

## **CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Castlereagh Hills Golf Club Board held, in committee, in Castlereagh Hills Golf Club on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2006 at 10.00 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Mrs M Chambers  
Councillor Mrs J Cochrane  
Councillor G Robinson  
Councillor J Spratt

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive, Director of Finance & Leisure Services, Director of Technical & Environmental Services, Operational Services Manager, Marketing & PR Manager, Acting Business Manager, Internal Auditor and Assistant Members' Services Officer

**APOLOGIES;** Apologies were recorded on behalf of Councillors White and Jeffers.

### **GCB/2006/30 : GOLF CLUB CONSTITUTION AND EXPENSES**

The Operational Services Manager circulated figures relating to the club's expenses and claims for the 2005/2006 year, together with an estimate for the 2006/2007 financial year.

Councillor Robinson asked Officers to collate, and table at the next Board meeting, all discussions relating to golf course and club issues from the relevant Minutes. He continued by stating that at the recent meeting of the General Committee, golf club members had taken issue with a number of points within the constitution. He added that they had also been of the view that club membership fees should go directly into their bank account, and had expressed their concern that the Council had reduced this portion of the fees from £75.00 to £50.00.

The Chief Executive advised Members that the Local Government Auditor (LGA) and the Council's solicitor had been involved in the process of changing from a private club to a proprietor's club, with the Council being the proprietor. He pointed out that as a Council owned club, the LGA had ruled Castlereagh Hills Golf Club's finances to be public money, requiring Members to adhere to Local Government usual fiscal policies for the payment of the golf club's expenses.

He advised Members that he and the Director of Finance & Leisure Services would liaise with the LGA to clarify the situation, and report back. He pointed out

that, as he understood it, the golf club had refused to formally change its name from Gilnahirk Golf Club to Castlereagh Hills Golf Club, until the issues relating to expenditure and the constitution had been resolved.

Councillor Spratt referred to the club's catering expenses of £7,000.00 for last year, and asked that the Board be provided with a breakdown of these figures.

A detailed discussion ensued on point 11.4 of the constitution, i.e. bank account, and consideration was given to the best way forward in establishing a process for the release of expenses to the golf club, whilst ensuring that the Council was adhering to fiscal policies, as follows:

- provide the club with an amount each quarter, subject to all receipts being produced at the end of the period before the next amount could be released
- establish a grant scheme, similar to the CSDA scheme, subject to all receipts being produced before the next round of money could be released

Councillor Chambers outlined that she was reluctant to release money in quarterly amounts, and felt that there should be a limit to how much could be released at any one time.

The Chief Executive stated that a golf club would have a reasonable idea of its financial requirements for the year, in terms of tournaments, hospitality costs, etc. He suggested that the club be asked to submit its planned programme for the year, together with the projected costs in order for the Board to determine the annual budget and relevant budget headings.

The Operational Services Manager pointed out that the Council had audited Gilnahirk Golf Club's accounts for the past three years, and he advised Members of the actual spend for last year. Based on these figures, the Officer put forward a recommendation in respect of the annual budget for golf club expenses for the Board's approval.

Councillor Spratt proposed that Members accept the Officer's recommendation, and he suggested that, in the meantime, Officers arrange to obtain the club's programme of events and projected costings for 2006/2007.

It was further agreed that the General Committee would be responsible for authorising the club's expenses, as submitted by the Honorary Treasurer, and the Council's Internal Auditor would audit their accounts.

Members then gave consideration to the named signatories on the cheques.

The Operational Services Manager then addressed Members' queries in respect of the following:

- (a) reduction in membership
- (b) findings of questionnaire
- (b) reserved tee rights by the club on Saturdays and Sundays
- (c) team selection

Following discussion of the above, Councillor Robinson suggested that it may be beneficial to call a meeting of all club members.

Members then discussed the other points within the constitution raised by the golf club members, i.e. 13.4, 18.1, 23.1, 18.1, and it was agreed that, based on Members' comments, the Operational Services Manager liaise with the Council's solicitor, and report back.

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services outlined that, in finding common ground between the club and Council in respect of financial procedures for recouping expenses it would also require the constitution to be changed.

Following further discussion, it was

**RESOLVED** : That the Golf Club Board agrees

- (a) that, in line with Members' comments, the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance & Leisure Services liaise with the Local Government Auditor in relation to financial procedures for payment of club expenses
- (b) that, following receipt of the above, and based on Members' comments, the Operational Services Manager obtain the legal opinion in respect of the constitution, and report back
- (c) following receipt of the legal opinion, the Operational Services Manager to contact the GUI regarding any proposed changes to the constitution
- (d) that the Operational Services Manager obtain the golf club's planned programme for 2006/2007, together with the projected costings, and in the meantime, the Director of Finance & Leisure Services be permitted to continue to provide the club's expenses retrospectively until otherwise directed by the Board
- (e) the annual budget for Castlereagh Hills Golf Club expenses for 2006/2007, as recommended by the Operational Services Manager

- (f) that the Golf Club General Committee authorise anticipated expenditure for Castlereagh Hills Golf Club, in respect of hospitality and GUI membership fees

**GCB/2006/31 : REQUEST FROM GUI FOR FREE USE OF CASTLEREAGH HILLS GOLF COURSE FOR THE 2007 JIMMY BREWAN SHIELD MATCH**

Councillor Spratt outlined that as this was a prestigious event within the golfing fraternity, with excellent public relations opportunities for Castlereagh Hills Golf Course, and he proposed that the Board agree to the request for free use of the course. He was of the view, however, that the Council should not be responsible for the hospitality costs.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor Chambers.

Following discussion, it was.

RESOLVED : That the Golf Club Board agrees to the request from the GUI for free use of the golf course for the 2007 Jimmy Brewan Shield Match, but that the Council would not be responsible for any related hospitality costs. The PR & Marketing Manager liaise with relevant Officers in order to explore advertising opportunities for the Castlereagh Hills Golf Club.

**GCB/2006/32 : COURSE MAINTENANCE POLICY**

The Operational Services Manager referred to the recent request from the golf club for the above policy to be drawn up, in liaison with relevant members of the club. He advised Members that Officers had drawn up a very comprehensive course maintenance schedule, which had previously been approved by Council.

Members were satisfied that a maintenance schedule was already in place.

Councillor Robinson proposed that the relevant Officer within the Parks Section be in attendance at future General Committee meetings to deal with course maintenance issues.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED : That the Golf Club Board agrees that the golf club be advised that the Council already has a course maintenance schedule, but that the relevant Officer within the Parks Section would be in attendance at General Committee meetings to address golf course issues.

**GCB/2006/33 : REQUEST FOR BULLETIN BOARD**

The Operational Services Manager advised that the club had requested a further bulletin board for the clubhouse.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED : That the Golf Club Board agrees to purchase a bulletin board for the clubhouse.

**GCB/2006/34 : REQUEST FROM LADIES' CLUB FOR NEW HONOURS BOARD**

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED : That the Board agrees to purchase a new Honours Board for Castlereagh Hills Ladies' Golf Club

**GCB/2006/35 : SUBSTITUTE – GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Councillor Spratt outlined that the golf club members in attendance at the last General Committee meeting had requested that, should any of them not be able to attend a meeting, that they be permitted to send a substitute.

Councillor Spratt stated that although the Committee did not see a problem with this request, he was of the view that a similar arrangement should be put in place for the Elected Representatives on the Committee. He suggested that the Council substitute should be a member of the Board.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED : That the Golf Club Board agrees that in the event that a club member or Elected Representative was unable to attend General Committee meetings, that they be permitted to send a substitute. The Elected Representative substitute must be a member of the Golf Club Board.

**REPORT FROM THE PR & MARKETING MANAGER**

**GCB/2006/36 : REVISED MARKETING SCHEDULE : APRIL TO MAY 2006**

The PR & Marketing Manager advised Members that the budget for the Spring/Summer marketing schedule was £4,650.00, and the total budget for the year was £12,000.00 (£10,000.00 from Technical & Environmental Services budget and £2,000.00 from the restaurant budget). She added that she had previously met with the Chairman who had been satisfied with the schedule and

costings, and she was now formally seeking the Board's approval for the following:

(i)	Advertising	£1,553.44
(ii)	Promotional events – shared with leisure	£ 328.00
(iii)	Photography	£ 500.00
(iv)	Printing	£1,455.00
(v)	Graphic Design	£ 312.50
(vi)	Staffing (absorbed costs)	

The PR & Marketing Manager stated that, where appropriate, a response mechanism would be put in place to evaluate the promotional events.

Councillor Chambers queried the circulation of the South Belfast Community Telegraph, as it did not appear to be distributed to all ratepayers living in that part of the Borough.

Councillor Spratt asked if the Officer could arrange for copies of the East and South editions of the Community Telegraph to be forwarded to the Council Offices each week for Members.

Members confirmed that the wording on letterheads, complimentary slips etc. should be "Castlereagh Hills Golf Club – owned and operated by Castlereagh Borough Council".

Councillor Cochrane advised that the Department for Social Development circulated its company magazine to approximately 2,000 employees every quarter, and that it carried a restaurant review. She added that this may be an excellent opportunity to promote the golf club restaurant.

Councillor Robinson suggested that Officers liaise with club members, who may provide some advice on the most appropriate golfing magazines to advertise in.

Councillor Spratt suggested sending advertising flyers to the PSNI at Newforge.

RESOLVED : That the Golf Club Board

(a) approves the Marketing Schedule for April to May 2006, together with the relevant costs, as follows:

(i)	Advertising	£1,553.44
(ii)	Promotional events – shared with leisure	£ 328.00
(iii)	Photography	£ 500.00
(iv)	Printing	£1,455.00
(v)	Graphic Design	£ 312.50

- (b) the wording on golf club stationery to read “Castlereagh Hills Golf Course – owned and operated by Castlereagh Borough Council”
- (c) the PR & Marketing Manager to pursue Councillors Cochrane, Robinson and Spratt’s suggestions in relation to advertising
- (d) the PR & Marketing Manager to clarify the circulation list of the South Belfast Community Telegraph, and to ascertain if copies of the East & South editions could be forwarded to the Council Offices each week for Members

The Chief Executive left the meeting at this point, at 1.25 p.m.

### **STAFF IN COMMITTEE**

At this point, all Officers with the exception of the Director of Technical & Environmental Services and the Director of Finance & Leisure Services left the meeting.

All Officers, with the exception of the PR & Marketing Manager returned to the meeting.

### **GCB/2006/38 : RESTAURANT ACCOUNTS FOR THE 2005/2006 FINANCIAL YEAR**

Officers addressed a number of Members’ queries in respect of the restaurant accounts.

Noted.

### **GCB/2006/39 : STAFFING STRUCTURE**

Following a query from Councillor Spratt, the Operational Services Manager advised that Technical & Environmental Services were responsible for the wages of a part time cleaner to clean the clubhouse, with the exception of the restaurant and kitchen area, which was cleaned by the casual staff employed by the catering manager.

Discussion then ensued on the cleaning of the clubhouse, associated wage costs, etc., and it was agreed that this matter be considered further at the next Board meeting.

RESOLVED : That consideration of the cleaning of the clubhouse be deferred to the next Board meeting.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **GCB/2006/40 : MEMBERSHIP**

The Operational Services Manager advised that he had received a letter from a gentleman who would be concentrating on opening his own business, and had asked if his fees could be waived for one year, whilst keeping his membership open.

Councillor Spratt proposed that a fee of £50.00 per annum be levied on anyone wishing to have their fees waived for the year, whilst keeping their membership open, and this was seconded by Councillor Cochrane.

RESOLVED : That the Golf Club Board agrees that any club member requesting their membership to be kept open, without paying their annual fees would be required to pay a fee of £50.00 per annum.

#### **GCB/2006/41 : GOLF CARTS**

The Operational Services Manager advised Members that a company had offered to leave two golf carts at the clubhouse (free of charge) on a trial basis. The Officer recommended that a charge of £20.00 be levied on non members and £15.00 for members for 18 holes of golf, and that following the trial period, he would report back to the Board.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED : That the Golf Club Board agrees that a charge of £20.00 for non-members and £15.00 for members be levied during the golf cart trial period, and that the Operational Services Manager report back to the Board..

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 2.40 p.m.

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**CHAIRMAN**

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**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**