

CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Castlereagh Hills Golf Club Board held, in committee, at Castlereagh Hills Golf Club on Friday, 18th August 2006 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT:- Councillor G Robinson (in the chair)

Councillor Mrs J Cochrane
Councillor B Hanvey
Councillor M Henderson
Councillor T Jeffers
Councillor J Spratt
Councillor J White

IN ATTENDANCE:- Director of Finance & Leisure Services, Operational Services Manager, Acting General Manager – Leisure & Marketing, PR & Marketing Manager, Business Manager, and Assistant Members' Services Officer.

APOLOGIES:- Apologies were recorded on behalf of Councillor Chambers

GCB/2006/122 : UPDATE FROM BECKER MERCHANT LTD

At this point of the proceedings, Councillor Jeffers declared an interest and left the meeting.

The Consultant from Becker Merchant Ltd circulated his proposed menus for Members' consideration. He stated that the menu comprised of "best-sellers" in the trade and he felt that these would be equally successful in the Golf Club.

He reported that the ingredients in the menu were all from local produce, which was in season, and he was confident that the kitchen staff could produce this menu.

Councillor Spratt indicated that he was keen to see Ulster produce being used, but asked if the Consultant could source cheese from Northern Ireland, for inclusion on the cheese board.

The Acting General Manager referred to the preparation times and asked if the new staffing rota would complement this menu.

The Consultant replied that the menu was relatively easy to prepare and reiterated that it would have a 3-month lifecycle before a different menu was devised.

The Acting General Manager stated that roast chicken and scampi were very popular with Golf Club customers, and she was concerned that it was not included in the menu.

The Consultant responded that scampi could be added as a "Today's Fish Special".

The Business Manager referred to the Sunday Lunch menu, which was extremely popular.

The Consultant indicated that he had not been aware of a Sunday lunch menu and asked if he could be given details in order that he could look at the content.

The Consultant then circulated the proposed Golfers and Kids Menus for Members' consideration and confirmed that the pricing structure of the Golfers menu had been discounted.

The Acting General Manager referred to the Food Standards legislation and the Catering Consultant assured her that the description of the food within the menu, accurately reflected the produce offered.

The Acting General Manager advised Members that she did not foresee too much surplus stock when the new menu came into effect, because of the Golf Club's current buying patterns.

Councillor Harvey asked if the Golf Club should be considering promotion of its "Christmas Fare" menu, to which the Chairman responded that the new menu should receive a month's trial before the Board should consider the Christmas period.

The Catering Consultant referred to Councillor Harvey's suggestion and stated that he would work on a package price for a 2-course and 3-course Christmas menu, including prices for function menus, as Councillor Spratt stated that there were several functions to be held in the Golf Club within the next few months.

Councillor Robinson therefore proposed that the Board agree to the implementation of these new menus, with the changes as highlighted by Members being taken on board, and that the new menus commence from the beginning of next week.

The Catering Consultant advised Members that if the Golf Club attracted more customers to its restaurant, they would need to consider purchasing screens in

the event of functions, which may be taking place, as it was unwise to turn away custom.

In response to a query from Councillor White, the Acting General Manager confirmed that Special Golf Outings and Societies were fully accommodated in the restaurant.

Discussion then ensued in relation to extending the entertainment and drinks licences for the Golf Club to fully maximise the facility.

Members then considered promotion of the new menu and it was agreed that Councillor Robinson, in liaison with the PR & Marketing Manager and the Becker Merchant Ltd Consultant would discuss the preparation of a glossy flyer and the proposed advertising campaign.

The Business Manager asked if the opening hours would remain the same, to which the Consultant responded that he anticipated that last orders for meals would be taken at 9.30 p.m.

The Acting General Manager stated that the Monday and Tuesday shift rotas would need to be amended to ensure that the Head Chefs were available to accept last orders.

The Acting General Manager referred to the implementation of the new menu and enquired if the Head Chefs had received any induction training.

The Consultant advised that he had received excellent co-operation from the kitchen staff and would be available on Monday to oversee the implementation of the new menu.

The Operational Services Manager asked if the Consultant had investigated the costs of buying in ingredients. The Consultant responded that tendering for food had been discussed and he had already spoken to the Chefs advising them where to source suppliers with regard to pricing.

At this point, the Chairman, on behalf of the Golf Club Board, thanked the Consultant for his assistance and he left the meeting.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, Members agree that the Golf Club should run with the suggested menu for a 3-month period, commencing on Monday, 21st August 2006 as it could be revised at a later date, however that

- (a) The Consultant ensure that scampi is offered, when appropriate, as “fish of the day” or as a “special”, and ice-cream to be served as part of the dessert menu.
- (b) The clipboard style of menu is approved, with the amendment of the wording “Soup” in bold lettering. In addition, that the Consultants ensure that there is an asterisk placed on the menus highlighting those meals which contain nuts and can cause nut allergies, although this should be counteracted with a statement that cross-contamination cannot be ruled out.

Furthermore, that the menu displays that prices are inclusive of VAT.
- (c) The Business Manager will forward Becker Merchants Ltd with details of the Sunday lunch menu.
- (d) The Consultant consider 2-course and 3-course packages and pricing structures for a “Christmas Fare” menu, and suitable Function menus for the Golf Club Restaurant.
- (e) The PR & Marketing Manager, Councillor Robinson and the Consultant from Becker Merchant Ltd be approved to discuss the preparation of a glossy flyer to promote the new menu, in addition to a proposed advertising campaign.

Councillor Jeffers re-joined the meeting.

GCB/2006/123 : MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CASTLEREAGH HILLS GOLF BOARD MEETINGS

Tabled:- Minutes of the 23rd February 2006, 22nd March 2006, 28th April 2006, 25th May 2006, 30th June 2006, 7th July 2006 and 28th July 2006 (copies previously circulated)

Members went through each set of minutes in turn to check for accuracy, and a number of amendments were made as a result. The following Members proposed and seconded the following minutes as a true reflection of the proceedings, once the minutes had been changed as agreed.

Minutes of the Inaugural Golf Club Board – 23 February 2006

Councillor Spratt proposed that these minutes be adopted as a true reflection of the proceedings, seconded by Councillor White

- Record apologies for Councillor Henderson and Councillor Jeffers
- Record Councillor Drysdale as a Substitute

Minutes of the Golf Club Board – 22 March 2006

Councillor Spratt proposed that these minutes be adopted as a true reflection of the proceedings, seconded by Councillor White

- Record Councillor Jeffers apology
- Amend “Diane” to read “Acting Business Manager”
- GBC/2006/07 to read “A verbal report was made by the Steering Committee” and noted.
- Add GBC/2006/08 and re-title “Register detailing equipment stored”
- GCB/2006/26 – add Councillor Spratt to the membership of the General Committee

Minutes of the Golf Club Board – 28 April 2006

Councillor Spratt proposed that these minutes be adopted as a true reflection of the proceedings, seconded by Councillor Hanvey

- Record Councillor Jeffers apology
- Amend GCB/2006/30 – delete “the” from the third paragraph, second sentence and include “it” on page 3, 4th paragraph.
- Amend resolution (a) of GCB/2006/30 to include the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance & Leisure Services

Minutes of the Golf Club Board – 25 May 2006

Councillor White proposed that these minutes be adopted as a true reflection of the proceedings, seconded by Councillor Henderson

- Delete Councillor Long’s name from attendances and amend Director of Finance & Leisure Services title.
- Record Councillor Jeffers apology
- Amend Minute no. GCB/2006/42 and delete word “full” from 3rd paragraph, delete 4th paragraph and Resolution (a).
- Amend Minutes no GCB/2006/47 and delete paragraph 2 from page 3

Minutes of the Golf Club Board – 30 June 2006

Councillor Henderson proposed that these minutes be adopted as a true reflection of the proceedings, seconded by Councillor Cochrane

- Amend title of Catering Consultant
- Amend Minute No: GCB/2006/67 to read “Down Recorder” and delete “Spectator”
- Amend Minute No: GCB/2006/79 and delete 2nd paragraph and amend 5th paragraph as requested by Councillor Henderson.

Minutes of the Golf Club Board – 7 July 2006

Councillor Cochrane proposed that these minutes be adopted as a true reflection of the proceedings, seconded by Councillor Spratt

- Amend title of Catering Consultant
- Amend Minute No: GCB/2006/91 to include provision of a freestanding ash tray
- Amend Minute No: GCB/2006/94 and replace General Committee references with Golf Club Board

Minutes of the Golf Club Board – 28 July 2006

Councillor Jeffers proposed that these minutes be adopted as a true reflection of the proceedings, seconded by Councillor Henderson

- Delete Resolution (b) from Minute No: GCB/2006/98
- Amend Resolution (a) and (b) of Minute No: GCB/2006/109 to read that the Golf Club Board will meet on the 3rd Friday of every month and the Golf Club General Committee will meet during the 2nd week of the month.
- Amend Minute No: GCB/2006/121, 3rd paragraph to read Kings Road/Ballyhanwood Road.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the amendments, as requested, be made to the minutes of the 23rd February, 22nd March, 28th April, 25th May, 30th June, 7th July and 28th July 2006 and that they be tabled on the September Council Minutes for information, following which, they will be available for public scrutiny.

In the interim, the Chairman be forwarded amended copies of the aforementioned minutes for his information.

REPORT FROM THE BUSINESS MANAGER

GCB/2006/124 : TRADING ACCOUNTS

The Business Manager referred Members to the trading accounts attached to her report and expressed disappointment at the figures for July which may have dropped off because of the hot weather and the holiday period.

Noted.

Councillor Henderson left the meeting at 11.30 a.m.

GCB/2006/125 : BUDGET VARIANCE REPORT

The Business Manager referred Members to her report in which there had been a reduced advance variance on staffing costs.

She referred to an overspend in Miscellaneous costs, a breakdown of this will be brought to the next meeting.

RESOLVED:- That, the Business Manager be instructed to bring back a breakdown relating to the overspend in Miscellaneous costs for the next meeting of the Board.

GCB/2006/126 : WEEKLY SALES ANALYSIS

The Business Manager referred to Appendix 3 of her report and advised Members that comparative figures from last year were now available.

Early indications are that the level of sales are rising on a weekly basis compared to the same period last year.

She referred to the new menu and hoped that it would have a beneficial impact on food and drink sales figures.

Noted.

GCB/2006/127 : MAN HOUR COSTS

The Business Manager advised that although there was currently a reduction in the number of man-hours, an extension of opening hours would increase the costs again.

The Acting General Manager stated that if last orders were at 9.30 p.m., the floor staff would need to remain in post. She suggested that, to ensure cover is maintained, staff shift rotas be amended to ensure that staff commence work at 4.00 p.m. instead of 2.30 p.m.

Councillor Robinson felt that it would be pertinent to see how the new menu took effect first.

He also felt that there should be a rota in place specifically for cleaning of the facility.

The Acting General Manager outlined the proposed rotas for Members' information and advised that it had been maximised to capitalise at the Golf Club's busiest periods.

Noted.

GCB/2006/128 : INTRODUCTION OF NEW MENU

The Business Manager referred to the Catering Consultant's earlier presentation of the proposed new menu and the discussion that had ensued as a result.

Noted.

GCB/2006/129 : REVIEW OF OPENING TIMES

Following agreement, it was

RESOLVED:- That, Members would discuss this matter later in the meeting.

At this point of the meeting the Committee went into "Staff in Committee.

STAFF IN COMMITTEE

GCB/2006/131 : CATERING CONSULTANT COSTS

At this point in the proceedings, Councillor Jeffers left the meeting.

The Business Manager advised Members of the Catering Consultant's costs to date, which was in line with the Council's fiscal policy.

Members agreed that it was essential to retain the consistency of the Consultant as he provided value for money and the necessary expertise in this field.

The Members referred to earlier discussion, in which the Board had agreed that his services be retained to amend the menu as discussed, to consider the Christmas, Sunday lunch menu and Function menus, to meet with the PR & Marketing Manager with regard to promotion of the Golf Club restaurant, and be available to implement the new menu.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the Golf Club Board authorise the payment of the Consultant for a maximum of 30 hours to carry out the aforementioned tasks, but that the Board be kept informed of the number of hours that his services have been employed.

GCB/2006/132 : REVIEW OF OPENING TIMES

Members discussed in detail the promotion of the new menu with regard to the opening times of the facility.

They considered the Golfers menu and the Operational Services Manager advised that it was normally used throughout the day from approximately 11.00 a.m.

Members then referred to the fact that during the winter months, the days become shorter and this would possibly impact on the times when the Golfers would use the restaurant.

Discussion then ensued in relation to Golfing Societies using the facility and it was agreed that the PR & Marketing Manager and the Business Manager would meet with the Acting General Manager to discuss a pricing structure to attract more Society bookings.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That,

- (a) the Golf Club Board approve the review of opening hours and implementation of the new menu, except on Saturdays when the Golfers menu would run throughout the day.
- (b) Officers should also ensure that Golfers should be accommodated on Sundays, in addition to the normal Sunday lunch menu
- (c) The PR & Marketing Manager, Business Manager and Acting General Manager will meet to discuss a pricing structure to attract more Golfing Society bookings. However, the Society menu will operate from the Golfers menu with a £2 surcharge on the roast chicken/fish & chip meals.

GCB/2006/133 : RECRUITMENT OF KITCHEN STAFF

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, subject to the position of Commis Chef becoming available, that Officers be authorised to implement the recruitment process for the post.

Furthermore, that Officers be instructed to forward the Golf Club Board's thanks and appreciation to the kitchen staff for their support during this time.

GCB/2006/134 : INDEPENDENT STOCK-TAKE REPORT

The Business Manager advised Members that the gross profit margins for food and drink sales had increased, and some of the deficits had reduced, and she was overall, pleased with the performance figures.

She then sought Members' permission to carry out a further stock-take of the Golf Club restaurant.

Members agreed that the Business Manager be approved to carry out an immediate stock take, prior to the implementation of the new menu, and given authorisation to carry out a further one in 6 weeks time.

The Acting General Manager also advised Members that the access cards granting authority for operation of the till were now ready to be implemented.

RESOLVED:- That, the Board authorises the Business Manager to carry out an immediate stock-take of the Golf Club restaurant, prior to the implementation of the new menu, and to be approved to carry out a further stock-take in 6 weeks time.

PR & MARKETING MANAGER'S REPORT

GCB/2006/135 : RECENT GOLFING PROMOTIONS

The PR & Marketing Manager referred to the Members' request at the last meeting of the Board to clarify the ratio of female/male participants in recent Golfing promotions. She confirmed that of the 117 people who participated in the recent Golfing promotions, 7 were females.

Noted.

GCB/2006/136 : MARKETING BUDGET

The PR & Marketing Manager advised that there were currently two separate budgets for the Golf Course and the Golf Club Restaurant and she felt that it would be more beneficial to market the two together as a complete package.

The Operational Services Manager stated that, while he had no issues in amalgamating the Golf Course budget with the restaurant budget, that the budget had been set during the 06/07 estimates process to include only those items associated with the Golf Course. He continued that, as previously reported, a complete review of the running costs of the Golf Course had been initiated and

that this included the marketing budget. It was therefore very probable that the marketing budget would have to be further reduced to ensure that the cost centre for the Golf Course came in on budget at the year-end.

The PR & Marketing Manager stated that during the next month, Officers would be concentrating on promotion of the restaurant, as there had been several advertising campaigns for the Golf Course held during the summer months.

Councillor Robinson asked Officers to ensure that they received the most competitive quotations from companies, and the PR & Marketing Manager responded that printing costs had been reduced as a result of this measure.

Noted.

GCB/2006/137 : SOCIETY BOOKINGS & BUSINESSES

The PR & Marketing Manager circulated a list of the proposed Societies/Businesses she was proposing to target with regard to promotion of the Golf Club.

She advised Members that it was the intention for staff based at the Golf Club to invite representation from these organisations to the Golf Club for a cup of coffee and to view the facilities at first hand. She stated that, further to discussion with the Business Manager and the Acting General Manager, she would be bringing back draft menus etc.

She stated that, once prepared, she would be bringing back draft menus suitable for Society/Function bookings for the information of the Board in due course.

Noted.

REPORT FROM THE OPERATIONAL SERVICES MANAGER

GCB/2006/138 : BLINDS FOR RESTAURANT & CONFERENCE ROOM

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the Operational Services Manager be instructed to ascertain with the Architect if the glass used in the Golf Club building had any reflective qualities which would impact on the necessity for blinds, and to report back to the Board with his findings.

GCB/2006/139 : COUNCIL MEMBERS & OFFICERS' RATE OF PLAY

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the discount offered to Council Members/Staff would be kept in line with the current discount offered to Golf Club Members, i.e. they be permitted to bring along one guest only on each occasion at a 25% discount.

GCB/2006/140 : UPDATE ON MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS

The Operational Services Manager advised Members that the total number of Members as at 7 August 2006 was 361, compared to the estimated 420 – a potential shortfall in income of £56,000 and he referred Members to the detailed analysis of membership uptake on a monthly basis. He stated that he was still working on reducing the overspend but reiterated that there was still some months to go before the end of the financial year and that further reductions in expenditure may be necessary to ensure that the course remained within budget.

The Officer continued that the current uncertainty over the future of the Golf Club was having an impact on the uptake of membership and that returning the course to a fully municipal course would have major financial implications in terms of membership uptake and potential refunds of memberships and joining fees.

Noted.

GCB/2006/141 : GREEN KEEPERS PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION – COURTESY PLAY

The Operational Services Manager referred to discussion with the British & International Golf Green Keepers Associations with regard to courtesy golf rounds for their Green Keeper members.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the Board permits BIGGA Members to have two free rounds of golf per year, as a courtesy measure. However, BIGGA Members be notified that they must provide their BIGGA membership card prior to play, and that it be dated accordingly.

Furthermore, that Officers be instructed to maintain a register specifically for this purpose to ensure that BIGGA members do not exceed the two free rounds of golf per year.

GCB/2006/142 : RIBA SPORTS & LEISURE SECTOR REVIEW 2006

The Operational Services Manager advised Members that Ferguson McIlveen LLP had recently entered Castlereagh Hills Golf Clubhouse for inclusion in the RIBA Sports & Leisure Sector Review 2006. He stated that if it was successfully submitted, an article would be placed in this publication and copied to the Board for Members' information.

Noted.

GCB/2006/143 : MINUTES OF THE LAST GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING

The Operational Services Manager advised Members that at the time of writing, these were not available.

Noted.

GCB/2006/144 : ENTRANCE DESIGN

The Operational Services Manager drew Members to the content of his report in relation to the proposed entrance design.

Councillor Spratt highlighted the problems at the entrance of the facility in which fencing had been removed and could attract potential vandalism of the golf course.

The Operational Services Manager agreed to expedite replacement of this portion of fencing.

Following discussion, it was RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the matter of the entrance designs be deferred to a future meeting for further consideration
- (2) That the PR & Marketing Manager be instructed to prepare designs for the Golf Club signage with regard to "Now Open"/"New Menu"/"Christmas Menu" artwork and bring back to the Board for the next meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

GCB/2006/145 : TERMS & CONDITIONS OF HIRE FOR CASTLEREAGH HILLS GOLF CLUB

The Operational Services Manager circulated proposed terms and conditions of hire for the Golf Club.

RESOLVED:- That, the proposed terms and conditions of hire for the Golf Club as circulated by the Operational Services Manager, be agreed by the Board.

GCB/2006/146 : LEGAL ADVICE ON FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

The Chairman informed the Board that when Officers were preparing the final draft of the financial procedures for the recoupment of the Golf Club's expenditure, approval had been sought and granted by the Local Government Auditor and the Council's legal advisers.

However, after the financial procedures had been finalised and accepted by the former Gilnahirk Golf Club, further legal advice was received from the Council's legal advisers casting doubt on whether the new financial procedures were in line with Section 54 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services then read out, to the Board, Section 54 of the 1972 Local Government Act and stated that he, and the Council's Chief Executive, were satisfied that the financial procedures did, in fact, comply with the relevant legislation. This was so because the Council's Internal Auditor would be carrying out checks on the Golf Club expenditure on a six-monthly basis and any irregularities would be reported immediately to the Board.

RESOLVED:- That, the Board notes the further legal advice from the Council's legal advisers, but accepts the advice of the Chief Executive, the Director of Finance & Leisure Services and the Local Government Auditor.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

GCB/2006/147 : CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM MR GIBSON DATED 10TH AUGUST 2006

The Operational Services Manager referred to correspondence received from Mr Gibson. He stated that he had subsequently responded to Mr Gibson confirming that the Constitution had now been approved by the GOI and changes would be made once the Club had been dissolved, but reiterating that it would be the Golf Club Board who would have to determine these changes.

He further advised that all members of Gilnahirk Golf Club would be invited to Castlereagh Hills to attend an extraordinary AGM, being held on the 30th August.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the Operational Services Manager and Councillor Robinson, as Chairman of the Board, would be in attendance at the AGM to be held on the 30th August 2006.

GCB/2006/148 : GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

RESOLVED:- That, all correspondence addressed to the Golf Club would be included on the Golf Club Board agenda in future.

GCB/2006/149 : RESIGNATION FEEDBACK

The Operational Services Manager advised Members that he had received correspondence from two Club Members who had resigned from the Club specifying personal reasons for their decision.

Noted.

GCB/2006/150 : CORRESPONDENCE FORM HARPER MARINE LTD

The Operational Services Manager advised that it had been brought to his attention that a member of the Club had been unable to obtain access to his locker. However, he assumed that the new staffing rotas would prevent a re-occurrence of this situation.

RESOLVED:- That, the Business Manager be forwarded a copy of the correspondence outlined by the Operational Services Manager with regard to the Golf Club member unable to gain access to his locker.

As there was no further business, the meeting concluded at 1.00 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

CHIEF EXECUTIVE