

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEISURE and ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

15 July 2008

Report of the Chief Leisure Officer and the Director of Finance

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 POULT WOOD GOLF CENTRE – GOLF SOCIETY CHARGES

Summary

This report recommends revised charges for golf societies at Poulton Wood Golf Centre for implementation from 1 April 2009.

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Members may be aware that the golf society charges at the Poulton Wood are considered in advance of the overall review of charges, which are reported in January. This enables promotional packages to be prepared for publication, prior to societies beginning to plan their programmes for the following year.
- 1.1.2 The golf society market remains highly competitive and there are very few courses which do not offer a variety of packages to large groups of golfers. The societies at Poulton Wood are co-ordinated by the Clubhouse Manager.
- 1.1.3 In considering charges for Council facilities, Members will be aware that the Medium Term Financial Strategy seeks to optimise opportunities to increase income where this is feasible.

1.2 Current Charges

- 1.2.1 Society packages currently available at Poulton Wood are set out at **[Annex 1]**. Members will note that the green fee element within the society packages is comparable to standard green fee charges, and for a number of categories societies pay a small premium.

1.3 Usage Patterns

- 1.3.1 Society packages at Poulton Wood are promoted actively and are well presented by the Clubhouse Contractor. 1,426 society tickets were sold in the last financial year (1 April 2007 – 31 March 2008) generating net income of £23,897 to the Council. This represented a reduction on previous years, and whilst the poor weather in 2007/08 was a contributing factor, it is important to note that the

society market is highly competitive and the number of players in societies and the number of societies appears to be on the decline both locally and nationally. It is recognised that price is increasingly becoming a determining factor in where societies choose to play.

1.4 Competing Facilities

1.4.1 In comparison to competitors it can be seen from **[Annex 1]** that charges for society packages at Poult Wood offer good value for money. It has been the strategy at Poult Wood over recent years to maintain the society charges in line with those of local competition to develop usage and to encourage loyalty. It is considered that this approach should be retained.

1.5 Consultation

1.5.1 The Clubhouse Contractor has requested that the catering element of the society charges be increased in line with inflation and rounded to the nearest fifty pence. This is felt to be reasonable. The Golf Professional is supportive of the proposed charges outlined in sub-section 1.6.1 of this report.

1.6 Proposed Charges 2009/10

1.6.1 Members are reminded that the green fee element of the society charges was increased last year in line with inflation. In view of current usage levels and the need to remain competitive it is considered that a similar approach be adopted once again this year. The following minimal increases, taking into account the increase to the green fee and catering elements, are therefore proposed:

Package	Existing Charge 2008/09 (£)	Proposed Charge 2009/10 (£)
36 hole	47.50	48.50
27 hole	41.00	42.00
18 hole (lunch/dinner)	32.00	33.00
18 hole (breakfast)	27.00	28.00

1.6.2 If profiled usage levels are achieved the proposed increases would generate £600 net additional income to the Council in 2009/10.

1.7 Legal Implications

1.7.1 The Council's Financial Rules require that all fees and charges must be reviewed at least once a year, and be reported to the appropriate Advisory Board.

1.8 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.8.1 These proposals are in accordance with the guidance in the Council's budget strategy.

1.9 Risk Assessment

1.9.1 The proposed charges take into account a range of factors including market conditions and customer feedback and have been brought forward within the context of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

1.10 Policy Considerations

1.10.1 Healthy Lifestyles, Young People, Community, Business Continuity/ Resilience.

1.11 Recommendation

1.11.1 It is, therefore, **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet that the proposed Golf Society charges at the Poulton Wood Golf Centre for 2009/10 be agreed as outlined in the report.

The Chief Leisure Officer confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers: Nil

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Nil

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