

REPORT TO: Leisure, Arts and Communities Committee - 14 January 2008
REPORT ON: Camperdown Wildlife Centre
REPORT BY: Director of Leisure and Communities
REPORT NO: 29-2008

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide elected members with an update on the actions taken following a break-in to the Camperdown Wildlife Centre in July 2007 and to seek approval for further initiatives relating to security and operation of the facility.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to:

- 2.1 note what has taken place since the break-in;
- 2.2 agree to delegate authority to officers to approve works up to the value of £40,000 to enable the perimeter security at Camperdown to be enhanced and
- 2.3 approve the appointment of external consultants Zoo-Lutions Limited on the advice of the British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums (BIAZA) at a fee not exceeding £3,000 to undertake an audit of operational and management procedures and to make recommendations on any further action required.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The expenditure of £40,000 on perimeter security can be met from the allowance for Health and Safety in the Chief Executive's Capital Budget.
- 3.2 The expenditure of £3,000 to undertake an audit of operational and management procedures can be met from the allowance in the Risk Management Budget for 2007/08.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 During July 2007, there were two break-ins to the Wildlife Centre in relatively quick succession. Following the second incident, and in response to suggestions that a number of animals had been hurt, there was considerable public disquiet and investigation by the Police and other authorities. Camperdown Wildlife Centre remains a very popular attraction and it is disappointing that these break-ins took place requiring the Council to further enhance security to protect the animals.
- 4.2 The Council's own investigation into the circumstances established that there had been shortcomings in the record-keeping system at Camperdown Zoo which had resulted in some of the injuries to animals being inaccurately reported at the time of the incident. These were brought to the attention of Tayside Police as soon as the position was established.
- 4.3 Animals were distressed and some appeared to be injured as a result of the break-in and activities which took place. In any future incidents, the department will involve a Vet so that the extent of the distress and any injuries can be better documented.

- 4.4 In relation to animal welfare recording, administration and operational procedures, the internal investigation suggested that the systems in place should be fully reviewed and that there would be benefit in such a review being undertaken by an independent consultant with experience in the management of zoos and zoo licence inspection.
- 4.5 Since the incidents, temporary CCTV and onsite security were put in place and have continued. These arrangements will continue in place until such time as improved perimeter security can be installed and then they will be reduced.
- 4.6 The system for recording animal welfare, injuries and incidents at Camperdown Park has been totally revised and a new procedure which is capable of being audited and verified has been in place for the last few months and this will be reviewed again if the external consultants recommend further information.
- 4.7 It also recommended that the following security improvements be undertaken to make it more difficult to gain unauthorised entry to the Wildlife Centre:
- The perimeter fence required to be increased in height
 - The external glasshouse wall required some form of deterrent to prevent entry over that wall
 - The feed-room doors required to be kept locked
 - A number of further internal security measures should be pursued

A plan of the extent of the new fence and the specification of the new perimeter fence will be displayed in the Council Chamber prior to the meeting.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management.
- 5.2 The recommended improvements to the security of the Wildlife Centre will improve its sustainability and will have minimal impact.
- 5.3 The recommended improvement to perimeter security is consistent with the Council's risk management objective of preventing criminal damage to public property and will reduce the likelihood of further harm to animals and/or injury to intruders.

6.0 CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, Assistant Chief Executive (Management), Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance) and Head of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report and are in agreement with its contents.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None.

STEWART MURDOCH
DIRECTOR OF LEISURE AND COMMUNITIES
20 DECEMBER 2007