

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL**Environment, Enterprise & Infrastructure Committee****8 November 2017****NORTH INCH GOLF COURSE ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17****Report by Director (Environment)****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report brings forward the North Inch Golf Course Annual Report 2016/17, based on the previously approved Business Plan.

1. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 In March 2016, the Environment Committee approved the North Inch Golf Course – Business Plan (Report 16/141 refers). The Business Plan was developed in order to deliver an improving service that reflects the demands of its users while providing Best Value.
- 1.2 The North Inch Golf Course Business Plan primarily focuses on retaining and strengthening the relationship with existing users through continuous consultation. This is to ensure that the golf course remains both affordable, accessible and enjoyable to play, while adding further value through season tickets.
- 1.3 It also emphasises the need to gain new customers by raising awareness of the North Inch Golf Course within the catchment area, as well as targeting the Perthshire visitor market.
- 1.4 Over the 6 year period, it sets out an action plan for both promoting and developing the course. This is with a view to improving the users' perception of the course, reducing the operating deficit and aspiring to achieve full cost recovery.
- 1.5 In terms of delivering these objectives, the aim of the North Inch Golf Course is to provide a well maintained, accessible and affordable golf facility. Promoting a family centred, healthy lifestyle in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere, the focus of the business plan is on the following core areas of:
 - Golf course maintenance
 - Attracting and retaining season ticket holders
 - Visitor golfers
 - Partnerships and outreach
 - Creating new golfers – ladies, gents & juniors
- 1.6 For each of these core areas, Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were developed to determine whether the objectives are on track.

- 1.7 Golf in Scotland finds itself at a crossroads. In the last decade, the number of adult playing members has decreased significantly to below 200,000 members, offset by an estimated 750,000 non-members who play the game in Scotland every year.
- 1.8 In addition, almost 90% of registered members are age 35 or over, with the majority of members between the age of 55 and 74.
- 1.9 Golf in Scotland requires a new direction to provide greater opportunity for investment and growth to support clubs and players at all levels. Recent years has seen ever decreasing resources being invested in golf in Scotland from membership affiliation income, commercial revenue and funding partners. Scottish Golf have developed a draft Scottish Golf Strategy which they hope will be approved at a Special General Meeting on 2 December 2017.
- 1.10 Already, the recent merger of the Scottish Golf Union and Scottish Ladies' Golfing Association has given Scottish Golf a platform on which to undertake the next phase of the modernisation programme. This includes significant growth in revenue generating investment to deliver the following by 2022.
- 1.11 The new Scottish golf strategy is intended to deliver:
- **Strong clubs at the heart of the community.**
 - Perth and Kinross Council is working with North Inch Golf Course User Group and Perth Artisan Golf Club with the outlook to potentially move the operation of the golf course to the Perth Artisan Clubhouse, located next to the second tee of the golf course. This would become a shared facility that all golfers could make use of. The clubhouse would afford a meeting space that our users could utilise before and after play to socialise. This space would also be used for our junior and beginner golfer groups.
 - **Growth in participation leading to a growth in club membership.**
 - North Inch Golf Course has grown its junior golf membership from only 5, to almost 70 during the past 2 years. We hold weekly coaching sessions for our young golfers along with Easter and Summer golf camps. We have also introduced a 'Young Adult' category of membership to attract the under represented 19 to 29 year old player. Over a 2 year period, we have increased our overall membership by 117 (66%).
 - **Winning golfers at all levels of the game.**
 - We are running beginner ladies golf sessions every second Monday at the golf course. This is being run in conjunction with Perth Ladies Golf Club in an effort to bring more women to the game. We also see this as a great way to bring the entire family to golf. This will help nurture our new golfers into potential competitive players in the future. We run a 'Golf Memories' project in conjunction with Alzheimer Scotland. Golf Memories gives dementia sufferers the opportunity to play the game they previously

enjoyed but had to give up. Our group feel achievement through their play and are competitive in our weekly putting competition.

- **Scotland playing a leading role in the development of golf.**
 - With the Solheim Cup coming to Gleneagles in 2019, we are working in conjunction with North Inch Golf User Group, making plans to grow and develop golf on the North Inch. This is a great opportunity for us to benefit from the profile that Perthshire golf will have as a result of the event. As the only public municipal golf course in Perth and Kinross, we plan to develop the game by taking North Inch golf to the local community.
- **The largest network of non-member and international golfers in the world**
 - North Inch Golf Course is a member of 'Golf Perthshire' which is a joint marketing group made up of Perthshire Golf Clubs, accommodation providers and visitor attractions. For 2018 and beyond, Perthshire is to be marketed as the most 'family friendly' golf destination in Scotland. Every golf club in the county has agreed to offer discounted family green fee tickets and at North Inch we add to this by offering free golf club hire for both adults and juniors.
- **Greater sustainable revenues generated with a target of £4m per annum additional income by 2022**
 - In 2016/17, North Inch Golf Course achieved a 38% increase in revenues. Our income grew from £60,494 in 2015/16 to £83,623, an increase of £23,129.
- **Greater sustainable investment in clubs, club members and areas & counties as outlined**
 - In an effort to create a sustainable future for the golf course and to maximise revenues, we have introduced a 9 hole FootGolf Course at North Inch. FootGolf is played by kicking a regular sized football into an oversized hole. FootGolf is great fun for all the family to play and has helped us bring new people to the golf course and has generated an additional income stream. We are currently looking at the opportunity of adding a croquet court, which could be managed by the golf course.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 In order to keep the Committee informed of progress against the business plan, it was agreed that annual reports be brought before the Committee in September each year, covering the preceding financial year. Due to the timescales involved in collating end of year information, it is deemed more practical to provide the annual report in November. The annual report for 2016/17 highlights performance against the Key Performance Indicators contained in the business plan, including membership levels, visitor rounds and actual income against the financial projections.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The implementation of the North Inch Golf Course Business Plan has seen increased levels of income along with positive reviews of the North Inch Golf Course.
- 3.2 It is recommended that the Committee:
- i. notes the North Inch Golf Course Annual Report 2016/17
 - ii. requests that the Director (Environment) submits the 2017/18 Annual Report to a future Environment, Enterprise & Infrastructure Committee.

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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	None
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	Yes
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	Yes
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

1.1 This section sets out how the proposals relate to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement in terms of the following 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
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

1.2 This report relates to (i) to (v) above by providing a well maintained, accessible and affordable golf facility. Promoting a family centred, healthy lifestyle in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

Corporate Plan

1.3 This section sets out how the proposals relate to the achievement 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.

1.4 This report relates to (i) to (v) above by providing a well maintained, accessible and affordable golf facility. Promoting a family centred, healthy lifestyle in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

2.1 There are no resource implications arising from the report outwit the existing budget for the North Inch Golf Course.

Workforce

2.2 There are no workforce implications arising from the report.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

2.3 The proposals in this report have no asset management implications.

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.

3.2 Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allow the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.

3.3 The function, policy, procedure or strategy presented in the Perth and Kinross Waste Management Plan 2010-2025 report was considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

- Assessed as relevant for the purposes of EqIA, with a positive impact,
 - that retention of the North Inch Golf Course supports less mobile
 - golfers, due to the Course's relatively short distance and flat
 - topography.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.4 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

- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 The proposals have been assessed in terms of the requirements to manage the Council's Greenspace assets in a sustainable long term way.

Legal and Governance

- 3.7 The Head of Legal and Governance and the Head of Democratic Services have been consulted on the content of this report.

Risk

- 3.8 The business plan will be subject to influences from the wider golf market.

4. CONSULTATION

Internal

- 4.1 The Head of Legal and Governance, the Head of Democratic Services and the Head of Finance have been consulted on the content of this report.

External

- 4.2 The North Inch Golf Course User group have been consulted.

5. COMMUNICATION

- 5.1 The Annual Report will be communicated to the North Inch Golf Clubs and Users.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

2.1 The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above Report; (list papers concerned).

- Report to the Environment Committee in March 2016 entitled North Inch Golf Course – Business Plan (Report Number 16/141)

3. APPENDICES

3.1 Appendix 1: North Inch Golf Course Performance Summary Report 2016/17

3.2 Appendix 2: North Inch Golf Course Annual Report 2016/17

2016/17 Performance Summary Report



Total Income ▲ **38%** ▲ **£23,129 vs 15/16**
 £83,623 in 2016/17 vs £60,494 in 2015/16

User Satisfaction

7% increase



85% of Users are happy
with the golf course condition

Volunteer Hours

100% increase



796 volunteer hours
recorded on 2016/17

Visitor Rounds Played

14% increase



3255 visitor rounds of golf played

New Golfers

63% over target



49 new golfer created against a
target of 30

**Securing the Future Awards
2017 Gold winner**



Category 6 - Improving Efficiency & Quality

Core Area - 1	<i>Golf Course Maintenance</i>
Strategy Statement	
<p>We will aim to continue to deliver a golf course in the condition desired by our users, with focus on great greens. We have a long-established course that is enjoyed by season ticket holders and visitors alike thus our aim is to remain, primarily, a relaxing and enjoyable course layout.</p>	
SMART Objectives	
<i>SPECIFIC – MEASUREABLE – ACHIEVABLE – REALISTIC - TIMED</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Increase communication on course maintenance works with users. (2 x per calendar month).</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A regular email newsletter is being sent out to our database of users. • <i>Promote user engagement in course management through volunteer days</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 796 volunteer hours recorded in 2016/17 • <i>Complete drainage project on 7th, 11th and 12th holes by 31st March 2016.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Completed • <i>We will maintain an 80% or higher membership satisfaction level with the golf course overall during our annual survey.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2016/17 user survey produced 85% satisfaction. • <i>Prepare 2016 Season course maintenance/improvement programme by 31st March 2016.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Completed 	
Initiatives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish schedule of maintenance works including; frequency of mowing, frequency of top-dressing, aeration, frequency of bunker-raking, etc. • Work with maintenance contractor to devise maintenance improvement plan including short-term turf improvement works (drainage, thatch removal, etc.) • Undertake annual membership and visitor survey • Engage qualitative feedback from specific user-types (e.g. men, ladies, seniors, juniors, low and high handicap and social golfers) via focus groups 	
KPI and Responsibility	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KPI - User Satisfaction to remain at 80% or higher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2016/17 User satisfaction of 85% in relation to the conditions of the golf course. 	

Core Area - 2	<i>Attracting & Retaining Season Ticket Holders</i>
Strategy Statements	
<i>To create a friendly, accessible and affordable environment for our Season Ticket Holders to enjoy.</i>	
SMART Objectives	
<i>SPECIFIC – MEASUREABLE – ACHIEVABLE – REALISTIC - TIMED</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Number of Season Ticket Holders to increase year on year for the next 6 years.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Season ticket numbers increased from 274 to 292 in 2016/17</i> • <i>Regular comparison of other local golf courses charges to ensure correct market positioning.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Compared annually when setting our prices for year ahead.</i> • <i>We will achieve a Season Ticket Holder satisfaction score of at least 80% annually</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>In our 2016/17 survey, 91% of our season ticket holders were happy to recommend the golf course to a friend.</i> 	
Initiatives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organised 3 membership Open days in April, May and June 2016. • Continue with 'Get into Golf' initiative to help attract new adult golfers with a special membership category created which includes free coaching. • Continue with 'ClubGolf' junior golf programme, specifically targeting local schools with weekly Wednesday evening junior coaching sessions run from May till end September. • Bi-Weekly ladies Monday evening beginner coaching sessions run May to end September in conjunction with Perth Ladies Golf Club. • Create marketing materials with Design team • New membership categories have been added to attract new players to the golf course. These include, Young Adult (18-29yrs), Get into Golf and Family membership. 	
KPI & Responsibility	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KPI - Increase Season Ticket holders by 50 across all categories in each of the next 6 years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase of 18 season ticket holders in 2016/17, although this is less than the target number, an increase in the number of higher value season ticket types resulted in a £20,000 increase in revenue on 2015/16. We have signed 117 new season ticket holders over a 2 year period. This is an increase of 66% against an overall Scottish golf club membership drop of 3% over the same period. 	

Core Area - 3	<i>Visitor Golfers</i>
Strategy Statements	
<i>Visitor income is an important part of our financial model and we seek to maximise this revenue.</i>	
SMART Objectives	
<i>SPECIFIC – MEASUREABLE – ACHIEVABLE – REALISTIC - TIMED</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to increase visitor green-fee revenue for each of the next 6 years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2016/17 visitor income increased 13% to £33,414 from £29,489. • We will continue to grow our advance party bookings each year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ These continue to grow and we are now working with Bells Sports Centre to provide catering options for our visiting groups. We are marketing our group packages with national online press. • We will achieve an overall visitor satisfaction score of 80% annually <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2016/17 satisfactions score was 85%, up by 7% from 78% in 2015/16. 	
Initiatives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have 817 facebook followers with whom we interact daily. We also now have a new youtube channel with golf course videos. • News items are uploaded each week and website content is updated regularly. • Price brackets have been established for off peak times from 11am-2pm and after 5.30pm. A group price has also been set for 8 or more players. • Link with online tee-time-services. Our online booking system now integrates with Teeofftimes.co.uk and golfnow.com • Golfers can book and pay for golf online via a third party provider (worldpay). • Promote our free golf club hire to potential users via our website and social media platforms. 	
KPI and Responsibility	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KPI - Increase number of visitor rounds by 18% in each of next 6 years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2016/17 we recorded 3255 visitor rounds of golf, an increase of 14% over 2015/16. 	

Core Area - 4

Partnerships & Outreach

Strategy Statement

Partner with local businesses and community/volunteer groups in an effort to promote the North Inch Golf Course and the Ryder Cup Legacy

SMART Objectives

SPECIFIC – MEASUREABLE – ACHIEVABLE – REALISTIC – TIMED

- Increase number of volunteer days Year on Year
 - **We recorded 796 volunteer hours in 2016/17, up from 393 in 2015/16.**
- Grow the number of partner accommodation providers year on year
 - **Through 'Golf Perthshire', we are now working with a number of local accommodation providers.**
- Grow the number of Outreach groups we work with
 - **We are working with our Golf memories group and Perthshire Rugby Club youth development squad and North Inch Golf Course User Group.**

Initiatives

- Online booking is now available for local accommodation providers to use. This allows them to book tee times for clients without contacting the golf course.
- Volunteer group has been undertaking more tasks with a number having been trained in the use of strimmers and hedge trimmers.
- 'Golf Memories' project in conjunction with Alzheimer Scotland. This group is going from strength to strength with around 15 attending each week plus 8 volunteers. This group allows dementia sufferers get the chance to play some golf and socialise with each other.

KPI and Responsibility

- **KPI – Work with 3 outreach groups and support 30+ volunteer days each year**
 - **In 2016/17 we worked with 3 groups and supported 59 volunteer days and 796 volunteer hours.**

Core Area - 5	<i>Creating New Golfers – Ladies, Gent's and Juniors</i>
Strategy Statement	
To become a leader in the creation of new golfers in Perth & Kinross. Encouraging a family inclusive activity, that is both accessible and affordable.	
SMART Objectives	
<i>SPECIFIC – MEASUREABLE – ACHIEVABLE – REALISTIC – TIMED</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow the number of new adult lady golfers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We have 12 ladies attending our Monday evening sessions • Grow the number of new adult male golfers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We have 10 new men attending our Get into Golf sessions • Grow the number of boys and girls learning golf <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We now have 61 junior season ticket holders and have 20-25 attend our weekly Wednesday coaching sessions. 	
Initiatives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise Lady only taster golf sessions held every second Monday May to September • Weekly junior sessions held every Wednesday May to September • Golf 'taster' sessions held with local primary schools in May each year. • Continue to grow our 'Get into Golf' adult beginner sessions • Continue to develop and grow usage of the 6 hole short course. This is used for the Ladies and Junior sessions weekly. We also use the short course for our Junior Easter and Summer golf camps. • Set up and drive usage of a 'Footgolf' Course which has generated an income of £3538 in 2016/17. 	
KPI and Responsibility	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KPI – Create 30 new golfers across all categories, each year for the next 6 years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In 2016/17 we introduced 49 new people to the game of golf. 	

KPI - PERFORMANCE

To know if we are progressing our Business Plan we need to keep score for each of our *Core Areas*. These are our business Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) - the things that will determine whether our *SMART Objectives* on track to being achieved:

<i>Core Area</i>	<i>Primary KPI</i>	2016/17 Target	2016/17 Actual
Golf Course Maintenance	User Rating	80%+	85%
Attracting and retaining season ticket holders	No. of Season Ticket Holders	319	292
Visitor Golfers	Visitor Numbers	2835	3224
Partnerships & Outreach	No. Outreach Groups	3	3
	No. of Volunteer Days	30	59
Creating New Golfers	No. of New golfers	30	49

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Through the implementation of the business plan, we aim to increase revenues and reduce the subsidy in relation to the golf course over the next 6 years. We aim to reach a level where the operation of the golf course reduces the net expenditure to the Council to below £40,000 per annum (the cost required to maintain the golf course as parkland). If the projections that are contained in the Business Plan are met, it is forecast that this would reduce the Council's net expenditure to £40,000 by 2021/22.

<i>Income Stream</i>	2016/17 Target	2016/17 Actual
Season Tickets	£46,479	£44,727
Daily Green Fees	£29,500	£33,414
Sale of Goods	£3000	£1944
Footgolf	£0	£3538
Total Income	£78,979	£83,623