

Continued from page 11

their courses, for it they do not then the Private Sector will take these over in due course with the result of Compulsory Competitive Tendering.

At the moment under the new legislation it is compulsory for all Local Authorities to expose leisure management, bars and catering and grounds maintenance to tender, and the dangers here are the

Private Sector will possibly take control of the grounds maintenance of some courses. I hear some Authorities saying that they welcome this but, as we all know, the maintenance of a Golf Course is not only a job but a hobby as well to dedicated Greenkeepers, and when Golf Course maintenance becomes a commercial issue then there is the danger that the specification

could suffer and investments which have been made in the Course over the past years could go overnight.

Having said this, there are a lot of Municipal Courses which will benefit from CCT especially those where maintenance in the past has been sadly lacking and it is these courses, I believe, that the Private Sector will be trying to win.

Having given my broad

views on the future of Municipal Golf, and to the future, I would welcome any comments from readers as to their views as I have only touched on some of the nerve ends which need debating and would welcome greater debate through this magazine.

PETER KIRKHAM
Assistant Director of
Recreation, Welwyn
Hatfield Council

THERE are three areas of legislation which may affect Municipal Golf Clubs. Managing sports and leisure activities, grounds maintenance and catering.

The local authority has discretion over letting these functions as a separate contract or including them all in the sports and leisure contract.

Some authorities will consider letting the management of golf courses (including any combination of the three functions) as a separate contract or including it in a much larger contract covering other activities e.g. sports centres, swimming pools etc.

Different authorities will take different approaches.

The Contract Process

Local authorities may only carry out work contained within the Act if the following conditions have been met.

(a) The authority must publish a notice, before carrying out any of the work contained within the Act, in at least one local newspaper and one trade journal containing a brief description of the work, details for inspecting or purchasing the specification and a statement that the authority intends to make an invitation to carry out the work.

(b) The periods, place, time and charge specified in the notice are reasonable and the authority has made a detailed specification of work available before carrying the work and that the specification includes a statement of the contract period.

(c) There must be at least three bids invited from the private sector if sufficient interest is shown.

(d) If the local authority wishes to carry out the work itself, a written tender must also be submitted.

(e) The authority must not act in a manner which is anti-competitive.

(f) In carrying out the work, the authority must comply with the specification of work it has produced.

The Specification

The specification is a very detailed document giving information and setting standards on every aspect of the service provided. If the specification is perfect and the contractor adheres to it, the customer using the service should not be able to detect any difference in the service, whoever is carrying out the work.

The specification for managing sports and leisure facilities might cover the following areas:

Description of area, description of service, changes in policy, improvements/expansion of the service, pricing, monitoring of performance, financial records, management information, sponsorship, purchasing, stationery, management, staffing levels, staffing qualifications/validity and experience, standards of dress/uniform, training, opening hours, programming, booking system, marketing, advertising, security, upkeep of facilities.

Action for Clubs

This note is not necessarily exhaustive, but is intended to act as a reminder, or checklist, of issues which clubs based on municipal golf courses should discuss with their local authority. Remember, if anything is not included in the specification, the person or company who wins the contract is under no obligation to provide it.

In this article we examine the myriad of ways in which Government legislation could affect the running of municipal golf courses. Thanks for the information goes to the National Association of Public Golf Courses.

Because of the financial objectives which have to be met, anything outside of the specification will be the subject of a variation order which could be expensive

(a) Seek an early meeting with officers of your council's Leisure Services or Recreation Department to discuss the club's position in relation to competitive tendering and, in particular, the specification.

(b) Find out how the local authority intends to package the contracts and what the timescale for going out to tender will be.

(c) It is likely that the local authority will be taking the opportunity to review its policy and operation. Find out if this is the case, what is under review, how it will affect the club and how you can help in that process.

(d) Is the local authority view on charging likely to remain the same? What about season tickets? Any price concessions for club members? What about other charges – lockers, hire of equipment etc? Are juniors protected?

(e) Has the club any arrangement to book the first tee for competitions? If so, are the arrangements included in the specification? Is there a difference between regular arrangements (e.g. twice a month for competitions) and special occasions (e.g. Cap-

tain's Day)? Are they also protected?

(f) What are the booking arrangements? Will they remain the same? How much notice will be given for regular bookings and special occasions?

(g) Is there a formal route for consultation between the club and the local authority. If not, use this opportunity to establish one. Don't appear to be in the position of always asking for something. Your expertise may help the local authority in preparing a specification or monitoring the contractor's performance.

(h) Are there rules about priority on the first tee? More than one starting point? Competitions having priority etc? Often these rules are not written down, but in future they may need to be.

(i) What arrangements does the club have for visiting players or teams in competitions (concessions, priority bookings etc.)? Make sure that they are protected in the specification.

(j) Have NAPGC competitions been considered? If there are existing arrangements, are they included in the specification? What about future possibilities – hosting the NAPGC Open?

(k) Does the club have any arrangements for catering (for visiting teams, for example)? Are the arrangements protected?

(l) Does the club have any arrangement for use of any part of the clubhouse either permanently or for special occasions? Office space, storage space or use for social events are examples. Make sure that your use is protected in the specification.

Continued on page 15

FOCUS ON LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Continued from page 13

(m) Does the club have any notice-boards, trophy cabinets, honours boards, displays of photographs etc? Is the right to continue them protected?

(n) Is there any relationship between the club and the Professional? Find out whether the Professional's terms are to be altered and how they will be considered under a contract. Will the Professional be contracted to the council outside the management contract or will it be left to the discretion of the Contractor?

(o) Are the proposed course opening hours any different? Who will decide whether the course is fit for play?

(p) Does the club have the right to have fund-raising events (prize draws etc)? Is that right protected?

(q) Do the council's staff at the Golf club carry out any administrative functions for the club? Can they be detailed and included in the specification?

(r) What are the insurance responsibilities of the club and the council? Will they be affected?

(s) What are the council's rules about sponsorship and will they be written into the specification? How does this affect sponsorship for club competitions?

(t) Finally, has the club considered submitting a tender? Discuss the possibility with the local authority.

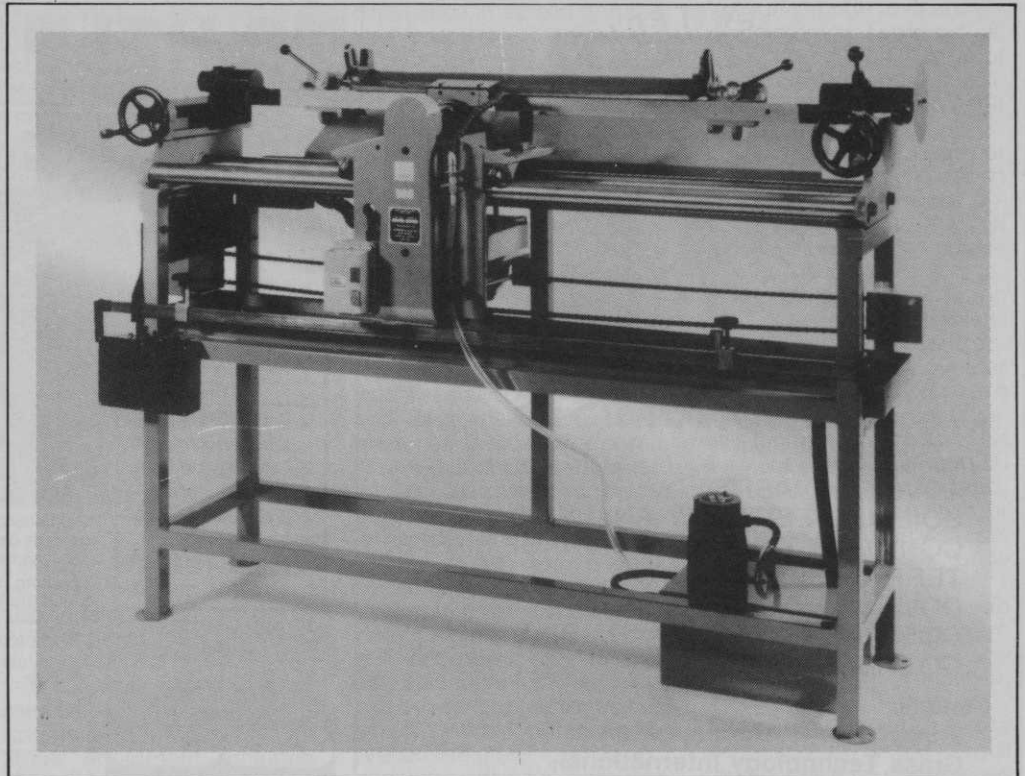
There are bound to be other issues to be considered because every arrangement is different at the moment. Perhaps you could use these notes as a basis for a brainstorming session at your own club Committee meeting and other ideas may crop up.

HAULER (EUROPE) LTD

THE U.K. manufactured Hauler AT500 is an economical load carrying all terrain vehicle that is easy to manoeuvre in tight spaces.

The high flotation tyres minimise compaction, enabling many tasks to be carried out without damage to the land. The AT500 can take a range of turf-care equipment and trailers, in addition to being capable of moving a wide range of boats or caravans around suitable sites.

Both 18 horsepower petrol and 15 horsepower diesel engined versions are available. The range of options include a cab, full lighting kit, and hydraulic tipping. Mesh cages suitable for transporting stock or leaf and litter collection can also be supplied.



The Atterton Anglemaster

ATTERTON & Ellis offers a range of machines to sharpen all sizes of cylinders and bottom blades.

The "Master" cylinder grinding machine is designed for sharpening large quantities of heavy duty cylinders and is suitable for machines having up to 106cm (42in) cutting width.

The company's "Express Dual" cylinder grinding machine is capable of both "in-situ" or plain cylinder grinding on a wide range of lawnmowers. When used "in-situ", the complete mower is located centrally on the machine and locked into place, the grinding cycle taking place without the usual 'strip-down' of the mower. Separate cylinder grinding may also be undertaken when the busy periods are over and the mower requires a 'full' service. Bottom blades have to be removed for separate grinding.

A "Public Authority" version of the Express Dual is available featuring a heavy duty mains electric motor.

A "Professional" kit to enable "in-situ" sharpening of a wider range of cutting units is also available at extra cost.

The "Pilot" plain cylinder grinding machine is produced to meet the needs of the smaller workshop - say 5 to 10 medium sized mowers and incorporates the essential features of the other machines, but without the high capital outlay.

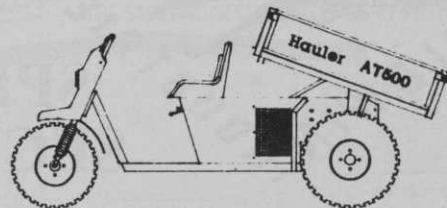
Arranged for bench fixing, the "Pilot" features the "Easitru" system of setting up

which combines accuracy with simple mounting.

Continued on page 17



THE HAULER A T 500



- VERSATILE with HIGH FLOTATION TYRES and GOOD MANOEUVRABILITY
- TOUGH - STEEL Box Section CHASSIS AND STEEL BED with REMOVABLE DROP SIDES
- PETROL and DIESEL ENGINE VERSIONS
- RANGE of OPTIONS including CAB and HYDRAULIC TIPPING
- RANGE of TRAILERS

For further information visit us at
The G.M.A. Stand 1212
or contact: Hauler (Europe) Ltd
4 Chapel Street, Stafford, ST16 2BX
Tel: 0785 213338. Fax: 0785 55002