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**Draft Minutes of the CGLMC Ltd Greens & Environment Meeting Held in the Training Room, Greenkeeping Sheds on Tuesday 10th May 2022**

**Present:**

K Daly (Convenor), R Wardlaw, S Duncan.

**In Attendance:**

C Boath (Links Superintendent), K Stott (Courses Manager), M Wells (Chief Executive), R Windows (R&A Agronomist).

Meeting began at 1500 hours.

**1. Apologies**

C Yule (Chairman), I Frier, L Gordon, A McArtney

**2. Declaration of Interest**

None

**3. Introduction**

Links Superintendent welcomed everyone and introduced Richard Windows (R&A Agronomist) to the Committee. Richard had completed a course walk with the greenkeeping team earlier in the day and intended to discuss his findings with the committee further in the meeting.

**4. Links Superintendent Report**

The Links Superintendent noted that spring this year has been very cold and dry, providing extra difficulties for the greenkeeping team in regard to the growth of newly lain turf and trying to delay the play of golf during the frosty mornings.

The Courses Manager noted the course is in the middle of a species change. He reiterated this has been the coldest and driest spring in his career at Carnoustie, the course was very close to a closure at the end of April due to frost which is not something expected in spring.

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The Courses Manager continued that due to the late frost, we are now only starting to see the beginnings of this year’s growth. The Senior Team have been working together to consider how to make the most of the conditions and requesting patience from players.

The Links Superintendent confirmed that the Greenkeeping team is almost back to pre-covid staffing levels with three greenkeepers having started in April, and the anticipated start of three greenkeeping apprentices in June.

The Links Superintendent shared the exciting news that current apprentice, Ross Crosbie, will be the first Carnoustie employee to benefit in an exchange programme with Pinehurst Resort in North Carolina, thanks to our partnership with John Deere. Ross will travel over at the end of May for a 3-week period, after which CGL will play host to Pinehurst’s Kevin Robinson during the month of July. This is a fantastic opportunity for the greenkeeping team and is anticipated to become an annual occurrence.

A trustee enquired as to how the new turf is looking on the Buddon. The Links Superintendent confirmed all is looking well, albeit the harsh weather conditions, and it is hoped that play will resume on the 15th & 16th from the end of May. Play on the 17th will unfortunately still be some time away.

**5. Richard Windows R&A Visit**

R Windows opened with a brief introduction of his work with all The Open venue courses. He explained that Carnoustie is one of 12 courses to record data monthly such as surface firmness, soil labs and moisture content. This data is compiled in an annual report which allows to chart progress and promote a ‘culture of learning’ between the courses.

R Windows was very complimentary of the work done on the course since the 2021 AIG Women’s Open, he was pleased to report that our fescue content (on the greens) is now sitting at 60%.

R Windows discussed the ongoing difficulty to source sand, and the increasing cost implications. He gave suggestions of how we may overcome this for the future. Accessing supply closer to Carnoustie is a main priority, which would also benefit our environment impact compared to shipping from round the UK. Monifieth and Panmure Golf Course currently harvest sand on site, the hope is Carnoustie Golf Links could one day do this too by forging a mutually beneficial working partnership with the MOD; CGL providing an ecological habitat within the MOD land in exchange for sand. The Chief Executive confirmed the idea has been discussed before with the MOD but will be revisited.

The Courses Manager stated the current policy for frost and rested greens was greatly benefiting the course. R Windows mentioned that Carnoustie Golf Links have been trend setters in our frost/rested green policy as other courses are now following suit.

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R Windows gave an insight to The R&A’s 5-year plan to explore how sustainable golf is, with the hope of proving that golf can be proven to benefit the environment. At the time of the sub-committee meeting, Dr Bob Taylor and Sophie Olenjnik (R&A Ecologists) were conducting a wildlife survey to gain an insight to the diversity of species on the course. The Links Superintendent confirmed Bob and Sophie will return to the August sub-committee meeting to report their findings. R Windows also spoke about The R&A exploring the affect of carbon being locked up in golf courses. This again, is being studied as part of a long-term data collection. The R&A hope to be able to publish findings in the next 2-3 years however the initial findings are very positive.

**6. Practice Facilities & Buddon Redevelopment**

It was agreed that another meeting will be rescheduled to discuss the future planning of practice facilities and Buddon redevelopment. Potential dates for a meeting will be communicated to the Greens & Environment sub-committee in due course.

**7. Any Other Competent Business**

A trustee raised a query after witnessing guests putting on the chipping green near the Nestie, the trustee questioned if signage would assist guests in using the correct practise areas. The Links Superintendent noted this and will have signage made.

After a question from a trustee regarding the Buddon redevelopment plans, the Chief Executive suggested it may be a benefit to the committee to have Martin Ebert attend a Greens meeting to provide an insight to the plans from a course architect point of view. This will be looked at.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 1600 hours.