

**Minutes of the CGLMC Ltd Environmental Sub-Committee Meeting held in the CGLMC Committee Room at 20 Links Parade on Friday 12 December 2014**

Present: J Gilbert (Convenor), W Thompson, A Nicholson, K Stott, A Reid, S Mitchell, C Boath, G Paton

In Attendance: G Duncan (General Manager)

Meeting began 09.00

**1. Apologies**

P Sawers, I Frier

**2. Introduction**

J Gilbert opened the meeting by stating that he felt Carnoustie Golf Links had done another excellent job in 2014 with regards to environmental work. He said it was obvious the head greenkeepers were passionate about doing environmental work and he saw 2015 as an opportunity to take the work that had been done to the next level.

However, he said he fully understood that course preparation and greenkeeping work should always take priority over environmental work and he fully supported this position.

**3. Bird Boxes**

J Gilbert said he felt the bird box program had been very successful and he was looking to expand the number of boxes that were available. He suggested perhaps more kestrel boxes and also owl boxes could be placed out on the course. He also queried how successful the bat boxes had been. A Reid said the bat boxes had been successful and that different species of bats were found in these boxes. There were kestrel and owl boxes out on the course already but as far as he was aware these had not been occupied. J Gilbert suggested perhaps they should be moved about and new locations tried.

J Gilbert asked about the appointment of an assistant for Barry Irving to help with the installation and maintenance of the bird boxes.

A Reid said he would look into the possibility of finding someone suitable.

A Nicholson said if required he could arrange a bat survey by Willie Milne of the Angus Bat Group. J Gilbert said this would be very worthwhile but he also asked G Duncan to look out the surveys done by Bob Taylor of STRI with regard to the new holes and see if there was a bat survey in there.

J Gilbert asked A Nicholson to arrange the bat survey if possible with the Angus Bat Group but to inform A Reid and S Mitchell when the survey group were to attend.

J Gilbert said that some of the bird boxes looked a bit weather beaten and asked that repairs be performed if necessary.

#### **4. STRI Environmental Report**

J Gilbert said he was in broad agreement with the gorse management section of the environmental report and asked C Boath if he was also in agreement. C Boath confirmed he was happy with the proposals in the report. J Gilbert said that he was supportive of gorse removal on 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> holes of the Championship course as he felt these were the most links type area closest to the sea. From the 6<sup>th</sup> hole onwards he felt that Carnoustie Championship was more of an inland links and therefore there should be more gorse allowed to develop. J Gilbert said this provided an excellent habitat for linnet and yellow hammer as well as other birds, A Reid agreed with this description.

A Nicholson asked about the turf nursery in the triangle between 3, 4 & 5 on the Championship course and said he thought this was agreed to be turned into more natural ground which would therefore provide excellent habitat. C Boath explained that when the turf was used it would be replaced and grown as rough turf which would be much more natural for the area.

W Thompson said the environmental report from Bob Taylor was an excellent publication but it should be broadcast much more widely to let the public have a more detailed view about what Carnoustie Golf Links was doing with regards to environmental work. He suggested that copies be printed off and delivered to the local golf clubs and also placed in the Golf Centre for people to read.

#### **5. Environmental Booklet**

W Thompson said this was exactly the right approach to be taking with regard to publicising Carnoustie Golf Links environmental work and he fully supported the funding necessary for this to be produced.

He suggested that there should be a budget allocation specifically for this type of work in the annual budget so that money did not have to be found from other budget areas.

W Thompson suggested that this was exactly the type of work which OSCR would be looking for Carnoustie Golf Links to do now that we were a charity.

W Thompson said it would be possible that funding could be provided from The R & A and perhaps even Angus Council with regard to environmental activities.

J Gilbert said that there was a 5 year plan in place which had been originally produced by Bob Taylor of STRI and updated by the head greenkeepers of each course.

It was agreed to recommend the production of the booklet and also the funding package to the full board.

#### **6. Bird Survey**

J Gilbert said he felt it would be beneficial to have a new breeding bird survey and he suggested that the Scottish Ornithological Group or the Angus Bird Watching Group could be involved in this survey. He felt that a donation of around £500 would be much appreciated by these groups and would be a more economical way to conduct the survey.

A Nicholson said he would contact the various groups to see if they were interested and the best time of year to carry out such a survey. A Nicholson said they may wish to review areas on 2 to 3 different visits in order to complete the survey.

## **7. Operation Pollinator**

J Gilbert asked C Boath for a summary of Operation Pollinator. C Boath said there were now 3 areas adjacent to the Golf Centre where the public could view and which could be accessed by the various local primary schools.

He said he had been going round the schools and so far had visited Woodlands and Carlogie Primary which he said had been very popular. He showed the sub-committee the various things he was handing out to the primary school children and he said this had been much appreciated. J Gilbert said that it would be useful publicity if a photo opportunity could be arranged with some of the school children visiting the sites and C Boath said he would speak to L Gordon with regards to that happening perhaps in the middle of March.

W Thompson said that this could also be linked to the new junior programme and J Gilbert asked C Boath to speak to Fraser Mann the junior co-ordinator with regard to this.

## **8. AOCB**

J Gilbert asked if further work could be done on the various ponds that are now on the Links and W Thompson said it was important to find the funding for this so that the greenkeeping staff were not required to clear out these ponds. It was agreed that a specialist company was much better positioned to do the job.

W Thompson said again this was something that should be costed and planned and placed in the budget.

W Thompson said that it was important to commit resources to the environmental activities if we wished to progress them properly and A Reid agreed saying it was normally staff time which was the biggest issue rather than money. A Reid said that St Andrews employed an environmental officer but at Carnoustie it was seen as the responsibility of the head greenkeeping team. W Thompson said that again this should be looked at as part of the overall staffing costs for Carnoustie Golf Links.

W Thompson asked about using the website more to publicise environmental activities. C Boath said that the environmental report was on the website at the moment but was possibly difficult to locate. G Duncan said the whole website was being redone and this was an opportunity to place the environmental information in a more appropriate location.

Meeting closed at 11.00am.