

CASTLEREAGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of the Special Meeting of the Castlereagh Hills Golf Club Board held, in committee, at Castlereagh Hills Golf Club on Friday, 8 February 2008 at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT:- Alderman J White
Councillor B Hanvey
Councillor M Henderson (in the chair)
Councillor Mrs J Cochrane
Councillor G Robinson
Councillor J Spratt

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

APOLOGIES:- Apologies were recorded on behalf of Councillors
Chambers, Jeffers and Drysdale

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF LEISURE SERVICES

GCB/2008/39 : IN COMMITTEE

Members asked that this item be discussed "in committee" and the Officers were asked to leave the meeting, with the exception of the Director of Leisure Services and the General Manager. The Director updated members on the events that took place in the wake of the special meeting on the 30th January 2008, and the measures necessary to fill the void. The Director further requested permission to progress with an expression of interest in the relevant publications seeking Golf Professional and associated golf activities services. The General Manager briefed on procedural and policy changes being effected.

Following agreement, it was

RESOLVED: That,

- (a) the Golf Club Board grant approval for an expression of interest advertisement to be placed in relevant publications.
- (b) the General Manager was to relay, that the individual discussed was banned from future association with the facility.
- (c) the officers set up either a lease agreement for golf trollies or purchase outright – whichever is most economically viable and report back retrospectively.
- (d) the officers pursue a Direct Debit facility either in-house or with an appropriate company.
- (e) additional cameras would be installed as appropriate.

At this point, the Officers re-entered the meeting.

GCB/2008/40 : WIND TURBINE

The Director of Leisure Services referred Members to the content of her report.

The General Manager informed Members that the grant enabling a wind turbine to be established at Lough Moss was now no longer available.

He suggested that, in the interim and in order to conduct concurrent activity, a wind analysis and a detailed profile of electricity usage could be carried out at the facility. This would enable the Council to be prepared, should more renewable energy grants be released.

The General Manager went on to report that the M&E Engineer had requested approval from the Board to purchase a “Hawk”. This would enable the Council to proceed with any future application should a more favourable renewable energy grant become available. Furthermore, the Council could proceed with a provisional planning application, which would identify any potential objections, and would subsequently be better placed when the grant application was being submitted.

In response to a query from Councillor Spratt, he clarified that White Young Green would be carrying out the consultative work. He stated that as the Golf Club site was extremely windy, there was the possibility that the wind turbine could be used as a wind generator and surplus electricity could be sold back to the national grid. Only further analysis would confirm this.

Following agreement, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the Golf Club Board grant approval for

- (a) Officers to conduct a wind analysis at the Golf Club at a cost of £6,500 to enable any future grant application for a wind turbine.
- (b) Authority is given to award the contract to Micro Wind Systems, as it has not been possible to obtain more than 2 quotations.
- (c) White Young Green to be authorised to conduct the consultative work. Furthermore, that the General Manager Leisure & Marketing be instructed to come back with the costs associated with the consultative work.
- (d) Authority is given to collect detailed electricity consumption data at the Golf Club and Hamilton's Shed to enable a usage profile to be developed.
- (e) Authority is given for the M&E Engineer to purchase a "Hawk" for the Leisure Department at a cost of £2,000.
- (f) Authority is given for the Officers to process the outline planning application for the wind turbine, through the Council's Planning Officer and the Officers to liaise with Miss Nicola Monroe to ascertain a point of contact.

GCB/2008/41 : APPRAISAL OF FULL DRINKS LICENCE

The Director of Leisure Services referred to the detailed content of her report and the options listed for consideration by Members.

The General Manager informed Members that he had sought advice in relation to the procurement of a full drinks licence and that the costs involved would be in the region of £130k-140k, taking 12-18 months to progress.

Councillor Spratt commented that, on the basis that the Council can capitalise the costs, he felt that Officers should proceed with the procurement of a full licence.

The Business Manager commented that, in her view, the drinks licence alone would not increase revenue, she stated that consideration of a bar facility would need to be progressed in line with a full drinks licence.

Councillor Robinson referred to the surplus monies from the previous Gilnahirk Club and suggested that Officers contact Members to ascertain if they wished to

contribute to the cost of the licence, as it may encourage a greater sense of ownership of the Club.

Following agreement, Members agreed that officers distribute Option 2 to all club members along with Plan 3, without the inclusion of the bar.

Councillor Robinson further commented that club members should be made aware that the Board would carry out a yearly review of bar sales to ascertain that revenue had increased as a result of the purchase of a full drinks licence.

Councillor Henderson asked if pay and play customers would be able to avail of the bar facilities.

The Director responded that the Members' Room was solely for the use of club members but she would ascertain if they would be willing to permit pay and play users and Golfing Societies to use their facilities.

Councillor Spratt asked that Officers ensure that the full drinks licence covers the entire Golf Club building, including the downstairs function room.

The General Manager stated that he would bring back detailed plans of the proposal to a future meeting of the Board. He also asked if Members would consider the installation of double doors in the Members' Room and downstairs function room, as this would provide greater flexibility for larger functions such as weddings etc.

Councillor Cochrane asked if there would be any implications for juveniles should the Golf Club purchase a full drinks licence, and the Director agreed to check this matter further.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the Golf Club Board authorise that

- (a) Officers proceed with the procurement of a full drinks licence, on the basis that the costs can be capitalised and that the licence covers the entire Golf Club building.
- (b) Officers circulate details of Option 2 to all Club Members and Plan 3 (without the bar) and seek their co-operation in relation to the use of the Members' Room by pay and play users and Golfing Societies.
- (c) The General Manager Marketing & Leisure to bring back detailed drawings and costs of the proposal, including the installation of double doors in the Members' Room and downstairs function room to facilitate functions, for a future meeting of the Board.

- (d) The Director of Leisure Services to ascertain if there will be any implications for the Juvenile Section in the event that the Council procures a full drinks licence.

GCB/2008/42 : SUMMARY OF MEMBERSHIP PACKAGES

The Director of Leisure Services referred to the Summary of Membership Packages report circulated to Members listing the various fees, packages and promotions going forward.

She commented that currently Senior Officers were unable to give discretionary rates and the Board needed to offer guidance in relation to this issue.

The Golf Club Secretary/Manager commented that during certain months, the Technical Services Officers carried out work to the course resulting in a reduction in holes to play. She felt that fees should subsequently be reduced when this work was ongoing, although the Parks Section Manager indicated that a temporary green was usually located beside the green in question.

Noted.

GCB/2008/43 : FAMILY MEMBERSHIP PACKAGE – 2 ADULTS & 2 CHILDREN

The Business Manager commented that she hoped that the Family Package would encourage wives and children of current members to join the Club. She referred to the Ladies' Section of the Club who urgently needed to recruit more members in compliance with GUI affiliation regulations and hoped that the introduction of this package would help address the issue.

The Director referred to the £50 subscription to the Club and suggested that a capped figure of £50 per Family Membership be agreed by the Board.

In response to Members' queries she clarified that up to the 1st October 2008, the green fees would be payable in full, however following that date the membership/green fees are payable on a pro rata basis.

RESOLVED:- That, the Golf Club Board approves the introduction of a Family Membership Package (2 Adults & 2 Children) at a proposed annual fee of £999 (offer to be promoted for a limited period only).

Furthermore that the subscription to the Golf Club for this package be capped at £50.00.

GCB/2008/44 : HUSBAND & WIFE MEMBERSHIP PACKAGE

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the Golf Club Board approves the Husband & Wife Membership Package at £850 (offer to be promoted for a limited period only).

Furthermore that the subscription to the Golf Club for this package be capped at £50.00 per couple.

GCB/2008/45 : LADIES MEMBERSHIP PACKAGE

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the Golf Club Board approves the following Ladies Membership promotion to take effect immediately:-

- One full lady's round of golf (casual play) gets the second lady a free round of golf to encourage a course trial.
- 2 or more ladies join together and receive 10% discount each on the membership fee.

GCB/2008/46 : PROPOSALS TO INCREASE CASTLEREAGH HILLS GOLF CLUB MEMBERSHIP INCENTIVES

The Business Manager referred to her report outlining suggestions to increase the incentives of becoming a member of the Castlereagh Hills Golf Club, namely:-

- 10% discount available within the restaurant (applicable to food purchases only) (may only be applicable to Members who pay full subs up front in April)
- Promotion for Members who pay up front to receive gift vouchers for use within the restaurant
- Buggy Hire – a member can purchase 5 Buggy hire vouchers in advance.
- Improvements to be made to the Members' Room.

Councillor Robinson also suggested that Members who introduce a new member to the Club should receive a restaurant voucher for a maximum of £25.00.

The General Manager felt that there maybe problems in proving membership of the Club. However, Members suggested that vouchers should only be printed out and distributed by the Business Manager and the Golf Club Secretary/Manager, which would make the system easier to monitor.

RESOLVED:- That, the Golf Club Board approves the above promotions which should increase the Golf Club Membership incentives with the inclusion that any existing Club Member who introduces a new member to the Club should receive a gift voucher for the restaurant to a maximum total value of £25.00.

GCB/2008/47 : CASUAL PLAY - PROPOSED PRICING STRUCTURE FOR 2008/2009

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That,

(a) the Golf Club Board approves the following pricing structure for 2008/2009:-

Adult	-	9 holes	(Mon-Fri)	£10.00	
Adult	-	18 holes	(Mon-Fri)	£15.00	
Junior	-	9 holes	(Mon-Fri)	£7.00	(under 18 years)
Junior	-	18 holes	(Mon-Fri)	£11.00	(under 18 years)
Adult	-	9 holes	(Sat,Sun, B/Hols)	£12.00	(review in 6 mths)
Adult	-	18 holes	(Sat,Sun, B/Hols)	£20.00	(over 18 years)
Junior	-	9 holes	(Sat, Sun, B/Hols)	£8.00	(under 18 years)
Junior	-	18 holes	(Sat, Sun, B/Hols)	£12.00	(under 18 years)
Members' Guest	-	9 holes	(Mon-Fri)	£7.50	
Members' Guest	-	18 holes	(Mon-Fri)	£13.50	
Members' Guest	-	9 holes	(Sat, Sun, B/Hols)	£9.00	
Members' Guest	-	18 holes	(Sat, Sun, B/Hols)	£15.00	
Staff	-	9 holes		£7.50	
Staff	-	18 holes		£13.50	

BUGGY HIRE (these charges to take immediate effect)

Members	9 holes	£5.00
Non-Members	9 holes	£10.00
Members	18 holes	£10.00
Non-Members	18 holes	£15.00

SOCIETY BOOKINGS

Society -	18 holes	(Mon-Fri)	£12.00
Society -	18 holes	(Sat, Sun, B/Hols)	£18.00

- (b) The Officers be instructed to prepare a letter detailing the new tariffs, promotional packages and savings offers and circulate it to all Club Members as soon as possible.

GCB/2008/48 : IMPROVED SOCIAL CALENDAR

The Business Manager advised that the Secretary/Manager was currently working with the new Golf Club Social Committee to produce an improved social calendar for the 2008/09 season.

Noted.

GCB/2008/49 : CURRENT MEMBERSHIP - SENIOR CITIZENS

Alderman White referred to a request received by the Board last year asking the Golf Club to consider the introduction of a special rate for Senior Citizens.

Councillor Cochrane commented that, since receipt of that request, the Golf Club Board had agreed to waive the joining fee.

Noted.

Councillor Spratt left at 3.50 p.m.

GCB/2008/50 : INDUCTION PACK FOR NEW MEMBERS

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the PR and Marketing Manager would prepare a draft induction pack for new Golf Club Members for a future meeting of the Board, to include welcoming letter from both the Mens' and Ladies' Captains and a free round of golf voucher.

GCB/2008/51 : MEMBERS' SWIPING SYSTEM

The General Manager informed Members that he wanted to encourage Club Members to swipe in to the facility before commencing play.

Members then discussed the situation in relation to the course rangers and the location of their hut and the Parks Section Manager reiterated that the introduction of course rangers at the Club had resulted in better control of the players.

The Director informed Members that the Golf Club Secretary/Manager was working on a system whereby Microcache cards would be issued to prove that a player was a member of the Club.

The Golf Club Secretary/Manager advised that it was her aim to circulate members with a Microcache card in which they could swipe it and receive a receipt.

Councillor Robinson asked that she ensure that the course rangers did not use the GUI tags as a form of ID, as tags were printed different colours each year and course rangers need to be familiarised with those which were out-of-date.

Noted.

GCB/2008/52 : SOCIETY BOOKINGS

Councillor Robinson referred to the proposed reduction in the rate for Society bookings and asked if there was a minimum requirement number of players before this rate took effect.

The Golf Club Secretary/Manager responded that she had been informed that 4 players or more usually constituted a Society but advised Members that she was progressing this issue and would update them at a future meeting of the Board. She felt that as long as the course was pre-booked and included the minimum number of players, once the Board had agreed the requisite number, she would

be discussing the matter with the General Committee and would update Members on the situation.

The Director referred to a number of options that she was investigating to perceive better value and she referred to the various packages that she envisaged, e.g. snack & golf/golfing only etc.

The Business Manager suggested that if the Club agree a basic Society rate, the restaurant could tailor individual packages as required.

RESOLVED:- That,

- (a) the Golf Club Secretary/Manager consider the minimum number of players required to achieve the reduced Society rate and to liaise with the General Committee, and update the Golf Club Board once this had been agreed.
- (b) Officers investigate various options for Society booking packages and report back to the Board with their findings.

GCB/2008/53 : CORPORATE PACKAGES

The PR & Marketing Manager informed Members that she had developed different types of Corporate packages to be tailored on the same basis as the proposed Society packages.

Alderman White stated that the problem with Corporate and Society bookings was the fact that the players finished at different times.

Following agreement, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the Officers would look at various options for Corporate packages and progress them further.

GCB/2008/54 : CORPORATE VOUCHERS

The Business Manager referred to the number of businesses and organisations in the Borough and suggested that the Club could sell them vouchers, which they could, in turn, use for potential customers. This would enable the same business and organisations to sample what the Castlereagh Hills Golf Club had to offer and subsequently would get more people playing on the course.

Councillor Henderson suggested that the vouchers should be issued with a “use-by” date.

At this point in the proceedings, Councillor Robinson left the meeting at 4.25 p.m.

The PR & Marketing Manager asked if the Council had the resources to set up a corporate voucher system. However, Councillor Henderson commented that the Golf Club should be targeting new businesses coming to Northern Ireland, and the PR & Marketing Manager agreed to take this on board and also contact the Health Service, MOD and PSNI organisations when corporate packages had been finalised.

The PR & Marketing Manager advised that she was due to meet with La Mon House with a view to a partnership between the hotel and the Golf Club which would include a new facility whereby guests at weddings etc. staying at the hotel could use the Club's facilities on a pay and play basis.

The PR & Marketing Manager concurred that she was trying to market this package with La Mon on the basis that the hotel was in very close proximity to the Golf Club.

The Director informed Members that there was a need for discretionary authority to be given for Senior Officers and the Secretary/Manager on the provision that strict controls were in place. She felt that Officers should record which packages were the most requested, but permit senior Officers to have an element of variable control.

Councillor Henderson suggested that Officers continue to liaise with the Golf Club, as the Honorary Secretary had been liaising with the Golf Club Secretary/Manager to ensure that Club members had some input into decisions.

RESOLVED:- That,

- (a) the PR & Marketing Manager would present a brief marketing overview to Golf Club Members at the pre-AGM meeting.
- (b) the Golf Club Secretary/Manager to be authorised to give discretionary discounted variable rates on the following 2 levels.
 - 10% where play on the course is interrupted on one hole
 - 15% where more than one hole on the course has been interrupted
- (c) the Golf Club Secretary/Manager to be authorised to give a complimentary ticket if rain stops play.

GCB/2008/55 : MARKETING PROMOTIONS

The PR & Marketing Manager advised that her department were moving away from leaflet distributions as everyone in the Borough was already aware that the Castlereagh Hills Golf Club was up and running. Instead, she commented that the Marketing Department were concentrating on new marketing initiatives.

Noted.

GCB/2008/56 : SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT FROM THE BUSINESS MANAGER

The Business Manager advised Members that a number of winter packages were being looked at to encourage revenue for the Club. She stated that one of the options being pursued was a package featuring a round of golf and a golfer's fry. She indicated that the potential of twilight offers was also being introduced in the summer months, which would increase the incentive to pay and play.

Alderman White suggested that the Board reconsider their winter prices as other Golf Clubs reduced their pay and play fees during the winter months.

Councillor Harvey commented that the Board should take into account what consequences these reductions would have on the remaining 6 months of the year, by reducing these pay and play fees especially with regard to those Club Members who were already paying for the full package.

The Director concurred that it would be simpler to run a pay/play and eat promotion.

Councillor Henderson suggested that the Golf Club retain the current prices and identify from the profiles where the Club was making income and which areas were subsequently losing income.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:- That, the Officers would bring back a suggested winter programme for the months of October-March to the next meeting of the Board.

As there was no further business, the meeting concluded at 4.45 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

