

MINUTES
SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING
BARNARD CASTLE GOLF CLUB
7PM, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28TH, 2024
HELD IN BCGC CLUB HOUSE

Minute taker: Geoff WALL.

46 members present.

Chairperson: Colin MacLeod (CMc) presiding.

Apologies for absence: Lainy Hunt, Ken Walters, Aidrian Lowes, Sue Seddon and Nick Seddon.

Colin opened the meeting by welcoming those present and gave an overview for the format of the meeting.

Colin then gave a detailed visual presentation and verbal explanation of the club's cashflow covering 2022/2023 & 2023/2024 and budgets covering 2023/2024 & 2024/2025. This included an increase in member subscriptions for the year 2024/2025, a full paying members subscription will increase by 4% from £750 to £780.

The visual presentation of the budget will be posted on the club's web page in the next 48 hours along with the minutes of the SGM.

At the conclusion Colin invited questions relating to the budget from members present.

- Q1. Andrew Sugden asked about the difference in subscriptions paid by 25 – 30 year old member and full paying members.
 - A. CMc, the difference in the subscriptions were in line with guidelines laid down by England Golf.
- Q2. Is the Head Greenkeeper trying to make the course more difficult?
 - A. CMc, there is no strategy to do that.
- Q1. Andrew Bowman asked about the drainage on the 17th fairway and how it is going to be rectified.
 - A. CMc, pointed out the drainage pipes have sunk and when the water level in the beck rises it causes a back fill of water into the pipes which in turn prevents the fairway from draining. Presently the club does not have a fairway slitter which would assist with drainage on the course, two slitters one for fairways and one for greens are on order, fairway slitter due imminently and the green slitter in October in readiness for the winter. CMc welcomed support and ideas from members regarding solving the drainage problem on the 17th fairway, he also pointed out the Head Greenkeepers monthly report on the status of the course is published on the club's web page. The Management Committee and Head Greenkeeper are aware of the drainage problem not only on the 17th fairway but on the 10th and may speak with Raby Estates for advice. In addition, provisions are being put in place to have the full course or at least 10 holes open over the winter period during wet/bad weather. The additional work includes the

installation of paths on the embankments on the 1st and 10th holes and a bridge from the 11th tee across the fairway leading towards the green. The Management Committee and the Head Green Keeper are conscious that next winter the course needs to be open much more than it has over the past few months, hence the additional work on 1st, 10th and 11th holes.

Q2. Andrew Bowman asked about temporary greens.

A. CMc, due to the adverse weather conditions and the heavy rain that has fallen over the past few weeks/months the green staff have been unable to cut the grass and prepare temporary greens.

Q3. Andrew Bowman asked what have the green staff been doing when the course has been closed.

- CMc, The Head Greenkeeper has had his staff carrying out maintenance on the equipment, machinery etc. and repairing damaged course furniture.

- Q1. Jed Collins asked, 'when are the monthly and yearly club accounts due'?

A. CMc, we are targeting mid May.

Q2 Jed asked if there could be a members vote regarding the length of the grass in the rough, he had previously asked the same question via email at last year's AGM.

A. CMc, the email Jed sent for discussion at last years AGM was received too late to be included in the AGM agenda, items for discussion at the AGM need to be submitted to the Management Committee at least 14 days before any AGM is held, as per the club's constitution and also to give sufficient time for the Head Greenkeeper to respond. Jed was informed, he could re submit his email and it would be discussed by the Management Committee. **Andrew Hall** (Greens Convener) pointed out, if the rough was to be cut as suggested by Jed, there would be financial implications for the club, additional daily work would need to be carried out by the green staff to cut the grass, this in turn would have an adverse effect on the amount of time green staff would spend on other parts of the course, consideration would need to be given regarding the additional costs on fuel for the machinery, additional wear and tear on machinery, the possibility of having to hire additional green staff so the work could be completed, none of which is included in the 2024/2025 budget. **Ross Law** explained despite the grass in the rough being longer than previous years and the fairways reduced in width and the course appearing to be tougher, the overall scores in competitions do not reflect that.

Q3. Jed asked what Colin's position is within the club.

- CMc, Colin is the Chairperson and as there is no Treasurer at present, he is assisting in preparing the clubs accounts on a monthly basis, they will then be submitted at the end of the financial year to the club's accountants, Alan Sykes for assurance testing and submission to HMRC. As per the club's constitution. the position of Chairperson is an appointed position by the Management Committee and not elected by members, **Andrew Sugden** said he and many other members supported Colin and congratulated him for doing a fantastic job for the club. Colin thanked him for his kind comments and support.

- Q. Sally Lavender asked about whether anything had changed regarding the Trustees of the Club.

- A. CMC responded that nothing has changed in the last year.
- Q. Sally Lavender asked about the budget matching the £6000 at the end of February 2024 and the £6000 deferred until the new financial year. Also have the Management Committee considered getting an overdraft facility from the bank, the financial liability on members of the Management Committee and have the Management Committee considered being a limited company.

A. CMC, Cash has been managed throughout the year through tight controls. In relation to the overdraft, the Management Committee do not consider an overdraft being put in place at this time as one is not required, if one is required in the future then that will be considered by the Management Committee before any application to the bank is made. The club has a recently acquired new insurance policy which includes the protection of members of the Management Committee from any financial liability. At the conclusion of the financial year and auditing of the club's accounts discussion will take place with Alan Sykes accountants in relation to whether the club should be a limited company.
 - Q. Phil Hartley asked, "what are we doing to encourage new membership"?

A. CMC explained the club are placing adverts in the local media and the Northern Golfer. Now that we have a Pro in place, Peter Hartley, we are expecting that he will bring in some additional members as he has started conducting golf lessons to junior and adults, it is hoped they will take up membership in the future. **Ross Law** pointed out that none of the present Management Committee have a lot of marketing experience, could Raby Estates offer any help/advice. Colin agreed and said it would be considered by the Management Committee.

Colin then gave a visual and verbal explanation on the changes that come in to force on April 1st, 2024, to the new World Handicap System. The new course handicap ratings have been completed for Barnard Castle Golf Club and they will be displayed on the board at the entrance to the course and within the locker rooms. There is also a men's rating off the red tees.

No other business, the meeting closed at 7.52pm.

G WALL, member of the Management Committee.