

Minutes of Arscott Golf Club Board Meeting (Virtual)
Tuesday 14th July 2020 at 4.00 p.m.

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

1. Apologies

None.

2. Declaration of Any Other Urgent Business

None.

3. Declaration of Interests

None.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 23rd June were confirmed as a correct record. There were no matters arising from the Minutes that would not be covered under the reports from Directors.

5. Reports

a) Managing Director

NJ reported that the additional new card machine was now in operation, provided by the same Company (with a discount). 95 members had renewed their subscriptions so far. A number of enquiries from potential new members had been received. Only 8 people had applied to pay through Orchard Finance. PB planned to put a link to this option in the Newsletter.

NJ: the evening for members would now be held on 22nd July, from 5 p.m.

b) Finance and IT

TH had circulated summary information for the last month but not the budget spreadsheet, pending all the invoices for June being entered. TH reported that the figures were looking very good, with income outstanding, wet and dry sales from the Clubhouse rising, and Green fee income better than any month last year. Expenses on the Course had increased, including outlays on essential machinery repairs, top dressing, sleepers and new baffle nets, plus essential items like sanitiser and a new battery for the defibrillator, on top of wages and overheads. Looking forward to the year end, the Club would be in profit and be able to have reserves ready for next winter. Membership renewals were coming in and the picture was looking very positive for the next financial year.

TH: the remaining member of staff who had been on furlough was now back part-time. CB: Nia was considering whether there was enough demand to extend this to full time. TH: decision then required with a letter to be sent to the employee. The

Cleaner's hours also needed to be considered.

TH: the VAT rate for supplies of hot food, takeaway food and soft drinks, including tea and coffee, from Wednesday 15th July would be at the reduced rate of 5% until January 2021, a saving of 15% on food/soft drinks sales. It was up to each business whether to pass this benefit on to the customer. **Agreed: prices to be reduced accordingly from 15th July. Action: Sian to change till.**

JS: queried the scope to claim £1,000 for each employee brought back from furlough? TH: this applied from January, but the employees had to have earned a minimum amount – to be looked into in due course.

c) Business Compliance

JS asked whether the kitchen floor issue was being taken up with Martin, as this needed doing as soon as possible? **NJ: yes - he would discuss with Martin.**

CB: relevant to note that the lease payment to the owner was going up in the coming year.

d) House

CB had circulated a report prior to the meeting setting out information on operations, income and expenditure following the changes in Covid-19 regulations from 4th July. Monitoring of the sales showed an overall increase supported by longer operating hours although some days takings remained very disappointing. Food sales were down but alcohol sales up since the change in regime from balcony service only.

CB: some problems had been encountered with regard to social distancing in the bar, with some members and visitors thinking that 1m was the requirement, and also a reluctance to leave contact details. TH stressed the Board's responsibility to ensure compliance for the protection of the staff.

JR: the policy should be that if someone would not give their details then they should not be served and/or they should be asked to leave. The Board recognised that it was difficult for staff to enforce this. NJ: staff should note names, with Directors then to speak with those involved. DW: a more formal sign in sheet would be better than the use of raffle tickets. CB: biggest problem would be Club Nights and Societies.

Agreed/Actions: proper signs to be displayed, including reference to conditions of entry, more formal sign in sheets to be introduced and reminders to go into Newsletter (NJ and PB).

NJ: raised issue of hours of service now in the summer months and given the increase in demand following the easing of lockdown restrictions, suggesting a need for greater flexibility to respond to demand but recognising the difficulties. CB: staff needed to have sufficient notice and certainty of hours/income. JM: there needed to be a cut off e.g. 8.30 p.m. NJ: there needed to be liaison with Glyn to check when teas were booked for and to ensure collection of green fees if he was leaving at 5 p.m.

Agreed: trial extending hours of provision of bar service to 8.30 p.m. on Mondays and Fridays, and 9.30 p.m. on Wednesdays.

e) Course

NJ: volunteers continuing with the strimming.

NJ: slope rating received for the Course (136) – would need to inform members and display information, and ask the Sections to ensure that their members were aware.
PB: need a separate Newsletter on the World Handicap System (WHS) which comes in to effect in November – and can ask members if they want the full information to be forwarded to them.

DW: Handicap Committee now established on an informal basis, comprised of the Handicap Secretaries for the three Sections - would be the obvious group to lead on introduction of WHS. **Action: PB to disseminate information to them.**

JS: need for new scorecards to reflect WHS? NJ/PB: yes, will need new scorecards from November for this, but also need additional cards now due to the high demand in recent weeks. NJ: some yardages need correcting. DW: can we also change one of the flags to be more distinct and amend on the cards. PB: could use old flags for the middle position.

JS: if printing new cards, can we seek further sponsorship? Was the arrangement with current two sponsors for 2 years or 20,000 cards? General view was that new sponsorship could be sought for the new cards.

JS: can arrange printing if Glyn informs him of changes required.

Agreed: do a top up of scorecards to cover through to November and print new cards with amendments, as discussed, for use from then.

NJ: practice nets now up – having to put up signs as some players were hitting off the protective matting rather than the tee mats provided.

f) Marketing and PR

NJ: sponsorship of three tees now sold, with another two possible. JM confirmed that the Ladies Section was still prepared to sponsor one sign – so sponsorship of 1st, 2nd, 10th and 17th tees now confirmed. **Action: NJ to send details to JR.**

NJ: Members Evening would cover Club V1, World Handicap System, rules and etiquette as well as encouraging membership renewals.

Action: PB to inform JM which ladies were not yet on Club V1.

g) Company Secretary

PB: would be renewing the Payment Card Security Standard.

6. Director Vacancies

NJ: Two members had indicated a willingness to serve on the Board – Alex Hughes and Steve Turner. TH stated that she was prepared to stay on to the end of August to complete the end of year accounts and to the AGM, if needed – this was welcomed by the Board. PB proposed and the **Board agreed that Alex Hughes and Steve Turner be co-opted on to the Board with effect from 1st August.**

In answer to a question, NJ confirmed that the Articles required there to be a minimum of one Director on the Board, while the Constitution recommended that there be seven Directors.

TH: it would be desirable for there to be at least one lady on the Board (in addition to attendance by the Lady Captain).

PB: could the Ladies Section be encouraged to find a member to stand?

NJ: if Sections could suggest anyone, encourage them to contact NJ/PB.

JS: would Nia report to NJ/PB from 1st August? NJ: yes.

NJ: planned to get all of the staff together, and working together, more.

PB: would notify Companies House of the changes to the Board from 1st August, with CB and JS standing down and Alex Hughes and Steve Turner joining the Board.

7. Covid-19 Support Fund Application

NJ had registered the Club's interest in applying for a grant from the COVID-19 Support Fund established by the R & A and being administered by England Golf. Clubs could apply for up to £10,000, with applicants having to demonstrate a clear financial need and requirement resulting from the COVID-19 outbreak. Some 230 Clubs had registered interest so far. Applications had to be submitted by the end of July.

PB: members were keen on a balcony extension, with the added benefit that this would give covered areas outdoors at ground level as well. NJ: Martin was keen for the Club to apply for this. CB: has the plans of the existing Clubhouse – will drop off for NJ. NJ: has approached an architect prepared to do the plans (there would be a fee) – either to extend or replace the balcony. PB: a further suggestion was for a decking area instead of the planter at the front of the Clubhouse. JR: it would be good to look at the whole frontage.

The Board agreed that an application be prepared and submitted on the basis of the extension/replacement of the balcony plus additional outdoor seating and related improvements to the frontage of the Clubhouse.

TH: there would be a need for a 5 year plan for the Club and signing up to the Women in Golf Charter. It would be sensible to get a team together to progress the application. DW indicated that he would be prepared to assist. NJ: had emailed Mark Romasiuk at England Golf to make contact and seek advice.

8. Health and Safety

Nothing to report.

9. Feedback from Section Captains

JR: The Seniors were getting 60+ players entering their Thursday competitions. He requested the **return of the Monday morning slot (8.30 a.m. - 9.30 a.m.) for Seniors from the beginning of August – this was agreed. Action: PB to add to tees schedule.**

JR: 90% sure that the Seniors Team Open would take place in September.

JR: thanks to the Board for answering the query raised by Seniors relating to the annual subscriptions – the explanation had been accepted.

JR: straw poll amongst Seniors on the question of Pro Shop vouchers and Bar Credits for competition prizes – in favour of leaving as is.

JR: welcomed the seating at the front of the Clubhouse, but could there be better quality furniture? Also, could the sign promoting the takeaway service by the 8th green be improved?

JM: updated on the health of the Lady Captain.

JM: some concerns from the Ladies Section regarding younger members congregating around the Clubhouse – could a reminder go in the Newsletter please. There were also concerns about etiquette on the Course.

JM: could there be an effort from the Board to improve transparency? This would be appreciated by the Members.

JM: had noted that wispy grass was being left after the fairways had been mown. Also could the two bushes at the front of the pond on the 18th be chopped back?

PB: would raise these matters with the Head Greenkeeper when seeing him tomorrow.

JM: any decision on a date for the Inter-Section Match? DW: struggling to find a weekend date, so thinking that would need to be a Friday – OK with JM and JR.

DW: the latest two day weekend Fundraiser Competition held on July 4th and 5th had again been very well supported (131 entries, including 17 from the Ladies Section), with £226 raised for the Club Development Fund. NJ commented on the benefits of the format over shotgun starts, including in giving the Club the opportunity to take green fees rather than a whole day being blocked out for the competition. JM: the ladies generally did not like shotgun starts, with more entering, e.g. with partners, as a result. DW: the next opportunity to run a two day event would be on 8th/9th August when replacing the Club Development Day shotgun start scheduled for 8th August. Draw prizes again welcome.

DW: the Men's Invitation was taking place on 19th July.

10. Any Other Business

PB: requested any last minute items for the next Newsletter. CB – reminders on social distancing in the Clubhouse.

JM: obviously not running the planned 1st August social event, but still liaising with Nia about an 'OctoberFest' event – but this might have to be postponed as well, if restrictions remained in place.

TH: suggested that the Club investigate the scope for taking on one or two apprentices under the Government's recently announced scheme, taking advantage of the funding being offered. NJ: there would be a need for a new member to join the Greenstaff in the New Year in any event. TH: scope for an apprentice to work in other parts of the business too. PB: good idea – worth exploring. **The Board agreed that the apprenticeship scheme be investigated.**

NJ: thanked CB and JS for their hard work as Directors over the last 2-3 years. Everyone on the Board had done a good job and it had been a real team effort,

successfully helping the Club through some rocky times.
JS – thanked the Board and wished them good luck.
CB: happy to advise whoever took on Clubhouse role.

Date and Time of Next Meeting

NJ would liaise with the new Directors and suggest a date for the next meeting, to be held after 1st August.

Note: Meeting took place virtually – via Zoom.