

## **CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the proceedings of the Castlereagh Hills Golf Club Board meeting held, in committee, in the Castlereagh Hills Golf Club on Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> April 2008 at 10.00 a.m.

**PRESENT:-** Alderman J White  
Councillor Mrs J Cochrane  
Councillor B Hanvey  
Councillor T Jeffers  
Councillor G Robinson  
Councillor J Spratt

**IN ATTENDANCE:-** Director of Leisure Services, General Manager of Leisure & Marketing, Golf Club Secretary/Manager, Parks Section Manager, Acting PR & Marketing Manager, Business Manager and Assistant Members' Services Officer

**APOLOGIES:-** Apologies were recorded on behalf of Councillors Chambers and Henderson

### **GCB/2008/85 : MINUTES**

Tabled:- Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Castlereagh Hills Golf Club Board held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2008 and Castlereagh Hills Golf Club Board meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2008 (copies previously circulated)

Following agreement, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Castlereagh Hills Golf Club Board held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2008 and Castlereagh Hills Golf Club Board meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2008 be accepted as a true and accurate account of the proceedings that took place, subject to Minute Ref No: GCB/2008/82 being taken back for further consideration.

### **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**GCB/2008/86 : APPRAISAL OF FULL DRINKS LICENCE**

**(Minute Ref No: GCB/2008/41 refers)**

Councillor Jeffers commented that there were a number of public houses within the Borough who were selling their drinks licences.

The Director of Leisure Services stated that before a drinks licence could be procured, the Council would have to have the necessary planning permission in place.

Noted.

**GCB/2008/87 : WINE TASTING EVENING – NEWTOWNBREDA LIONS CLUB**

**(Minute Ref No:- GCB/2008/63 refers)**

The Golf Club Secretary/Manager informed Members that this had been a very successful event.

Noted.

**GCB/2008/88 : MAYOR'S CHARITY BOWLING EVENT**

**(Minute Ref No:- GCB/2008/83 refers)**

The Director reported that the Mayor's Charity Bowling Event was being rescheduled.

Noted.

**GCB/2008/89 : DRAFT GENERAL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Tabled:- Minutes of the Draft General Committee meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2008 (copy previously circulated)

Noted.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE DRAFT GENERAL COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**GCB/2008/90 : HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP  
(Minute Ref No:- GCB/2008/65 refers)**

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That,

- (a) this minute be referred back to the next General Committee Meeting.
- (b) “Honorary Green Fees” be included on the agenda of the next General Committee Meeting.

**REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF LEISURE SERVICES**

**GCB/2008/91 : PROPOSED LEISURE BUDGET 2008/09**

The Director of Leisure Services took Members through the proposed leisure budget 2008/09 attached to her report. She advised that these figures represented the first true reflection of the Golf Club’s accounts and indicated that the overall expenditure figure had reduced.

The Business Manager referred to fuel cost increases and advised that the recent 18% gas increase had not been built into the figures.

Councillor Spratt asked if the Council had been given a fixed price for electricity costs. However, the General Manager responded that although the Council had been allocated a fixed formula, businesses could no longer purchase electricity at a fixed rate.

The Director then advised that although the profile showed a need to significantly increase the budget, she commented that the Golf Club had come a long way in the past year.

Councillor Robinson referred to the salary/wages costs and asked if these figures could be more clearly articulated for next month’s report.

The Director indicated that this would be carried out and, furthermore, she would like to see the wages figures separated into 2 further columns to distinguish between contracted wages and casual wages.

She went on to say that she had brought the figures forward to allow Members to view the bottom line figure, so that Officers could provide an explanation where necessary.

Councillor Robinson referred to the tables for Estimate/Actual/Variance budgets and asked Officers to add a column “last year to date” for next month’s meeting.

The General Manager indicated that Members would not get a true reflection of the salaries and wages profiled.

The Director also asked Members to bear in mind that primarily the estimates were finalised in month 10, but the Director of Finance closed off the figures at the end of Month 9.

Councillor Cochrane asked that she would like to look at the actual figures for last year and see them on a month-to-month basis comparing like-with-like.

Councillor Robinson referred to the £6k and £7k differences in respect of electricity and gas costs between the year end figures and estimated costs. However, the Business Manager stated that she was cautious of reducing these figures in light of the substantial increase in fuel costs.

The Business Manager advised that there were still some invoices to come out of the marketing budget.

Councillor Robinson commented that although Officers were carrying out an excellent job, there was a still a need to continue monitoring the facility.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That,

- (a) For next month’s accounts, Officers present the figures for salaries and wages and further separate the wages figures to distinguish between “contracted wages” and “casual wages”.
- (b) Members to look at the proposed Leisure Budget and raise their concerns at the next meeting of the Board
- (c) The Director of Leisure Services to bring back an explanation for the next meeting in relation to the gas and electricity figures.

- (d) For next month's accounts, Officers to include a "last year to-date" column in the Estimate/Actual/Variance budgets column.
- (e) Officers to continue to monitor the facility.

### **GCB/2008/92 : ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY**

The Director of Leisure Services referred to a proposed Zero Tolerance policy which had been attached to her report for Members' information and indicated that it had already been passed on to the Community Services department.

Councillor Spratt enquired if a legal opinion had been sought and if the policy would be enforceable.

The Director responded that if the Council had to implement action, a policy needed to be in place which had been endorsed by Members. She felt that the term may be misleading and suggested that, in light of Members' comments, it be entitled "Behavioural Code".

Councillor Spratt again stated that although this policy gave Council staff guidelines to adhere to, he still felt it could be legally challenged.

Councillor Robinson referred to recent incidents at the Council's leisure facilities and advised that the Council were legally obligated to let the perpetrators of these acts have the opportunity to give an account of what took place.

Councillor Hanvey referred to the 2nd paragraph of the policy and suggested that the wording ensures that it takes into account expressions of apology.

Councillor Robinson also suggested that the policy needed to ensure that more than one person could vouch for it.

The Director reiterated that she would ensure that the 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence of the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph in relation to sanctions imposed would be amended to state that every case would be assessed on its own merits and would give guidance.

**RESOLVED:-** That, the "Zero Tolerance Policy" be retitled "Behavioural Code" and that the 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence of the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph would state that "every case would be assessed on its own merits".

### **GCB/2008/93 : FINANCIAL TRADING ACCOUNTS**

The Business Manager referred Members to the financial trading accounts and reported that the figures presented were provisional as there may still be invoices outstanding which relate to the 07/08 financial year. She commented that due to the changes of budget responsibility for the facility, it was difficult to compare this years financial result with that of the previous year.

She compared the graph for this month's restaurant income levels to the same period last year and reported that the income for both months had been very similar.

Noted.

At this point, the Golf Club Board went into Staff-in-Committee.

### **STAFF-IN-COMMITTEE**

The Officers then rejoined the meeting.

### **REPORT FROM THE GOLF CLUB SECRETARY/MANAGER**

### **GCB/2008/95 : FREEZING GILNAHIRK MEMBERSHIPS**

The Golf Club Secretary/Manager took Members through the details of her proposed Freezing Membership policy.

Councillor Cochrane felt that it was useful to have a procedure in place for non-Gilnahirk Club members in case the joining fee was reinstated.

RESOLVED:- That, the Golf Club Board approve the proposed Freezing Membership policy as outlined in the Golf Club Secretary/Manager's report.

### **GCB/2008/96 : OPERATIONAL ITEMS & ASSOCIATED COSTS**

The Golf Club Secretary/Manager advised that two new cameras had been installed within the facility. However, she asked Members to consider the purchase of a high spec static camera with a wider lens to cover the entire restaurant.

RESOLVED:- That, the Golf Club Secretary/Manager be authorised to purchase a new high spec static camera with a wider lens for installation in the restaurant area.

**GCB/2008/97 : CCTV CAMERAS & PANIC BUTTON**

The Golf Club Secretary/Manager indicated that there were no CCTV cameras monitoring the front of the building or car park area.

She also requested that Members consider approval for the installation of a panic button in the Reception area.

RESOLVED:- that, the Golf Club Board approves the installation of two CCTV cameras at the front of the golf club building and car park area, and a panic button in the reception area.

**GCB/2008/98 : NEW MICROCACHE SWIPE CARD SYSTEM**

The Golf Club Secretary/Manager advised that she was preparing to write out to all members to collect their swipe cards, as the new system would be taking effect from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2008.

She further advised that she was giving consideration to procedures which would police the system.

Noted.

**GCB/2008/99 : GOLF TROLLEYS**

Members were informed that golf trolleys were currently being leased from Terry Ritchie at a cost of £520 p/annum (20 trolleys).

Officers had researched the purchase of trolleys at £30 per trolley and replacement handles at £5.00 each.

RESOLVED:- That, the Golf Club Board authorise that the lease from Terry Ritchie be terminated and Officers be instructed to purchase 15 golf trolleys at a cost of £30 per trolley.

**GCB/2008/100 : WILGAR CONTRACTS**

The Golf Club Secretary/Manager reported that the painting of the anti-room, conference room and stair-well had been completed during the 07/08 financial year.

The Members' room and restaurant would be painted at a cost of £1,391 to be allocated from the 08/09 budget.

Due to the cost of a full drinks licence, Councillor Cochrane had decided not to paint the Members' Room and ceiling of the restaurant, therefore the total net cost for painting the restaurant walls and reception area was £913.

Noted.

### **GCB/2008/101 : COURTESY ON THE COURSE**

The Golf Club Secretary/Manager requested 'Courtesy of the Course' to be considered for visiting -Golf Professionals, club captain's, green keepers, and a free practice round for competitors in Club competitions in line with other clubs and GUI guidelines.

Councillor Cochrane asked if there was a cap to the number of times that visitors could play on the course at no charge.

RESOLVED:- That, the Golf Club Board agreed- Golf Professionals, Club Captain's, Green Keepers, only play on the Castlereagh Hills golf course for a maximum of 2 times without charge per season

A free practice round for competitors in Club competitions agreed so long as it was monitored and controlled by council staff.

In the interim, the Golf Club Secretary/Manager will maintain a report on the uptake to monitor the situation.

### **GCB/2008/102 : WELCOME PACK FOR GOLF CLUB MEMBERS AND PUBLIC**

The Golf Club Secretary/Manager circulated a sample welcome pack which would be available for Golf Club Members and members of the public.

RESOLVED:- That, Members contact the Golf Club Secretary/Manager with any additions that they would like to see included in the welcome packs.

### **GCB/2008/103 : PLANTS**

Members referred to the Officer's report in relation to quotations for plants to improve the ambiance of the restaurant.

Following agreement, it was

RESOLVED;- that, this matter would be looked at by the Golf Club Secretary/Manager in liaison with the Parks Manager and Councillor Cochrane.

### **GCB/2008/104 : EVENTS CALENDAR**

Members were informed that the provisional date for the Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony and Members' Quiz Night had been scheduled for Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

Noted.

### **GCB/2008/105 : OPENING HOURS**

Golf Club Secretary/Manager referred to an extension of Thursday and Sunday evening opening hours and indicated that sandwiches/tea/coffee would be provided in the Members' Room at minimum cost to the Council.

Golf Club Secretary/Manager to consult with club and get feedback on their needs and requirements.

Councillor Cochrane suggested that the newly extended opening hours should be advertised at the golf club entrance to inform passing trade.

Noted.

### **GCB/2008/106 : NEW DINNER MENU**

The Golf Club Secretary/Manager informed Members that the new dinner menu which had been introduced on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2008 had been received favourably by customers.

Noted.

#### **GCB/2008/107 : RESTAURANT CLOSURE**

The Golf Club Secretary/Manager advised that the restaurant had been closed on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> March due to a lack of running water. As the Water Service could not indicate the source of the problem on the 5<sup>th</sup> March, they were therefore unable to compensate.

She went on to report that the incident on the 26<sup>th</sup> March was due to a burst mains pipe caused by an outside contractor working in the area. Officers would be pursuing a compensation claim and would update Members at the next meeting.

Noted.

#### **GCB/2008/108 : TRADING STANDARDS SERVICE**

Members were informed that an area inspector from Trading Standards Service had called to the golf club on 19<sup>th</sup> February and completed an on-the-spot visit in the restaurant and had been satisfied with all areas of the business.

Noted.

#### **GCB/2008/109 : VALUE CABS INVOICE**

Members were informed that the Value Cabs invoices for January and March had been received at a cost of £3.04 and £6.83 respectively.

Noted.

#### **GCB/2008/110 : BUGGY HIRE**

No buggies were hired out during the month of March due to the course grounds being too soft.

Noted.

**GCB/2008/111 : UPDATE ON MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS**

Members were informed that the total membership at the end of March 2008 stood at 288.

The Director confirmed that a new year had commenced with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008. She outlined that the membership statistics had dropped substantially due to a lapsing in memberships.

Noted.

At this point in the proceedings, Councillors Robinson and Spratt left the meeting at 11.45 a.m.

**GCB/2008/112 : GOLF PROFESSIONAL LESSONS**

The Golf Club Secretary/Manager referred to the Easter Golf School held on 26<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> March which had been extremely successful, despite limited marketing as the new Golf Professional had only taken up post 3 weeks before Easter.

She outlined that initiatives were being progressed for a Summer Golf School and once a Permanent Golf Professional had been appointed, she would confirm the relevant details.

Noted.

**GCB/2008/113 : NUMBER OF STAFF USING THE COURSE**

Members were informed that no staff had played on the course during the month of March.

Noted.

### **GCB/2008/114 : RECORD OF ALARM CALL-OUTS**

There was one alarm call-out for the month of March.

Noted.

### **GCB/2008/115 : COMMENT CARDS**

The Director of Leisure Services circulated a number of comment cards which were fairly complimentary about the facility.

Noted.

### **GCB/2008/116 : JUNIOR MEMBERSHIP INITIATIVE**

The Golf Club Secretary/Manager informed Members that Officers had reviewed the drop in junior membership numbers and had asked the Parity Student to complete research in this area.

Councillor Cochrane referred to the constitution and the need to ensure that the amendments with regard to juveniles had been changed.

It was therefore agreed that the following incentives would be introduced for this year to endeavour to increase junior membership numbers, namely:

RESOLVED:- That,

- (a) Juniors who were non-members be offered group lessons with the Resident Professional at a price of 5 lessons for £30.
- (b) After the junior has completed these lessons they will be offered membership of Castlereagh Hills Golf Club at a discounted rate of £140 for the year.
- (c) This recommendation will encourage juniors as membership is cheaper, however the Council would received the additional £30 for lessons.
- (d) This will also ensure that juniors using the course have been taught rules of the course and will subsequently have more respect for the course.
- (e) It will also show that Castlereagh Hills golf course has a junior development programme, which can be developed in the future.

## **GCB/2008/117 : UPDATE ON GOLF PROFESSIONALS**

The Director reported that 3 candidates had submitted an interest in the Golf Professional position within the Golf Club which was currently being progressed, concluding in a presentation towards a panel.

Options regarding golf simulators were discussed. Alderman White commented that the previous Golf Professional had tried to introduce assimilated golf at the Ice Bowl some time ago and suggested this could be looked at again.

Councillor Hanvey asked if schools would be targeted to encourage junior participation.

The Golf Club Secretary/Manager indicated that the Temporary Golf Professional had spoken with the Sports Development Officer and the GUI with a view to a "Try Golf" pilot system for schools.

Alderman White indicated that he felt that those junior members who had already paid should be offered the same membership privileges.

Councillor Cochrane felt that it was worthwhile offering golf packages at the summer sports schemes and the Golf Club Secretary/Manager agreed to pursue the matter with the schools' PE teachers.

RESOLVED:- That, the Golf Club Secretary/Manager would continue to pursue options to encourage school children to participate in golfing.

## **GCB/2008/118 : CENTRAL PROCUREMENT**

The Director of Leisure Services informed Members that the Council had agreed to recruit a Central Procurement Officer with 2 supporting staff (one to be appointed from Leisure Services). She voiced concern that she did not have an Officer exclusively experienced in "buying".

Councillor Cochrane felt that consideration of the matter should be deferred until the new Central Procurement Officer was in post.

Noted.

**GCB/2008/119 : WORLD BLIND GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS**

The General Manager informed Members that permission had been sought to use the Golf Club's course for tournament practice for those golfers participating in the World Blind Golf Championships.

RESOLVED:- That, the Golf Club Board authorise that the participants in the World Blind Golf Championships be permitted to use Castlereagh Hills golf course as a practice ground for the tournament.

**GCB/2008/120 : THE NORTHERN IRELAND ICE SKATING ASSOCIATION**

The General Manager commented that the Northern Ireland Ice Skating Association had requested if the Golf Club Board would donate a prize for one of their forthcoming events.

RESOLVED:- That, the Golf Club Board approves that a 4-ball game voucher be donated to the Northern Ireland Ice Skating Association for their forthcoming event.

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

**GCB/2008/121 : CAPTAINS' PHOTOGRAPHS**

RESOLVED:-

- (a) That, outgoing captains would receive the photograph from the waiting area, less the frame, which would be retained by the facility for future use by subsequent captains
- (b) Cost of photography would be absorbed within the Marketing Budget.

**GCB/2008/122 : NEW MARKETING PACKAGES**

The Acting PR & Marketing Manager referred Members to the proposed marketing plan outlined in her report.

The General Manager reported that, in the run-up to the Castlereagh Hills Golf Club's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday, this anniversary would be a suitable time to launch the new Golf Professional and commence advertising.

Councillor Cochrane referred to door-to-door leaflet drops and asked if there were any statistics available to record the success of these campaigns. The Acting PR & Marketing Manager responded that 8-9 members had been recruited as a result of the last leaflet drop.

RESOLVED:- that, the Golf Club Board approve the marketing expenditure to promote the new membership packages during the summer when potential customers are more receptive to joining the Club.

### **GCB/2008/123 : WEBSITE**

The Acting PR & Marketing Manager drew Members to the content of her report in relation to the design of an independent website for Castlereagh Hills Golf Club.

The General Manager commented that the proposed website had been prepared in consultation with the Council's IT Manager, who felt that the price quoted had been extremely reasonable. Furthermore, the website would contain links to all the Council's facilities as well as the Council's own website and the GUI website.

Councillor Hanvey felt that the Board should proceed with the website. He stated that it would be a worthwhile venture and would encourage people to have a less municipal view of the Club, but stressed that control of the content of the website should be overseen by the Golf Club Board.

The Acting PR & Marketing Manager commented that she could add pages to the website and make editing amendments herself.

RESOLVED:- That, the Golf Club Board approves the development of an independent website for Castlereagh Hills Golf Club at a cost of £1,500, plus an additional £1,000 for hosting and administering changes to the site throughout the year.

Furthermore, that the Acting PR & Marketing Manager can add pages to the website and carry out editing amendments, while the Golf Club Board will have full control of the content of the website.

### **GCB/2008/124 : TWO HOLES-IN-ONE**

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, a letter from the Chairman of the Golf Club Board be sent to Mr Mark Barr congratulating him on his recent two holes-in-one and offering him a celebratory meal for 4 and complimentary bottle of wine at the Golf Club Restaurant to mark his achievement.

### **REPORT FROM THE PARKS MANAGER**

#### **GCB/2008/125 : LIGHTING AT GOLF COURSE ENTRANCE**

The Parks Manager referred to his report and the revised costs outlined therein.

With regard to the electricity supply, he commented that the Technical Manager was investigating ducting which had been uncovered from the outside door of the Clubhouse to the gate to ascertain if this could be used for the lighting. If it was found to be unsuitable, it was agreed that Councillor Robinson would speak to the contractor.

The Parks Manager referred to tree lighting. He stated that the costs for the lighting options could be sourced in the underspend in 0708 but the electrical installation costs would come out of this year's budget.

He again referred to his under spend and indicated that he had contacted the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for permission to proceed with all purchasing and he was now seeking retrospective approval.

The General Manager asked that the Officer check that the lighting at the gate would not need planning permission, and the Director concurred that any illuminated signage would require planning permission.

RESOLVED:- that,

- (a) the Golf Club Board grants retrospective permission for the under spend in the 0434 budget for 07/08 to be used to purchase cabling at £1,850.00, light fittings at £3,084.00 and trees/lighting at £1,763.20.

Furthermore, that the Parks Manager ascertains that no planning permission is required for the lighting provision at the entrance of the Club.

- (b) that, Councillor Robinson will liaise with the Contractor, should the ducting which had been uncovered from the Clubhouse to the gate be found unsuitable for the electricity lighting provision.

#### **GCB/2008/126 : BUDGET BREAKDOWN**

Councillor Robinson referred to the breakdown showing ongoing costs of wages and salaries relating to the staff on the course. He asked if the Course Manager could dedicate a greater percentage of his time to the golf club, in light of the drainage and flooding problems.

The Parks Manager outlined the sand slitting works timetable and anticipated that seeding would commence shortly, dependent on the weather conditions.

Councillor Robinson asked if the Course Manager would go round the course and tidy up the sand slits, as they looked untidy. Furthermore, he indicated that there was a broken gate at Manns Road and asked if this could be repaired.

He then enquired if the golf club machines had been wheel-balanced properly as misappropriate use would cause greater damage to the course.

The Parks Manager reiterated that as the course was only two years old and that although there were still some soft areas, this problem would rectify itself in time. RESOLVED:- That the Parks Manager be instructed to investigate how the gate at Manns Road was damaged.

#### **GCB/2008/127 : SIGNAGE ON GOLF COURSE**

The Director of Leisure Services informed Members that she had walked the course yesterday with the Golf Club Secretary/Manager and referred to Minute No: GCB/2007/267 regarding further signage provision. She stated that the original proposal had suggested a cost of £500 per sign, but a second report had proposed costs on a sliding scale from £800-£1000.

The Director therefore asked Members to take this minute back and arrange for the signage to be organised and for the cost of the signs to be covered in the first year through the sale of advertising by the independent contractor, followed by the sale of advertising in the second year with the view of making a profit.

Councillor Robinson asked that Officers ensure that the type of signage purchased is removable.

RESOLVED:- That, minute no: GCB/2007/267 be taken back and that signage on the golf course be provided at no cost to the Council in the first year, and sold at a profit during the second year.

### **GCB/2008/128 : CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**

The Parks Manager referred to suggested course improvements which had been raised by club members at the pre-AGM meeting, namely:

- Improvements to irrigation to 6 park land greens
- Upgrade 8<sup>th</sup> hole by constructing new tee behind the existing tee which will turn the hole into par 5
- Upgrade 12<sup>th</sup> hole by constructing a new green behind the existing green and a new set of tees behind the existing tees, therefore turning the hole into a par 5.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, Members approve, in principle,

- the development of a tee on the 8<sup>th</sup>
- development of a green and a tee on the 12<sup>th</sup>,
- additional irrigation to 6 x park land greens.

Furthermore, that Officers be instructed to bring back costings and plans of development for approval.

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**

