

29 March 2017

Dear Trustees

This letter is not meant to cause upset however I really feel as though the voices of the 7 greenkeepers are not being heard – it is our job to be that voice in the absence of anyone meeting with them. I feel that I had no choice but to write to you as when I ask questions of Dundee City Council and Leisure and Culture, I am met with nothing but silence.

I thought it important to give you a factual summary of where we are with the proposed transfer.

L&CD management have stated that they are now simply enacting the wishes of the board with progressing with the privatisation of the greenkeepers – this is why I am writing to you today as it seems you are the decision makers, however I believe that you made the decision in good faith based on the information you received.

The paper that you passed referred to a STRI report that was out of date. There have been further, subsequent reports which paint a much more favourable light of the way in which the golf courses are maintained. I have asked the chief executive Stewart Murdoch why the less favourable report was quoted in the report and am yet to receive an answer.

The paper also referred to ongoing consultation with the trade unions and the golf clubs. I have asked for formal minutes from the meetings with my predecessor and his predecessor in GMB and none have been produced. In my last letter I stated that I did not believe meaningful consultation has taken place with the trade unions – I believe that this is demonstrable in the absence of formal minutes.

The meeting that was held with the greenkeepers on the 15th November did advise that market testing would take place – none of them were clear that this may lead to privatisation. Again, we do not believe that meaningful consultation has occurred.

No reason has been given for the transfer.

ID Verde have confirmed that they will not make any improvements to the courses. They will work with the same men, the same equipment and may employ an apprentice. Vacancies have not been adequately advertised by L&CD.

ID Verde will apply to the Tayside Pensions Board after the transfer. A leading member of Dundee City Council (who is also on both boards) agreed that access to the pension fund cannot be guaranteed.

GMB SCOTLAND – PROTECTING YOU AT WORK

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ID Verde would not make a commitment in writing that existing terms and conditions would be guaranteed in the future.

I would also have to ask the elected members at the very least to meet with and speak to our members to show that you are accountable - it is really concerning to us as a trade union that there has been no communication from you to constituents and members of leisure and culture to at least advise your opposition, or indeed agreement to privatisation – Dundee did not vote ‘yes’ for privatisation of public services.

In terms of accountability there is no reference to the possible privatisation of any section of L&CD in the minutes that are available on the website.

To my knowledge there has been no consultation with any paying members of L&CD around this privatisation and indeed, as a result of there being no reason for the transfer, it seems as though all this exercise will serve is to allow taxpayers money to go to the profits of a private sector company, one of which we have no idea of the taxation history of.

This is a very brief synopsis of where we currently are. I ask the board to please reconsider condemning these very loyal workers to an uncertain future, some of whom are close to retirement after 40 years of service to the council, some with very young families but still with over 15 years service. I urge you to talk to them.

Yours fraternally

Helen Meldrum

Regional Organiser

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