CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURAL SERVICES AND SPORT Tuesday, 19th January, 2010

Present:- Councillor St. John (in the Chair) and Councillor Falvey.

F56. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 5TH JANUARY, 2010

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet Member held on 5th January, 2010 be signed as a true record.

F57. GRANGE PARK GOLF CLUB

Consideration was given to a report presented by Phil Gill, Green Spaces Manager, which detailed the 2008/2009 annual report that had been received from the Directors of Grange Park Golf Club Ltd. (GPGC) regarding the performance of the golf club and course leased to them by the Council at Grange Park, Kimberworth.

The annual report showed that substantial investment was being made on an annual basis in the betterment of the course and that an independent assessment of the course condition had been undertaken by Rigby Taylor Ltd. The report also showed that annual advice given by Rigby Taylor Ltd. regarding fertiliser application etc. had been followed. The work undertaken was in excess of the minimum standard agreed with Grange Park Golf Club Ltd.'s lease and this has led to substantial improvements in the playability of the course.

Some changes had also been made in 2008/09 to the golf course booking system to benefit pay and play golfers as this was seen by the Council as part of the ethos of the course making it as accessible as possible to the largest number of residents.

Pay and play prices have remained static between April, 2008 and March, 2010, while season ticket prices have seen an increase in line with the requirements of the lease.

The 2008/09 trading year saw a drop in rounds due in varying degrees to a wet summer and the general downturn in the economy. However, the report pointed out that the effect at Grange Park had been less than many other courses and income continued to improve over the previous year.

The detailed financial report for the year ending 30th June, 2008 pointed to a reasonably stable financial position with the course remaining in profit, but with an 8% drop in profit over the previous financial year.

Grange Park Golf Club Ltd have continued to make improvements to the course, including planting, path works, drainage and a tee extension as

well as refurbishing the clubhouse lounge. The key findings of a customer survey carried out by them in 2009 pointed towards high levels of customer satisfaction with 97% of customers agreeing that the general condition of the course had improved in the last three years.

A further report for consideration would be submitted at a later stage to the Cabinet Member regarding future improvements/arrangements at the course.

Discussion ensued on the lease period, the support from Ward Members, future plans for improvement and specific details within the annual report.

Resolved:- (1) That the contents of the report be noted.

(2) That a visit be arranged for the Cabinet Member for Cultural Services and Sport and Advisor to observe the improvements that have been made to the operation of Grange Park Golf Club once the later report had been considered.

F58. BRADGATE PARK - SEATING UNIT

Consideration was given to a report presented by Phil Gill, Green Spaces Manager, which detailed a request from the Rotherham North Area Assembly to provide a small covered spectator seating unit with bin in Bradgate Park, Kimberworth, the funding of which had been secured through their devolved budget.

This request was made following complaints of anti social behaviour on the surrounding streets of Bradgate Park. As a direct response to resident concerns several weeks of intensive patrols were carried out jointly by the Safer Neighbourhood Team and Green Spaces Rangers in February/March, 2009. During this time it was found that whilst young people were using the park they were not found to be causing any nuisance. Officers engaged with the young people and led to a request for a covered seating unit close to the multi-use games area.

The Area Assembly believed that by responding to the request for the seat that it may help to alleviate the young people moving away from the main path and play area to the far side of the multi use games area and by engaging with the young people and listening to their views, as well as those of the local community, it was hoped that they will be more responsible in their actions, once they saw their points have been acknowledged.

Despite a resident petition, the spectator seat had the full support of the Area Assembly and Police Safer Neighbourhood Team who have given their reassurance that they would monitor its use if installed. Also on a positive note the exact same seating area was installed in Barkers Park during 2009 and to date there had been no increase in reports relating to problems with this seating.

Discussion ensued on the various seating areas installed across the borough and the positive impact some of these had had. It was noted that these kind of arrangements could co-exist as long as they were safe and did not cause a disturbance to other park users or surrounding residents.

Resolved:- That Green Spaces, working with the Rotherham North Area Assembly and the Safer Neighbourhood Team, be allowed to site a small covered three to four spectator seating unit and be used as a viewing area for the multi use games area in Bradgate Park.

F59. FLOODING AT MALTBY MANOR RECREATION GROUND

Consideration was given to a report presented by Phil Gill, Green Spaces Manager, which detailed proposed action following a complaint of flooding draining from Maltby Manor Recreation Ground from the occupier of a nearby property.

Following survey works to locate and assess the condition of existing land drains in the vicinity it was established that an existing land drain running through the garden of the affected property was in good working order. Streetpride, therefore, recommended that a herringbone type drainage system be installed in the recreation ground and for this to be connected to the existing drainage pipe by constructing a new inspection chamber. It was believed that this would reduce the risk of recurrence of the flooding to an acceptable level.

The occupier of the property reported other occasions since 2007 when water draining from the recreation ground had entered his land raising the fear of further flooding. He sought resolution of the matter through a Ward Member who brought it to the attention of officers in Green Spaces. It was explained that any further work would be dependent on the necessary funds being identified.

The Ward Member also requested that consideration be given to immediately implementing a lower cost temporary solution by installing a road gully into the existing drain. Streetpride advised that this was unlikely to be effective as such gullies were not designed to be installed into soft ground with vegetation, and would not, therefore, represent good value for money. It was, therefore, suggested that funding be sought from the Capital Investment Block for the installation of a herringbone drainage system at the recreation ground.

Discussion ensued on the amount of funding required, the current economic climate and whether the improvements to the recreation ground would be of benefit to the playing pitches currently using this area. On this basis it was suggested that further discussions take place with colleagues in Streetpride to ascertain if all avenues and grant funding opportunities had been explored in full to assist with areas experiencing problem flooding.

Resolved:- (1) That the contents of the report be noted.

- (2) That discussions take place between Green Spaces and Streetpridge to ascertain if all avenues and grant funding opportunities had been explored in full for assistance with problem flooding pockets.
- (3) That no attempt be made to implement temporary alterations to the existing drainage within the affected area.

F60. NOVEMBER REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

Consideration was given to a report presented by Dawn Roebuck, Senior Accountant, which set out performance against the revenue budget for the Environment and Development Services Directorate as at the end of November, 2009 and provided a forecasted outturn for the whole of the 2009/10 financial year.

Pressures within Culture and Heritage include staffing costs in Theatres (£38k) and the payment for South Yorkshire Archives (£23k) these pressures were being offset by an underspend on staffing in Museums (£50k).

Pressures within Sports and Recreation included solicitor costs (£18k), operational costs at Herringthorpe Stadium (£22k), unrecovered debts (£64k), loss of income at Country Parks (40k) and general operational costs across parks (£20k), but the delay in opening Clifton Park was partially offsetting these pressures (£50k-).

The Service continued to work towards establishing the financial position of the Clifton Park Restoration Project. There were revenue budget implications which were currently being quantified.

Overall Libraries were forecasting an underspend (£16k-) and pressures within Libraries management were being offset by staff vacancies, book fund savings and an expected reduction RBT charges (£40k-). The Service was continuing to work to achieve the savings offered in the 2009/10 budget.

Additionally, unbudgeted security costs at Ulley Reservoir (£27k) have been incurred.

It was noted that the Culture and Leisure Service was continuing to work on achieving savings offered as part of setting the budget for 2009/10.

Resolved:- (1) That the current forecast year end outturn position of an overspend of £475,000 for the Environment and Development Services Directorate based on expenditure and income as at November, 2009 and forecast expenditure and income to 31st March, 2010 be noted.

(2) That this report be referred to the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel for information.

THE CHAIRMAN AUTHORISED CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM IN ORDER TO PROCESS THE MATTERS REFERRED TO)

F61. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:- That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act (information relates to finance and business affairs).

F62. BOSTON CASTLE – HLF GRANT OFFER

Consideration was given to a report presented by Steve Hallsworth, Acting Director of Culture and Leisure, which set out details of a funding bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the repair and restoration of Boston Castle. The bid had been successful and the Heritage Lottery Fund have requested that the Council formally accepted the offer of grant.

Resolved:- (1) That a standard terms of grant with the Heritage Lottery Fund be entered into based on the acceptance of the offer of grant to the value of £590,000.

(2) That the formal confirmation of this decision be certified by the Cabinet Member as a true copy.