

You couldn't make it up - Or Could You ?

Posted by RM64 - 08 Nov 2020 11:12

Subject Eastwood Leisure Centre and Eastwood Park Master Plan: Member/Officer Working Group 12th March 2020

From Fry, Lesley

To Attendees: Tony Buchanan (Cllr), Andy Cahill, Phil Daws, J Fletcher (Provost), Barbara Grant (Cllr), Ian Harper (SB), Anthony McReavy (Trust), C Merrick (Cllr), Paul O'Kane (Cllr), Mhairi Shaw, Graeme Smith, Christina Bruce

Apologies - Gordon Wallace (Cllr)

Sent 11 March 2020 15:30

Minutes

Background

□ Work on the Eastwood Park Masterplan options has been ongoing since June 2019

- It was previously decided that an alternative site location was not the preference for the new leisure facility, leading to the need for all options within Eastwood Park to be explored

- The exercise determined that a tandem build is possible – which is of key importance to ensure there is no loss of income for the CLT and no impact on St. Ninians High School

- The document that went to Council in December was only a presentation of the options that are available for the new Leisure Facility and Eastwood Park as a whole, it does not make any recommendations.

Moving Forward

- The Council can utilise a phased approach to the masterplan of Eastwood Park – beginning with an

end vision of what the park will look like in the future

- The first works to take place in the park needs to be the Leisure Centre to ensure no loss of services
- The end vision for the park allows the Council the opportunity to ensure that Eastwood Park is fully utilise with connectivity between key facilities and services, giving residents, pupils and Council employees a high quality provision
- The final version of the masterplan for Eastwood Park needs to give consideration to sustainability & renewable energy.

Actions for next meeting

- Ian Harper / Anthony McCreavy to determine final specification for the Leisure Centre facilities
- Focus Groups to take place for what facilities are missing / people would like to see in the new Leisure Centre – focus groups to include; pupils, parents, users of the leisure centre and non-users
- Bring specification and results of the focus groups back to the Working Group to sign off final Leisure Centre Specification.

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Re: You couldn't make it up - Or Could You ?

Posted by RM64 - 03 Feb 2021 16:18

----- Original Message -----

From: "Mahon, Gerry";

Sent: Wednesday, 27 Jan, 2021 At 12:25

Subject: RE: Request for Review - FOI Request 101002296727 - subsequent investigation

I would indicate that I have not yet responded to your e-mails on this topic as my enquiries have not fully

concluded, nor are they likely to until full physical access to office accommodation and a return of all relevant staff occurs.

Despite this, I can answer some of your queries from information obtained to date.

I have not currently identified any e-mail with minutes from Mrs Fry.

She was not involved in minuting the meeting.

This was undertaken by another officer who became involved due to Mrs Fry's unavailability on the day in question.

The minutes appear pre dated as the officer who stepped into this role was asked to do so on the day before the meeting and having not been involved in this particular matter before, set up a template on Microsoft OneNote (a product used across the Council) in preparation for the meeting the next day.

In doing so, she used the heading detail of the invitation e-mail which had been issued by Mrs Fry (and which you were supplied by the dept at the time of your original request) which had been sent to her to advise of probable attendees and agenda.

Once the meeting took place this template was of course filled in but the original date on which it was created (as carried across from invite) was not changed.

Regards

Gerry Mahon

----- Original Message -----

To: "Mahon, Gerry"

Sent: Wednesday, 3 Feb, 2021 At 09:26

Subject: RE: Request for Review - FOI Request 101002296727 - subsequent investigation

Hi Gerry

Thanks for this.

It is important that FOI applicants are confident that they are being supplied with all the correct information requested.

If the minutes were attached to an email, It is worrying that such a simple email could be missed.

As you have not fully concluded your investigation would appreciate if you can at least establish how the members

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received a copy of these minutes.

This should be easy to do and not take a great deal of your time.

Was it by email or other means?

Some of these members may still have an email with the attached minutes or a copy if by other means?

I am surprised that all these emails should disappear.

What was the correct date when the minute was sent out?

Obviously the file supplied to me is not an original email.

Again, how did members receive a copy of these minutes?

Were the minutes amended to record the correct details?

Were the minutes approved and accepted at the next members meeting?

Again, this should be easy to do and not take up a great deal of your time.

Your help with this matter is appreciated.

Thanks

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Re: You couldn't make it up - Or Could You ?

Posted by RM64 - 08 Apr 2021 10:05

----- Original Message -----

To: "Mahon, Gerry"

Sent: Friday, 19 Feb, 2021 At 11:46

Subject: RE: Request for Review - FOI Request 101002296727 - subsequent investigation

Hi Gerry

I refer to

- your email of 30 October 2020 and your commitment to carry out an investigation -

' I remain unclear at this time as to why the minute did not show up in earlier searches of electronic files given that it appears to have been the subject of an e-mail but will investigate this aspect to assess the need for future improvements in internal search procedures.'

- your email of 27 January 2021

- my email of 3 February 2021 below.

Again I would stress this investigation is a very important matter.

FOI applicants have to be confident that they are being supplied with the requested information held by East Renfrewshire Council(ERC).

If electronic files/emails are not showing up it is very concerning and casts doubt on the whole 'search' process.

How many have not shown up?

How many continue not to show up in searches of electronic files/emails and FOI Applicants not provided with the requested electronic files/emails they are due?

These 'missing' electronic files/emails may contain information that ERC is reluctant to see released into the public domain?

Not sure why you would need 'full physical access to office accommodation and a return of all relevant staff.....' to carry out an investigation into searches of electronic files?

Would appreciate if you can say why you cannot use video conferencing, email or the phone to make the necessary contact and ask the relevant questions?

Also, would appreciate the requested information/answers in email below.

Again, this is an important matter and should not take up a great deal of your time.

Thanks

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Re: You couldn't make it up - Or Could You ?

Posted by RM64 - 08 Apr 2021 10:12

Sent: 09 March 2021 12:21

To: Mahon, Gerry

Subject: Re: freedom of information review - Leisure Centre - 2385153

Hi Gerry

I refer to your FOI review response below regarding minutes for August 2020 meeting and that you say 'no information is held'

- Minutes for August 2020 meeting(minutes for the March 2020 meeting have been published)- no information is held

As you are aware you are conducting an ongoing investigation regarding the minute of the March 2020 meeting not showing up in FOI searches of electronic files -

' I remain unclear at this time as to why the minute did not show up in earlier searches of electronic files given that it appears to have been the subject of an e-mail but will investigate this aspect to assess the need for future improvements in internal search procedures.'

I have attached the correspondence regarding this ongoing investigation to this email below your FOI review response. (I would also appreciate response to my emails of 3&19 Feb)

I am concerned , as it is normal practice and there is no reason why minutes/notes would not have been taken at the August 2020 meeting, the minutes/notes did not show up due to the problems with the search procedures you have raised and are investigating.

Would appreciate if you can confirm, that as with the March 2020 meeting minutes, minutes/notes regarding the August 2020 meeting were taken and do indeed exist.

Your help with this important matter is appreciated.

Thanks

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Re: You couldn't make it up - Or Could You ?

Posted by RM64 - 08 Apr 2021 10:50

As background please read previous posts.

I was provided with minutes for a 12 March 2020 meeting via a FOI request.

However although an Officer took the time and effort to compile these minutes, they weren't really minutes.

They were never issued to the attendees.

and the 'handwritten' notes just disappeared.

Mr Mahon says below -

'I can also advise that the note of the March meeting was not issued to attendees'

You really just have to laugh !

This is the actual minute provided via FOI request.

It says 'Minutes'

It has recorded 'Actions for next meeting'

Yet it was never issued to the attendees.

As Mr Mahon says below -

'I can also advise that the note of the March meeting was not issued to attendees'

Just bizarre.

You just have to laugh.

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This is the bizarre 'explanation'

----- Original Message -----

From: "Mahon, Gerry"

Sent: Tuesday, 16 Mar, 2021 At 11:56

Subject: RE: freedom of information review - Leisure Centre - 2385153

please treat this response as a reply to the three e-mails you refer to (9th March, 3 & 19th February).

I can now confirm after further investigation with those attending the said August meeting that no note or minute was taken or issued in respect of it.

The taking of minutes in meetings of this sort is a matter of discretion for those running the process and any queries as to the choice not to do so should be directed to them.

I can also advise that the note of the March meeting was not issued to attendees – given this fact there was no approval of the same.

The copy which you have previously been provided with was the note produced by the officer charged with doing so in advance of the meeting who had been sent the meeting invitation to use as an indicator of the attendees and agenda.

In preparation for the meeting she had compiled a template using the meeting invite e-mail as its basis.

As previously explained, this is why it appeared the note predated the meeting.

It also explains why the document itself was not caught in any e-mail search

– what appears to be an e-mail to the attendees post meeting (with note attached) is in fact the lift from the e-mail which invited them to the meeting, printed from the one note facility of the officer who compiled it.

I am therefore satisfied that the searches earlier conducted electronically were appropriate and sufficient to identify relevant information held in that format pertinent to your request.

As you correctly state, I was able to speak to individuals by various remote means but there remained a need for me to satisfy myself that there was no further hard copy documentation held that may also have been relevant to the matter before concluding my investigation and that what had been described to me as hard copy was in fact so.

I have now done so.

My investigation was not limited to just electronic files and as my findings illustrate, if it had been it would not have provided me with the full picture in this matter.

You asked in your previous correspondence questions I consider to be vexatious as having no logical meaning including how many records had not been caught by searches.

In order to quantify any such number the documents would obviously had to have to been logged after such a search, taking them out of that category in the first place.

To conclude, I am satisfied that the initial searches of electronic systems were comprehensive;

that following my access to the office accommodation, you have been supplied with copies of all relevant hard copy documentation held;

that there are no "missing" documents;

that there was no attempt to mislead you and

that the apparent inconsistency in the dating of the note document is reasonably explained as per my previous e-mail to you

Yours sincerely

Gerry Mahon

As said you just have to laugh.

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