

Minutes of Arscott Golf Club Board Meeting (Virtual)
Wednesday 6th May 2020 at 11.00 a.m.

Present: Nick Jones (Chair) Paul Buckley
 Geoff Harding Chris Brace
 Trish Harding John Simpson
 Joe Rimmer (Seniors' Captain)
 Jacqui Mullineux (for Ladies' Captain)
 Dave Wallace (Club Captain/minutes)

1. Apologies

None.

2. Declaration of Any Other Urgent Business

As notified by the Managing Director, the meeting had a limited agenda linked to the discussion of the management of the Club in the context of the current Coronavirus pandemic.

3. Declaration of Interests

None.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous Directors only meeting held on 22nd April were confirmed as a correct record.

5. Finance

TH reported on progress:

- sufficient funds now to support anticipated costs for next 3 months – position will be helped if course opens and start generating income;
- diesel bill paid, but top dressing and Zipline needed for Course;
- furlough scheme process worked well – will continue on same basis for May unless Course opens, with just Sian coming in at the end of the month;
- Business Interruption loan had been applied for, but Government changed the criteria to £50,000+ and now introduced Bounce Back Loans of up to £50,000, with a simple application process. TH had applied and secured agreement for £30,000 – interest free for 1 year then 2.5% and no charges for early repayment. TH suggests retaining the loan funding over the winter in case it is another bad one;
- £2,500 flooding related Business Recovery Grant applied for via Shropshire Council but processing delayed by Coronavirus work;
- email sent to Shropshire Council thanking staff for their help.

NJ: should get some green fees income by July with course hopefully to open, but staff costs will also be incurred. NJ putting revised green fees on website – but will have to see if visitors allowed to play. Online booking system currently open, but for members only;

TH: changes to annual subscriptions – need to be transparent including regarding removal of bar tab. NJ: held back on putting in newsletter as wanted to wait until members were back playing. DW suggested asking the Men's Committee to propose

the removal of the bar tab, if helpful. JR: most members would be happy to support the Club, including paying early. NJ explained plans to provide free Golden Ticket for early payers. **Agreed: leave removal of bar tab as a decision of the Board along with streamlined categories/pricing/Golden Ticket, to be explained to members in June in the context of the financial position, noting Club still cheaper than anywhere else locally;**

JR and JM stressed thanks to Board for their hard work to keep the Club's finances in order.

6. **Re-Opening**

Course

NJ: reported on a PGA Webinar – advised that may be very busy when re-open, with interest from all sorts in playing. PB: marketing opportunity. JS: maybe 9 holes only initially to allow more on the course i.e. two separate 9 hole courses? NJ: depends if can have 2/3/4 balls and have to be careful with more players arriving/finishing at the same time. GH: and safety issues for greenkeepers who need to work round players.

NJ: need to be prepared for re-opening and possible surge of players a) if opening immediately or b) if in a week or two...communication with members key – Facebook, Twitter, Newsletter. PB: been looking at opening communications using more frequent newsletters.

TH: will need written risk assessments for each aspect of the running of the Club.

Action: each Director to write up for their areas of responsibility.

JS: if going to have a lot of visitors, then need to ensure that members get priority. GH/DW: maybe reserve times for members? NJ: tees will all have to be pre-booked and visitors will have to fit in round members.

JR: will Seniors still have time blocked out? NJ: Yes. GH/JR: can be sent their tee times in advance (not multi-tee starts). DW: could have two separate 9 hole courses for Seniors if 2 balls only allowed?

Use of practice facilities: putting green (**yes, as Glyn can marshall from Shop and parts of the green could be separated with tape**), practice nets (**not up yet, but yes could operate with social distancing**), practice ground (**no, as balls have to be collected**).

PB: generally, hazard tape could be used to indicate 2 metre distances and delineate corridors.

Other measures:

Players to change shoes in car park, arriving close to start time, having booked tees on-line.

Display laminated signs re no removal/touching of flagsticks.

No rakes in bunkers. GH: have 13 volunteers ready to work on the bunkers – aim to do before Course re-opens or on Monday if opening then. GH and JP will then just rake over daily.

Holes: shallow cups better than raised cups, if possible. GH to investigate.

Social golf only initially, in line with guidance, but to be kept under review.

Matchplays – maybe abandon for the year? DW to discuss with Men's Committee/Competition Secretaries.

GH: will do signs re social distancing and playing requirements.

PB will include information in newsletters.

JR: need to stress that players have to book before playing – could be issued with a ticket so that clear who can be on the course?

All players need to check in with Glyn so that can be informed of restrictions.

Steps on 7th tee: Close off? Sign to say need to wash hands/not touch face if touch handrails? Players need to take some responsibility for their actions.

Ball washers covered up.

Benches and litter bins to be removed.

DW: Help for Glyn? JR: could have volunteers as starters/marshals? Glyn could then organise a rota. **Action: Request volunteers through newsletter.**

PB: how to manage closure of course each day? NJ: Glyn to be there each day, with first tee at 7.30 a.m. but when to close – 6 p.m.? JR: depends on marshals' availability? Marshal could go round in buggy in the evening, including picking up any litter left (would need gloves)?

Need notices to tell players to take their litter home.

Buggy hire – yes, but one person per buggy and Glyn to disinfect each time used (and trolleys).

PPE requirements for staff. CB to check stocks of gloves.

Clubhouse

Toilets only to be open. Players can get their clubs/shoes from the lockers, but then need to take home – locker users to be informed.

Food and Drink: CB: planning to offer a takeaway service, if permitted. 2 scenarios:

1) if allowed to use Clubhouse, then supermarket style one way system;

2) if not allowed to use Clubhouse, then provide service via balcony.

Basic food and drink options. Disposable cups and foil for serving food. Cashless transactions. Members can use their cards, giving details to be put through the till.

People can order in advance but not essential given basic food on offer. NJ: can email bar directly now, so could do in advance, with tee time, if wished.

DW: any issue of members congregating to eat/drink? CB: should not be a problem as players will be coming round in small numbers and spread out by tee times. CB will draw up a communication to explain and to market/seek support for the service.

TH: to provide the service, the Club will be incurring costs, paying wages and buying stock, so need to be confident that will at least break even – a concern, especially with guidance likely to be for players to return home straight after playing. CB: try for a week, then review. TH confirmed that staff could be returned to furlough arrangement, if needed.

NJ/JS: need to sell the service. NJ can put information on Facebook and Twitter.

Cleaning: TH to discuss days/hours with Di – TH prepared to provide some cover, when available. Players should be advised to wash their hands on entry and exit.

Towels: **Cloth/roller towels – remove; hand driers not very effective; provide paper towels in accordance with guidance.** NJ: then review as go

along.

7. Marketing and Business Planning

NJ: PB, Mike Kenyon and Mark Kudarenko had been working hard to amend the webpages.

PB reported:

- explained difficulties tying in with email addresses and hosting fees incurred if changed provider, so emphasis on improving existing rather than creating new website;
- started to develop Google My Business pages – shows how many searches for golf locally and can post special offers etc.;
- identified potential market for weddings next year, given the number of people whose weddings will have been postponed and need to be rearranged;
- Albatross Digital, a partner of Club Systems and England Golf are offering a free membership marketing programme (no win no fee) – investigating;
- Newsletter – cross-referring all recipients with Members to ensure all receiving;
- Facebook – want to do more;

Action: all please view website and give feedback.

JR: any ideas on offers for new members e.g. 14 months for the price of 12? NJ: need to be careful not to upset existing members, so 14 months for 12 better than two (summer) months at low cost. CB: maybe focus on existing Members plus visitors paying green fees in June, then can offer 13 months for price of 12 deal.

Captains Comments

NJ: Captains please thank their Sections/Members for contributing to the Club Development Fund – hopefully they would be able to see what it was being spent on in the next few months.

JR and JM re-iterated their thanks to the Board members for all their work. DW added his thanks to CB for current efforts to complete the redecoration of the bar/dining room areas.

JM: have obtained lighting for the ladies' locker room.

JR: checked with NJ re arrangements for an overseas Member – NJ: paid up to 1st August under a flexible informal arrangement (there were 3 overseas members).

Note: Meeting took place virtually – via Zoom.