

Extract from minutes:

Councillor D'Alton informed Members that recreation and amenity infrastructure of all kinds is vitally important to establishing and maintaining the quality of life in a community and region. Parks and recreation programmes and services contribute in a significant way to the physical and mental health of people of all ages. They are also very important for the economy. Parks trails and recreation facilities increase property values and tax revenue. Quality parks and recreation are cited as one of the top three reasons that business cites in relocation decisions. Some staff has real expertise in the development of recreational facilities and if that expertise were collated in a dedicated section, it would have the drive to coordinate and promote cohesive and structured integration of recreation and amenity facilities in everything we do.

During a discussion Members made the following points:

- Many other local authorities like Dublin, Cork City, Tipperary, Waterford City and County have departments dealing with Cultural, Recreation, Amenities, Community and Sport.
- Within the Municipal District Directorate the Council could incorporate a small but distinct section with a specific focus on the coordination of development of Recreation and Amenity facilities throughout the county.
- We need that kind of structure if we are to optimise limited opportunities for funding, think in an innovative way and advance positively even the plans and strategies we already have in place.
- Recreation and Amenity is one which gives so much pleasure to people and it promotes Cork County Council in a positive way.
- We spend a lot of money on amenity grants and to collate that information appropriately we need this kind of section. This is a clean, clear transparent way of moving this forward.

The Deputy CE agreed with Cllr. Marcia D'Alton that this is one of the most pleasing aspects of our work and delivery. He reminded members that the organisational restructuring that will commence in September will have a specific Director with the area of recreation and amenity as part of the brief.