

## **CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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

**PRESENT:-** Councillor Mrs M Chambers  
Councillor J Cochrane  
Councillor B Hanvey (until 12.30 pm)  
Councillor M Henderson  
Councillor T Jeffers  
Councillor G Robinson  
Councillor J White

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

**APOLOGIES:-** Apologies were recorded on behalf of Councillor Spratt and the Director of Technical & Environmental Services.

### **GCB/2006/98 : PRESENTATION BY THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION OFFICER**

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services referred to previous Board discussion in which Members had resolved that the Freedom of Information Officer be invited to this meeting to update them on legislation and exemptions to the Freedom of Information Act.

The Freedom of Information Officer presented her views on the Freedom of Information Act and listed those exemptions to the regulations.

Following discussion, in which the Chairman thanked the Officer for her presentation, it was

**RESOLVED:-** That, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman will be notified in future if the Council receives any requests under Freedom of Information Act, in relation to the minutes of the Golf Club Board.

## **REPORT FROM THE PR & MARKETING MANAGER**

### **GCB/2006/99 : MARKETING PROMOTIONS TO DATE**

The PR & Marketing Manager referred Members to her report and the promotional campaigns that had been held to date.

She indicated that, although the Golfing Day promotion had generated a response from 68 people, she felt that a more personal approach would provide better results.

Councillor Henderson suggested that the Officers distribute flyers to the local churches in the area.

The PR & Marketing Manager stated that she would ensure that these were included in the circulation list and pointed out that flyers had already been distributed at the Lord Taverners Ball as well as at local leisure centres.

In response to a query from Councillor Chambers with regard to possible marketing promotions at Carryduff and Connswater Shopping Centre, she listed the costs involved in hiring a shopping stand at the various centres.

Noted.

### **GCB/2006/100 : ADVERTISING**

The PR & Marketing Manager referred to the recent advertising campaign in the local press and outlined the costs involved for Members' information.

Noted.

### **GCB/2006/101 : PHOTOGRAPHY & PRINTING**

The PR & Marketing Manager again drew Members' attention to the costs involved in relation to photography and printing requirements.

Noted.

**GCB/2006/102 : PROPOSED NEW OFFERS – “TWILIGHT TICKET OFFER” & “CORPORATE PACKAGES”**

Councillor Hanvey referred to the recent campaign run by “Breathe” which had targeted hospitals as well as other organisations, and asked if there was any information available which would reflect the success of this campaign.

Councillor Henderson suggested that the Officers target the PSNI, in addition to other large organisations.

The PR & Marketing Manager outlined the types of corporate packages proposed in her report and indicated that she was intending to hold an “Open Day” for businesses in September, inviting local businesses/organisations to the Club to view the facilities.

Councillor Robinson agreed that there was merit in this suggestion and asked that Officers compile a list of local businesses which were being targeted and bring it back to a meeting of the Board.

The Operational Services Manager felt that it would be more beneficial to approach the Golfing Societies affiliated to these organisations.

The PR & Marketing Manager drew Members’ attention to the “Twilight Ticket Offer” and the “Playing with a member rate”.

The Operational Services Manager stated that there would be no staffing implications during the anticipated hours of the “Twilight” promotion or the “Playing with a member rate”, as the Club was already manned by the Golf Professional and the Golf Club Rangers. He pointed out that a similar promotions were already operating, with the “Twilight” rate applying at weekends only and stated that the Club needed to make radical improvements to encourage more casual play use. Furthermore, other Golf Courses were operating “Twilight” promotions during the evenings.

Councillor White, however, stated that not all private Golf Clubs ran these types of promotions.

The Operational Services Manager offered to research other Golf Clubs and the deals they were offering, for bench-marking purposes, and report back to the Board. However, he referred to the fact that most Clubs had approx 1000 members and this obviously had to be taken into account.

Following agreement, it was

RESOLVED:- That,

- (a) The Golf Club Board agree, in principle, to the proposed “Corporate Packages” and that the PR & Marketing Manager be instructed to negotiate with the Club Restaurant with regard to appropriate costings for the packages, which will be brought back to the September meeting.
- (b) The Golf Club Board authorise the PR & Marketing Manager to run the “Twilight Offer” seven days a week for a period of 4 weeks at the proposed rate of £8 for the 18 holes of golf, and the income figures generated from the promotion be presented to the next meeting of the Board.
- (c) The Golf Club Board authorise the “Playing with a member” promotion, which allows a Golf Club member to bring a guest at each visit to the golf course, with the guest paying the appropriate junior rate.
- (d) Officers to ensure that the Business Plan compiling a list of those businesses to be targeted by the Golf Club is prepared and brought to the next meeting of the Board.

**GCB/2006/103 : STAFF OFFERS**

The Operational Services Manager advised Members of the current position in relation to staff offers.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, Officers be instructed to notify all staff that, in future, any member of staff wishing to avail of the Council’s facilities, will be required to produce photographic ID.

**GCB/2006/104 : HIRE OF GOLF BUGGIES**

The Operational Services Manager referred to his report and suggested that the price of the hire of golf buggies be reduced for a limited time to ascertain if it would increase the usage, in addition to obtaining a further 2 carts for hire.

He stated that the Golf Professional had indicated that once one member used the golf buggy, others tended to follow suit.

Following consideration, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the cost of the hire of the golf buggies remains unchanged and that no additional carts be hired in the interim, but that the Chairman be given the authority to approve the hire of the two additional buggies after further discussions with the Operational Services Manager.

## **GCB/2006/105 : PROMOTIONAL LISTS**

The Operational Services Manager referred to the PR & Marketing Manager's report, which included a current marketing list of promotions, and informed Members that, in liaison with the PR & Marketing Manager, he had established this list detailing every promotional offer that had been held at the golf course. He continued that the intention was to provide an all-encompassing list which would detail every promotional offer that had been, or was currently, being used at the Golf Club.

Noted.

## **GCB/2006/106 : VERBAL UPDATE FROM THE ACTING GENERAL MANAGER**

The Acting General Manager gave Members an update in which she indicated that 2 consultative meetings had been held and she was hoping to finalise the new staffing rotas by next Wednesday.

She further advised that the menu change was being progressed and had been tailored on the basis of supporting a split shift rota pattern.

However, with regard to the waiting issue, she informed Members that this matter was still ongoing.

RESOLVED:- That, Officers ensure that the Golf Club Board is fully notified of any posts within the Golf Club which are being replaced or filled.

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

## **STAFF IN COMMITTEE**

## **GCB/2006/109 : DATE OF GOLF CLUB BOARD MEETINGS**

The Chairman indicated that the Golf Board meetings would take place on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of every month at 10.00 a.m. at the Golf Club, and the General Committee meeting would take place in the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the month, the day and time to be confirmed by the Chairman of the General Committee.

Discussion then ensued in relation to the August AGM of the General Committee, and Members agreed that it should be specified that only members of Gilnahirk Golf Club would be permitted attendance. Furthermore, he added that he was

sure that Councillor White was hoping to be present at the AGM in his capacity as Chairman of the Golf Club General Committee.

RESOLVED:- That,

- (a) The Golf Club Board meetings will be scheduled at 10.00 a.m. on the 3rd Friday of every month.
- (b) The Golf Club General Committee meetings will be held in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of the month and Officers are instructed to liaise with Councillor White, as Chairman of the General Committee, to ascertain a specific day and time for meetings to take place.
- (c) That, the meeting of the AGM being held in August should only be open to members of the Gilnahirk Golf Club, and Councillor White would be in attendance, in his capacity as Chairman of the Golf Club General Committee.

### **BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT**

#### **GCB/2006/110 : TRADING ACCOUNTS TO END OF PERIOD 3 (APRIL 2006 – JUNE 2006)**

The Business Manager referred Members to the trading accounts to the end of Period 3 and compared the net cost of the restaurant to last month's figures. She reported that although the year end projection had been reduced, it was still a projected loss.

The Business Manager then referred to the Variance Report and highlighted the need to reduce staff costs. She also reported that the food sales figures had performed better than anticipated, although bar sales were well below what had been estimated.

The Director commented that the Board should see reductions in the staffing costs once the new split shift rota system was introduced.

The Business Manager also referred to the need to increase evening business within the restaurant to boost, both food and bar sales.

The Director of Finance & Leisure Services referred to the performance of Rockmount Golf Club and suggested that it could be used as a benchmarking model for the Board.

Councillor Chambers stated that until the Golf Club had been operating for over a year providing comparative figures, it was impossible to predict realistic estimates.

Noted.

### **GCB/2006/111 : MANHOUR COSTS**

The Business Manager informed Members that, even though the man-hour costs were higher for period 3, this covered a five-week period, and when comparing them with a weekly average they had in fact reduced.

Noted.

### **GCB/2006/112 : WEEKLY SALES & LEVEL OF SALES**

The Business Manager concurred that once the Golf Club had been opened for a year, comparative figures would be available.

Councillor Hanvey referred to the period 23 April – 11<sup>th</sup> June when there were no sales figures recorded for Sunday lunches.

The Business Manager assured Members that the restaurant had been used for Sunday lunches during that period but stated that an error had occurred during the mechanical recording of figures and this had since been rectified. She added that this matter had only come to light during the completion of this report.

The Chairman asked that Officers ensure that staff were fully aware of the way the EPOS system worked to ensure that information was recorded accurately.

The Business Manager responded that the installation of swipe cards was being progressed, and that she intended to meet with the EPOS supplier to ascertain what information the system could provide, which could be used to monitor performance.

Councillor Cochrane asked if she could be in attendance during this meeting.

RESOLVED:- That, the Business Manager be authorised to set up a meeting with the EPOS supplier to progress the installation of swipe cards, and ascertain what information the system could provide. Councillor Cochrane to attend the meeting, and Officers to notify her of the date and time in due course.

### **REPORT FROM THE OPERATIONAL SERVICES MANAGER**

### **GCB/2006/113 : CLUB CORRESPONDENCE**

The Operational Services Manager referred to his report and following consideration, it was

RESOLVED:- That, all correspondence received in relation to the Golf Club should be tabled at the next available meeting of the Board, where approval will be sought to forward it to the Club Secretary and Captains.

**GCB/2006/114 : MARKETING UPDATE**

Noted.

**GCB/2006/115 : UPDATE ON MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS**

The Operational Services Manager reported that at the end of July 2006 the total number of Members stood at 362, compared to the estimated 420, representing a potential shortfall in income of £46,000 for the 2006-2007 financial year.

He then circulated his financial report for Members' information and indicated that he had instructed that a comprehensive review of all running costs be undertaken to reduce this potential overspend.

Noted.

**GCB/2006/116 : HIRE OF BUGGIES**

The Operational Services Manager referred Members to his report with regard to a financial update on the above.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the Operational Services Manager will continue negotiations with the Buggy Hire Company and will try to progress the matter with a view to bringing back detailed costings to the Board.

**GCB/2006/117 : TEACHING FACILITIES FOR GOLF PROFESSIONAL**

The Operational Services Manager referred Members to the financial breakdown regarding the above matter, which had been attached to his report.

Councillor Robinson referred to the original arrangement in relation to the Golf Professional and the Operational Services Manager outlined the responsibilities listed in his contract.

RESOLVED:- That, the Operational Services Manager be instructed to bring a copy of the Golf Professional's contract for the next meeting of the Golf Club Board.

**GCB/2006/118 : MINUTES OF THE LAST GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING**

The Operational Services Manager circulated copies of the last General Committee meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2006 and Members took several minutes to peruse their content. He reiterated that these minutes were still in draft form and, once approved by the General Committee, would come back to the Board.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the AGM of the General Committee scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> August would take place.

At this point of the meeting, Councillor Hanvey left at 12.30 p.m.

**GCB/2006/119 : CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL MEMBERS & OFFICERS' RATES OF PLAY**

The Operational Services Manager reiterated that it had been resolved at a previous Board meeting that the Council play rate would be amended to a 25% discount for Members and Officers with no restrictions on times of play or number of occasions. He informed Members that this would take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2006.

The PR & Marketing Manager stated that she would be emailing all staff with regard to the requirement to produce photographic ID and that they would be notified of all promotional offers on a monthly basis.

Noted.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**GCB/2006/120 : SALE OF SOFT DRINKS**

The Operational Services Manager informed Members that he was proposing to sell soft drinks from the Rangers Hut on the Golf Course, and stated that

information relating to the sales figures would be brought back to the next meeting of the Board.

RESOLVED:- That, the Operational Services Manager be instructed to make available information relating to the sales figures of the soft drinks being sold from the Rangers Hut on the Golf Course for the next meeting of the Board.

**GCB/2006/121 : CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE ROADS SERVICE RE: CASTLEREAGH HILLS GOLF CLUB – TOURIST SIGNING APPLICATION**

The Chairman referred to correspondence received from the Roads Service, which was circulated at the meeting.

He reported that the Roads Service had reviewed its previous decision in relation to the Golf Club and were now proposing to erect further signs at the Gilnahirk/Upper Braniel Road junction.

Councillor White suggested that the Roads Service should consider a further sign at the junction of Kings Road/Ballyhanwood Road.

The PR & Marketing Manager also advised that, in her view, the Council could push for a sign for the Golf Club at the site of the Dundonald Leisure Park, as tourism at this facility was currently being reviewed and it made sense to include the Golf Club in this review.

The Chairman pointed out that, in his view, this was the best outcome that could be obtained at present, but that this did not preclude the Board from pursuing further signs in the future.

Noted.

As there was no further business, the meeting concluded at 12.40 p.m.

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**CHAIRMAN**

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**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

