

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL**Aberfeldy Common Good Fund Committee****11 December 2013****ABERFELDY PUTTING GREEN FUTURE LEASE****Report by Depute Director (Environment)**

This report seeks the approval of the Aberfeldy Common Good Fund Committee to advertise the putting green in Aberfeldy for a lease following an interim arrangement which has been in place for the last two seasons.

1. BACKGROUND/ MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 The putting green in Aberfeldy is located off Taybridge Road to the North West of the Town Centre (see Appendix 1).
- 1.2 Historically the operation of the putting green and pavilion, which included provision of public toilets through the Comfort Scheme, was undertaken by a private operator under a Concession Agreement from the Council. The last formal Concession came to an end at the close of the season in 2011.
- 1.3 Up to that point the maintenance of the putting green was undertaken by the Council, but this was withdrawn in 2012 as part of the budget savings approved in February 2011. As a result the operators advised that they were no longer interested in running the facility.
- 1.4 Traditionally it has been recognised that the facility is important to the town in that it contributes to the activities available to visitors, provides a public toilet and is in a prominent location adjacent to the Tay Bridge crossing. Options were explored with the neighbouring golf club in 2011 to see if they would be interested in taking it on as part of the golf experience in the town. After careful consideration, they decided not to pursue this.
- 1.5 As a result the Concession was advertised and whilst there were two formal expressions of interest, they didn't result in a Concession being taken.
- 1.6 The reasons given were that the one year lease period was too short and that the timescale for putting it in place for 2012 would mean the Easter period would be missed. Fortunately however, a local individual did come forward to say they would be prepared to try running it on an informal basis for the 2012/13 season.

- 1.7 In order to retain the facility, an informal arrangement was put in place, including the maintenance of the putting green itself, to see if it could be operated as a viable business prior to formally re-advertising it. Whilst the facility was open, the operator was unable to run for the full 2012 season and as such, it was agreed that it would be mutually beneficial to extend the arrangement for 2013.
- 1.8 The returns from the operator for the last two years have now been received and would indicate that the business has not generated a significant return. As such, the current operator has indicated that they would not be interested in bidding for any future or longer term arrangement. A different operator may run the business in another way which may lead to a greater return.
- 1.9 If an operator cannot be found, the putting green would revert to a standard fortnightly amenity grass cutting regime. This would change the appearance of the area and mean it would be unlikely that the putting green could be re-established at a reasonable cost in the future. In addition the pavilion would remain closed and the public toilet facility would cease to be available.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 As the Council do not have the resources to provide this facility and the current operator is unable to continue, the only option to retain the facility would be to advertise the concession. Any Concession Agreement would need to include responsibility for all of the grounds maintenance associated with running the putting green.
- 2.2 To improve the chances of a Concession being taken, it would be offered for a period of 3 years and advertised in adequate time to get an agreement in place and the facility open for Easter 2014.
- 2.3 Should the offer of a Concession be unsuccessful, the Council would revert to undertaking the standard fortnightly amenity grass cut and the building would be mothballed and either disposed of or an alternative use sought.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that a Concession agreement for a 3 year period is advertised as soon as possible with a view to an operator starting in the spring of 2014. If there is no interest, the Council will undertake basic grass maintenance. Alternative public toilets are available in the town at six other locations through the Comfort Scheme and Automated Public Convenience (see pkc.gov.uk/publictoilets).
- 3.2 The Committee is therefore asked to agree that the Aberfeldy Putting Green Common Good Fund site is advertised for a Concession to run it as a going concern including the Comfort Scheme and grounds maintenance, or close it and revert to standard amenity maintenance should this be unsuccessful.

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Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Jim Valentine	Executive Director (Environment)	13 November 2013

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	Yes
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	None
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	Yes
Legal and Governance	Yes
Risk	Yes
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	None
Communication	
Communications Plan	None

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

1.1 The proposals contribute to priorities (iii) and (v) in relation to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

Corporate Plan

1.2 The proposals contribute to priorities (iii) and (v) in relation to the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan Priorities:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 There are potentially minor resource implications arising directly from this report, with future site maintenance for the putting green reverting to the standard amenity grass cutting. This would need to be prioritised from within the current Environment Service Revenue budgets. The Head of Finance has been consulted, and has indicated agreement with the proposals.

Workforce

- 2.2 The proposals in this report have no workforce implications for the Council.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 The proposals in this report have direct land and property implications. The Depute Director (Environment) has been consulted, and has indicated agreement with the proposals.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.
- 3.2 The function, policy, procedure or strategy presented in this report was considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:
- Assessed as **not relevant**.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.3 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.
- The matters presented in this report were considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

Sustainability

- 3.4 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. In terms of the Climate Change Act,

the Council has a general duty to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and the community, environmental and economic impacts of its actions.

- 3.5 The proposals have been assessed in terms of the requirements to manage the Council's Greenspace assets in a sustainable long term way. The putting green area will continue to be maintained either as a viable facility or amenity open space.

Legal and Governance

- 3.6 The Head of Legal Services has been consulted. The proposals may require a formal agreement for the Concession over a 3 year period.

Risk

- 3.7 There is a risk to the Council arising from this proposal. There may be additional complaints by members of the public if the facilities at the putting green are withdrawn.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Heads of Legal Services, Democratic Services, Planning and Regeneration, Property and Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

External

- 4.2 There was consultation with the existing operator of the facility.

5. Communication

- 5.1 There will be some communication about the designation of the sites. The type and format of the communication will be tailored to suit the particular circumstances.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) relied on to a material extent in preparing the above Report.

3. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Site location



Location



View looking South on Taybridge Road

