

Minutes of Arscott Golf Club Board Meeting
Monday 29th April 2019 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Nick Jones (Chair) Claire Evans
John Simpson Chris Brace
Geoff Harding Trish Harding
Paul Buckley Keith Morris (Seniors' Captain)
Paul Owen (Men's Captain)
Jacqui Mullineux (Ladies' Captain)
Dave Wallace (minutes)

1. Apologies

None.

2. Declaration of Any Other Urgent Business

GH: Update on Golf Mark application.

3. Declaration of Interests

None.

4. Minutes of Last Meeting

a) The Minutes were received and confirmed as a correct record. DW confirmed that these and the minutes of previous meetings could be published on the Club's website;

b) Matters Arising:

None.

5. Reports from Directors

a) Managing Director

First tee: NJ had obtained a further quotation for the improvement of the area around the first tee – a mid-range figure. He thought that there might be scope for the Club to do some of the preparatory work itself to reduce costs.

Tee signs: The proposed sponsorship packages for the tee signs had been firmed up – Gold for 1st and 17th tees (£750 for 2 years), Silver (£600), and Bronze (£500). Where the tee locations were split, there would be a signboard and a single post.

GH raised the idea for an overall Club sponsor, with the name displayed at the Club entrances and on the website. NJ thought that there was scope for a wall and gateway on the Pound Lane entrance (subject to any necessary permissions) – for discussion on another occasion.

Meeting with England Golf – update under Marketing and PR.

b) Finance and IT

TH had circulated a spreadsheet showing actual and projected monthly income and expenditure prior to the meeting. There had been an increase in membership fees due to the seasonal offers being taken up, with membership now standing at 319.

The fine weather had also increased green fees, bar sales and food sales. Clubhouse hours had been extended, reflected in staffing costs.

Course and clubhouse expenses were as expected for this time of year but the next month would show an increase in course costs with machinery repairs, a 9 month bill for the coffee machine, a new fridge freezer and also a substantial bill for the wood pellets.

The scope for expenditure on improvements should be clearer by late May. NJ commented that the old Social Committee had been a good way of increasing income via social and musical events. PO and JM referred to a planned joint golf and barbecue event on 13th August. NJ stressed the scope for use of social media to promote the Club and events. CB referred to the Clubhouse information webpage set up by Josh.

NJ and TH had submitted an application to Shropshire Council for social enterprise relief on the rates bill - outcome within the next few weeks.

TH reported on the position regarding a replacement credit provider for membership fees, with Zebra no longer offering this service, with the recommendation that **the Club uses Orchard Funding this year as the terms will suit both member and club – Agreed.**

c) Business Compliance

JS had met with Josh – procedures for raising and signing off orders etc were all in order. There was a need for improved security arrangements for some elements of the Clubhouse – **Agreed: JS to action.**

d) House

CB had circulated a report prior to the meeting, summarising further improvements over the last month (including replacement of fridge freezer), staffing matters, and the need for action relating to the gas cooker/isolation valve. **Agreed: identified gas issues to be rectified, with cooker also to be serviced.** NJ to discuss costs with Martin.

CB reported on success with outside events and compliments on the quality of food on offer now. The planned review of security would be complete for the next meeting of the Board.

e) Course

GH had circulated a note relating to a Greens Committee meeting held on 24th April and covering issues relating to drainage and irrigation, the annual plan for the greens, additional sand for some bunkers, a further working party for the strimming of the banks in the Fox Holes, and ideas for planting of a spinney/special trees to commemorate Martin's legacy.

GH also reported on contact with the Council regarding signage of footpaths and bridleways crossing the course, and the possibility of a brown visitor promotional sign at the junction of Pound Lane with the main road. John Ecclestone had provided GH with some information regarding the provision of additional buggies

when required – quote awaited.

GH had drafted a 5 year strategic development plan for the course to bring to a future meeting.

f) Marketing and PR

Marketing Plan – Recruitment and Retention

CE had circulated a draft Marketing Plan (on agenda as separate item), setting out its purpose, the Golf Club's Mission Statement, key market research information from the members' survey, local housing growth potential, results on membership types from a free of charge 'Know Your Market' study by England Golf, target markets, suggested marketing and PR campaigns to capture the target markets, proposed key objectives and tactics for marketing/attracting new members and member retention, with actions.

The Board congratulated CE on the draft Plan. There was general agreement that implementation and management of the Plan was key. CE stressed the need for a budget e.g. for promotional literature, advertisements, professional photos etc. - perhaps £2,000, and TH referred to the need for a Marketing Sub-Group with volunteers (as agreed at the last meeting). **Agreed: CE to move forward with the Marketing Plan, drawing on information and help from Sian and Glyn as well as volunteers.**

g) Company Secretary

PB: the premises licence for the Clubhouse bar had been updated.

6. Health and Safety

An Accident Book is kept in the office – a recent incident involving one of the greenstaff should be recorded.

NJ commented that a fire drill had not yet taken place – CB: all staff have now been designated as fire wardens and given training, and signage was in place. **Action Agreed: Fire Drill to take place in next 10 days.**

7. Business Plan for Replacement of Greens Mower

GH had circulated a paper on the business case to upgrade greens machinery. In summary, there was a need for a new greens mower, with various options for securing a new machine. GH recommended leasing a new machine, with different types of machine to be trialled first (hydraulic/electronic/hybrid) – this was **agreed in principle, with GH to bring back costs.**

GH reported that he was also looking into having an iron/roller for the greens, which helps to extend the life of the mower and brings immediate improvement to the greens. The replacement of the surrounds mower could wait another year.

The Board congratulated GH on this work.

8. 2019/20 Annual Subscription

Members discussed options for the 2019/20 Annual Subscription. **The Board agreed in principle to leave the full subscription at £650 with £25 bar credit, keeping other categories the same** but, before making a final decision, members would take soundings, consider the financial implications of the Marketing Plan, and have regard to the final rates position (linked to outcomes of CASC application and application for Social Enterprise discretionary rate relief). On the question of retaining the bar credit at £25, with the other £25 going to the Club Improvement Fund, NJ commented that the Board should explain what the funds were being spent on.

KM raised a question regarding the disparity between the age limits for the Seniors' Section membership (60) and for the Seniors' subscription rate (65) – the Board considered that the question of the minimum age for Seniors' Section membership was a matter for the Seniors.

9. Next Members' Survey

The members agreed that there was a need to progress with the next stage of the survey and to start implementing priorities for improvements from the first survey. **Actions: CE to circulate draft questions, taken from the original questionnaire. Also, prize winner to be identified, and meal for two to be given to Tammy in thanks for her help.**

With regard to priorities for improvements, **the Board agreed that the Club should proceed a.s.a.p. with replacing the practice net**, potentially with Andrew levelling off the area (GH to obtain the digger). In the meantime GH would look at the existing net with Andrew to improve its condition for the Seniors Open. It was suggested that second hand astroturf might be available from Lilleshall National Sports Centre or the Sundorne Sports Village.

10. Feedback from Section Captains

The Captains had nothing to add.

11. Any Other Business

GolfMark application – GH had provided an email update to Board members. There had been progress on the main issues outstanding – marketing, role of the Professional, and safeguarding register, so the application was more or less ready to go. The CASC membership application could therefore proceed, with the website to be updated when done.

12. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Next meeting to be held on **Tuesday 4th June at 7 p.m.**