

AGENDA ITEM: 8

Page nos. 1 - 3

Meeting	Cabinet Resources Committee
Date	28 April 2005
Subject	Parks Golf Courses
Report of	Cabinet Member for Resources Cabinet Member Performance, Partnerships and Best Value Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport
Summary	This report seeks a variation of the previous approval and undertakes the marketing of the former golf courses by the in-house team seeking bids for appropriate open space uses.

Officer Contributors	Dave Stephens, Chief Valuer and Development Manager David Dench, Greenspaces Manager
Status (public or exempt)	Public – with a separate exempt report.
Wards affected	Hadley, East Barnet & Friern Barnet
Enclosures	None
For decision by	Cabinet Resources Committee
Function of	Executive
Reason for urgency / exemption from call-in (if appropriate)	The report is urgent because whilst the courses remain unused, they will deteriorate and the cost of bringing them back into use will escalate making them less desirable as potential business opportunities.

Contact for further information: Dave Stephens, Chief Valuer and Development Manager.
Tel : 020 8359 7353

REPORT TO BE CONSIDERED IF THE CHAIRMAN AGREES IT IS URGENT

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 That in variation of the committee's previous decision:

- i. the appropriate Chief Officer be instructed to carry out the marketing of the three former parks golf courses; and**
- ii. that the marketing be on the basis of inviting bid proposals for golf use or other uses compatible with the status of the land and the immediate vicinity.**

2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- 2.1 Cabinet Resources Committee 22 July 2002 – Considered a report upon the poor condition and lack of investment in the three parks golf courses and the revenue costs of running the facilities, and agreed to enter into a management agreement with Golfwise Limited.
- 2.2 Cabinet Resources Committee 4.11.04 – approved the marketing of the golf courses on the basis of granting leases of the same and that the appropriate Chief Officers be instructed to:
 - i. advertise the proposed leasehold disposals in accordance with the requirements of Section 123 (2A) of the Local Government Act 1972; and
 - ii. seek fee quotes and marketing recommendations from suitable experienced private sector firms with the Cabinet Member for Resources approving the appointment of a firm to act as the Council's agent under delegated powers; with the results of the Section 123 advertising and the marketing being reported to a future meeting of the Committee for further consideration.

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Corporate Plan commits the Council to “plan and manage land use and development in Barnet to enhance the quality of life and provide tangible benefits for the community. The proposals in this report may achieve this by attracting potential lessees who will be prepared to invest in the golf courses to improve the quality of the facilities.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 There is no certainty that an in-house attempt to find an operator or operators of the golf courses will be successful but there may be interest for other appropriate uses.

5. FINANCIAL, STAFFING, ICT AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 If the golf courses are let they will generate new revenue income.
- 5.3 There are no staffing or ICT issues.

6. LEGAL ISSUES

- 6.1 As the courses are within areas of public open space any proposed disposals must be advertised in the local press in accordance with S123 (2A) of the Local Government Act 1972. Any representations received must be given due consideration by the Council.

7. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS

- 7.1 Constitution – Part 3 - Responsibility for Functions – Section 3.6; Functions delegated to the Cabinet Resources committee – All matters relating to land and buildings owned, rented or proposed to be acquired or disposed of by the Council.

REPORT TO BE CONSIDERED IF THE CHAIRMAN AGREES IT IS URGENT

8. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 8.1 Three nationally based agents who specialise in the marketing of golf courses were asked to submit fee quotes to carry out the proposed marketing and comment upon the market for such facilities and the probability of a successful outcome.
- 8.2 One of the agents, Strutt & Parker, declined the opportunity to submit a quote. Humberts Leisure and Savills quotes are set out in the exempt report. Whilst not commenting specifically on the marketability of these courses, it seems clear from the work proposed and the fees payable for abortive work that the agents do not envisage the marketing will be particularly successful.
- 8.3 Considering the likely levels of rents these courses are likely to generate it is considered that the agents fees are excessive. It is proposed instead that the marketing be carried out by the in-house team.
- 8.4 To minimise the risks of not finding lessees for these recreation lands to carry out regular maintenance and to bring them back into beneficial use, it is recommended that whilst the primary objective should be to seek golf course operators, proposals should be invited for other appropriate uses – such uses to be compatible with the status of the land and the use of the adjoining lands. The results can then be reported to a future meeting of the committee for further consideration.

9. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 None.

MO: DVP

BT: CM