with schools and other community groups. It has therefore requested that the Council, fund, in part, the provision of a purpose-built changing facility at Lochshore.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed (a) to authorise the Architectural Services Manager (i) to undertake a survey of Lochshore to determine the ground conditions; and (ii) in consultation with the Director of Planning, Roads and Environment to liaise with Scottish Enterprise regarding their proposals for the future use of the site; (b) to instruct the Legal Services Manager to report on the current position regarding the litigation process; and (c) to approve in principle, the future provision of changing accommodation at Lochshore, subject to a further report on the outcome of litigation in progress and the ground condition survey.

4. Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park: Agricultural Properties: Request to Declare Land Surplus to Requirements

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on a request received from the tenants of Routdaneburn and Birkhead Farms to purchase agricultural properties which are situated within North Ayrshire and within the boundaries of Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park. The Regional Park is administered by a Joint Management Committee under a Joint Management Agreement between North Ayrshire, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire Councils but park assets, including Routdaneburn and Birkhead Farms remain in the ownership of their respective Council.

The Farms currently generate a rental income of £4,000 per annum for the Regional Park. If the Council were to dispose of the them, it

would require to fund the park's income shortfall from savings in financial year 1999/2000. It is however estimated that £80,000 is required to upgrade the properties and hence disposal would result in savings in Capital Expenditure in future years.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve in principle, the request to declare the farms surplus to requirements subject to recommendations from the Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park Joint Committee; (b) to offset the loss of income of around £6,000 from savings in financial year 1999/2000; (c) to advise the Garnock Valley Area Committee of the decision; and (d) thereafter, to refer the matter to the Support Services Committee for its consideration.

5. Largs: Douglas Park Bowling Club

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on a request from Douglas Park Bowling Club, Largs to lease the bowling green and clubhouse, currently operated by the Council, for a period of up to 20 years for the benefit of Club Members and the local community. The right of access through the facility to the remainder of Douglas Park and access on a casual basis for individuals to play bowls would be retained and the maintenance of the bowling green would continue to be carried out under the current grounds maintenance contract.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve the request to lease the bowling green and clubhouse to Douglas Park Bowling Club; and (b) to refer the matter to the Support Services Committee for consideration.

6. Community and Recreation Strategy 1998-2003

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on the Community and Recreation Strategy 1998-2003 which details the Directorate's strategic aims and objectives in a "framework for action" and sets out priorities and action plans for the period. The Strategy has been the subject of a wide ranging consultation process including statutory and voluntary bodies, local authorities and community groups and will be launched and implemented in May 1998. The Strategy will also be subject to regular monitoring and review.

The Committee agreed to approve the Community and Recreational Services Strategy 1998-2003.

7. Lease Agreements: West Kilbride Public Hall and Barrmill Community Centre

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services confirming that as part of the revenue budget process 1998/99 a number of community facilities including West Kilbride Public Hall, Barrmill Community Centre and Longbar Community Centre would now be subject to new management arrangements, involving the leasing of the facilities to community management groups.

To date, the West Kilbride Development Group and Barrmill Community Association have agreed to lease West Kilbride Public Hall and Barrmill Community Centre respectively for a pilot period of one year. Longbar Community Association does not however wish to lease their Community Centre and, accordingly, the Directorate will require to identify alternative savings.

As the new management arrangements will secure savings for the Council it is proposed to provide awards to the West Kilbride Development Group and Barrmill Community Association to assist them in undertaking their management responsibilities. The Directorate will continue to seek opportunities for new management arrangements for other community facilities.

The Committee agreed (a) to award grants of £10,100 to the West Kilbride Development Group and £3,300 to Barrmill Community Association; and (b) to receive a further report following the first year of the operation of the lease agreements.

8. Irvine: Land Surplus to Requirements

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on a request to declare an area of land at Castlepark, Irvine situated between the existing Community Centre and proposed new Primary School surplus to requirements so that the ground can form part of a new Nursery School to be built by the Education Directorate.

The Committee agreed (a) to declare the land in question; and (b) to refer the matter to the Support Services Committee for consideration.

9. Conferences and Seminars

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on invitations received to attend conferences.

The Committee agreed that one elected member attend (a) the Scottish Library Association's Annual Conference, 8 to 10 June 1998

at Peebles Hydro Hotel, Peebles; and (b) the Scottish Association of Directors of Leisure Services Annual Conference, 18 to 20 August 1998 to be held in Dunkeld.

10. Urgent Items

The Chair agreed that the undernoted item be considered as a matter of urgency.

11. Scottish Office Capital Grant Schemes for Village Halls and Community Facilities

Submitted report by the Director of Community and Recreational Services on an application from Corrie and Sannox Village Hall, Arran which had been agreed for funding under the Capital Grants Scheme for Village Halls and Community Facilities operated by the Scottish Office. The Council had agreed to contribute £5,000 to the total Project costs of £50,000 while other contributors including Argyll and the Islands Enterprise, the Hall Committee and the Scottish Office made up remainder of the funding package. The Scottish Office approved the Project, subject, to the outcome of an application for funding from the Scottish Halls Investment Programme (SHIP), which is expected in May 1998.

Project costs have increased from £50,000 to £150,050 as a result of the relocation of the doctor's surgery and enhanced standards of insulation to the building. The Group has therefore revised its application to SHIP for £75,000 and to Argyll and the Islands Enterprise for £20,000, has reviewed its own fundraising target to £15,000 and has asked the Council to increase its contribution from £5,000 to £13,350. The Council's current financial situation would require any contribution to be phased over financial years 1998/99 and 1999/2000 and the Scottish Office contribution of £26,700 which is dependant upon the Council's award would likewise be phased over two years.

The Committee agreed to approve this.

The meeting ended at 2.40 p.m.