

**Minute of Council Meeting
held on 20th August 2024 in the Trophy Room**

Present:	A. Gordon	(Vice Captain/Greens Convener)
	C. Watson	(Finance Convener)
	S. Hutchison	(Match & H'Cap)
	H. Craigie	(Junior Convener)
	J. Gove	(Ladies Captain)
	A Powell	(President)

In Attendance:	D.P. Pern	(Club Manager)
	N. McLoughlin	(Course Manager)
	G Nethercott	(Head Professional)

Apologies	D. Halliday	(Captain)
-----------	-------------	-----------

1. Welcome:

Vice-Captain AG welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minute of Council held on 23rd July 2024

The minute of the Council meeting on 23rd July was approved.

3. Matters arising from the previous Minute:

- Member forums will be held on Wednesday 18th September in the evening and Thursday 19th in the afternoon. DP to draft a notice. It was agreed to put together a Q&A of potential questions in advance of the forums.
- AG met with a member to update him on progress with the recent survey on options for an alternative path coming up from the 18th green. After Council discussion it was agreed to progress with a further survey and cost on a preferred option.
- AG is meeting with a member to discuss the vacant position of Greens Convener. In accordance with the Club Rules this will be an interim appointment until approved at the AGM in February.
- AG and member Paul Birch will meet with a representative from Ballater Golf Club to discuss flooding issues which affect both Clubs.
- The Course Risk Assessments have all been completed. AG will now collate all the information and formalise into a document which will be circulated to Council for approval.
- AG/CW/JG/DP have a meeting scheduled with Macleod & Aitken on Thursday 22nd August to progress with Clubhouse refurbishment.
- DP updated Council on the progress of the new website. Following no comments received last month, it was agreed to invite Platform77 and Morgan Speirs to attend the next Council meeting to present the latest draft of the new website.
- NM has met with Husqvarna on purchasing more Robotic mowers in 2025. NM will forward a proposal including options and cost before the next meeting. It was agreed to

circulate a note to members of the cost benefit and why these mowers are the way forward.

- AG/NM attended the annual meeting with STRI on Tuesday 21st August. It was a very positive meeting. The full report will be posted on the website when it is available. NM to send a note to members with the highlights of the report.
- AG to set up a meeting with a hydrologist from Seabeck. This is the company used at Ballater Golf Club. They come highly recommended and have a very positive relationship with SEPA. There are two key focus areas for discussion, the first is around the 13th and the second is around the boundary with Camphill.
- The bunker plan is displayed on the notice board and is available on the website. It was agreed that an additional legend is required to show which bunkers are being removed and which are new or being reshaped. NM to action. SH reported that he had some negative feedback on some of the older bunkers which have builder sand. NM highlighted that the intensive rain last week had compacted the sand further. NM to ensure that greens staff rake the bunkers right to the bottom as members tend to rake the top section only. It was discussed that next Spring, all the bunkers would have the same sand to ensure consistency. This would incur timing, phasing and have cost implications. NM highlighted that whilst the new sand was double the price, this cost is offset by reducing the number of bunkers. NM confirmed that labels are now on the rakes reminding members to place the rake back in the middle of the bunker.
- AG/DP met with the Cults, Miltimber and Bieldside Community Council Path Group. They are a group of volunteers and have agreed to help with clearing the path when they can. AG explained that the Club would be erecting a boundary fence and once that was finished DP would arrange another meeting to walk the boundary and establish various areas of concern. The Club would fix the area behind the 10th tee. DP to promote the Path Group to the memberships at some point. DP to send article to the CMBCC highlighting the new fence and signage before April 2025 for their magazine.
- Signage for boundary – NM circulated a proof of course boundary signage. It was agreed to proceed with the addition of “Keep your dog on a lead as at all times” Other signage with arrows directing the public to the path areas have been ordered.
- NM spoke to Design Scotland (Kirsty McLean) who will follow up on the recent survey of the path up to the 1st tee. Once more details have been confirmed, path material will be researched.
- Trackman is on schedule to open on Thursday 22nd August. All rules and safety notice to be circulated to members in advance. The booking system is ready for use and will open on Monday 26th August.

4. Health and Safety

- Two Green keepers have been hit by a golf ball in separate incidents. NM to ensure they are in view of golfers at all times, or working as part of a team who can monitor the situation.

5. Convener Reports

Vice-Captain's Report

- Nothing to report

Finance Report

A full Finance report was circulated in advance. To summarise:

- **Profit & Loss Review**
The net profit for the month was £36.3k which compares to a budget profit of £37.8k and profit of £15k in July 2023. The net profit YTD of £95k compares to a budgeted loss of £34k and a profit of £47k in the prior year. The main variances to budget are lower costs for course maintenance, clubhouse and administration as well as some unexpected recoveries from Scottish Water and gain on sale of equipment.
After another positive month, the net loss from F&B YTD of £38k is now about £14k better than budget and close to prior year. The Gross Profit from catering at 62.5% YTD is not far off budget of 64% and up 2% on last year.
The net loss from Golf Operations YTD is a loss of £26k and the variance to budget is about £22k. Sales are lower than budget and coupled with the lower margin from sales of older stock at heavily discounted prices during the winter months the YTD margin is 32% v budget of 37%. Coaching and trackman income are ahead of both budget and prior year.
- **Bank Balances at 30 June 2024** – total of £1.09million. This represents a reduction in cash in the month of about £17k with payments to creditors exceeding receipts.
- **Cash Reserves Requirement for Operations** – Based on budget, the requirement is £540k, leaving about £550k for working capital requirements and capital improvements.
- **Clubhouse Refurbishment**
An updated forecast for capital expenditure has still to be finalised as the timings and the scope and cost of work are revised but the bulk of further expenditure will be in the next financial year.
- **Financial Projections**
It is anticipated that we will continue to make a surplus in the last two months of the financial year and that the surplus for the year will exceed £100k.
- **Budget 2024/25**
DP/NM/CW will start planning for the budget for next year.

Greens Convener and Course Manager Report

The full report was circulated in advance. To summarise:

Overview

- This month, the focus is on preserving the quality of the courses. Routine in-season maintenance was carried out, including pencil tinning, verti-cutting, and applying a light topdress. The sand injecting machine has been injecting sand into select fairways and semi-roughs with problem areas namely the 14th carry, parts of the 15th fairway, and sections of the 17th fairway. More work will be carried out over the next few weeks.
- Looking ahead to next month, the end-of-season maintenance will commence. This includes sand injecting greens, tees, and several approaches, along with scarifying selected fairways.
- Sports Turf Services are nearing the completion of their scheduled work. The final task of installing the flapper valves is expected to be completed by the end of the month.

- **Sewage Management**
Scottish Water is still awaiting delivery of the sealing plates, which have been delayed due to galvanizing issues with the steel.
- **Bunker Construction**
The bunker construction plan, along with the masterplan drawings, is now on display for members in the clubhouse. Construction will start next month, beginning with the 7th and 13th fairways.
- The robotic mowers continue to operate effectively. Husqvarna recently conducted a site survey to assess the number and size of robots needed to mow the Haughton rough. Once the results of the survey are completed, a cost benefit analysis will be carried out.
- Wizard bunker rakes have been placed in all bunkers. Sticker have been placed on all the bunkers instruction members to place the rake in the middle of the bunker.
- One quote has been received for the fencing work along the boundary. Another quote has been requested and one contractor has declined to quote.
- STRI carried out their annual inspection on Tuesday 20th August. The full report will be available on the website when it has been received. NM to circulate a summary of the report to members once it has been received.

Ladies' Captain Report

The full report was circulated in advance. To summarise:

- Lyon Foursomes took place at Peterhead Golf Club. Deeside Ladies made the quarter final but were defeated by Cruden Bay.
- Unfortunately, the friendly match against Murcar GC (away) was cancelled due to adverse stormy conditions.
- The new rakes have been welcomed. To avoid any issues with balls rolling into the bunkers and ending up in difficult positions, it might be helpful to remind members to leave the rakes in the middle of the bunkers after use. This way, we can keep play smooth and fair for everyone. NM confirmed that label has been added to the rakes with instructions to replace the rake in the middle of the bunker.
- Course Safety assessment carried out with AG & Charlie Dingwall.
General Risk document completed (holes 2-12) and submitted to Vice Captain Alan.
- On the 30th August the Annual Ladies Invitational will be played on the Haughton & Blairs. Alternative times are available late afternoon on the 29th.
- Ladies Committee meeting on Friday 23rd August to discuss the September fixture and other matters.
- JG attended various meetings with AG, CW, DP. & Fiona Young of Cumming & Co regarding refurbishment plans for the clubhouse.

Match & Handicap Report

The full report was circulated in advance. To summarise:

- The Men's Pennant Team lost to Portlethen 3 v 2 in the Pennant League Semi-Final. A strong effort from the squad all season and a huge thanks to all who have represented the club so well this year.
- Two teams picked for Dalswinton Trophy on Sunday 1 September at Deeside GC.
- Knockout matches continue to progress.

Junior Report

The full report was circulated in advance. To summarise:

- Unfortunately, the Junior Team didn't qualify for the Off the tee competition

Pro Shop Report

A full report was circulated in advance, to summarise:

- A visitor that has returned to play Deeside again after playing in May referred to Deeside as the 'Augusta of Scotland'. Also one of the Reps commented that there is nowhere else like Deeside in Scotland. Facilities are looking magnificent, vibrant clubhouse, social element is ten out of ten. Great feedback.
- There has again been a lot of issues with groups losing holes to other groups in front and not letting groups behind play through. GN has been asked the question by several member's if we should be looking at three balls on a Wednesday. After discussion it was agreed that GN would arrange for a ranger for a couple of hours on a Wednesday over the next few weeks.
- There has been a small reduction in the numbers competing in the Stroke Play Championship. This appears to be a result of holidays, family and work commitments. The Handicap Stroke Play Championship on the other hand has been extremely popular. After discussion on various scenarios to improve participation it was agreed that GN will speak to the Pennant Team for some feedback on the format.
- The layout of the weekly Pro Shop update has changed. Positive feedback received. The weekly update gets sent to c1200 members with a very consistent open rate of between 920-980 members per week.
- GN has received a handful of extremely positive comments about the etiquette and conduct of our junior section. The parents of these juniors have all been informed. There are currently 164 juniors at Deeside, many of whom have been using the facilities over the summer holidays. Deeside is very much 'bucking trends' The kids have all behaved impeccably throughout the summer holidays! The Club should be extremely proud of our juniors.
- **Trackman**
Trackman will be on site Monday 19th – Wednesday 21st August to install Trackman Range. Everything looks on schedule.
GN and Sam have had online meetings with Trackman/YourGolfBooking re their App's & booking system. It appears to be quite a bit of work still to get this online. Will Chambers (Pro Shop Team/Young Adult member) will be in Monday-Friday 10-4 from Monday 26th August till circa 3rd week in September to assist members on the range with log in details, instructions etc

Club Manager Report

- Membership Numbers:

Full members	797
Senior members	125
Associate 30 – 34	16
Associate 24 – 29	18
Young Adults	24
House/Non Playing	184
Senior VIP	11
House 5 Day	2
Country	16
Junior 12 – 18	107
Junior under 12	55
Non Resident	66

Life 15
Honorary 8

- Applications for membership – July 24, approved by membership sub-committee

Cat	Name	Proposer	Second
	Full	Graham Fyfe	Trevor Mackie
	Full	Helen Bacarreza	Catherine Robertson
	Full	Charlie Davies	Connor Bruce
	House	Catherine Ah-See	George Gibson
	Full	Connor McAnespie	Martin Allan
	Junior	Daisy Cooper	Jamie Cooper
	Junior	Lewis Allan	Zong Fan Zhou
	Junior	Baxter Allan	Zong Fan Zhou
	Full	Brian Martin	Gary Hance
	Full	Craig Smith	Phil Stratford
	Full	Simone Maclean	Neil Maclean
			Chuck Florence
			TBC
			Richard Bickerton
			Eric Yule
			Colin Yule
			Gordon Guthrie
			Hugh Craigie
			Hugh Craigie
			James Sorbie
			Paul Mercer
			Derek Rettie

- **Transfers from within the membership during July**
No changes this month

- **Resignations**
Michael Lawrie – Gent Associate 25 – 29
Pauline Varley - House

- **New members**
Luke Brodie – Junior
Mathew Johnston – Junior
Leo Wishart – Junior
Brodie Keay – Junior
Finn McGurran - Junior

- **Waiting List**
236 on Full waiting list
7 on Senior waiting list
23 on deferred list (2024)
12 on House List

Course Usage – H & B

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	
2018													
2019	1996	1558	909	1047	1489	2495	3606	3795	3999	4218	4038	2843	31993
2019													
2020	2184	1033	943	1704	1202	1928	0	773	7359	6823	7413	5374	36736
2020													
2021	3873	3869	809	0	0	2451	5930	5435	7156	6939	6244	5130	47836

2021													
2022	3659	2131	1843	2926	2250	3502	4501	5221	5548	5495	5362	5236	47674
2022													
–													
2023	3179	1361	90	1245	2355	2220	4073	5548	5288	5684	6381	4880	42304
2023													
-													
2024	1078	1286	495	498	2078	2436	3689	5373	5041	5880			

General Information/Actions/Requests etc. for discussion

All covered in other reports

6. August Agenda Items

- **Course Projects**
18th Path – DP circulated plans and gradient drawings. After discussion Council agreed the preferred path route. AG to request more engineering work to allow for costing for various paths (1st, 17th, 18th on Haughton and 1st on Blairs) Possible landscaping along the path at the 18th with Rhododendron bushes to be investigated.
- **Clubhouse Projects**
A meeting with MacLeod & Aitken on Thursday 22nd August has been arranged to progress with the Clubhouse refurbishment.

Marketing

- Following a meeting with Mearns & Gill it was agreed that the Club would set a budget and see what Mearns and Gill can offer within that budget. AG/CW/DP to discuss. Following a lengthy discussion on comms in general it was agreed that DP would forward the Comms schedule to Council for review and feedback. It was also discussed that possibly the Club could employ a part time student to look after comms as part of their studies.

6. AOCB

- AG & SH to meet and discuss how best to organise sub committees for specific projects. Terms of reference to be agreed. It was agreed that a Council member would chair any future sub-committees.
- Strategy 2025 – 2030 – Following discussion it was suggested that Council bring in one or two members to focus on key areas of the Strategy Plan. A more pictorial approach was suggested. Strategy should be the key and Council serve the strategy. More discussion required to drive this forward.

Next Meeting – 17th September @ 5.30pm in the trophy room

Actions

AG	Arrange follow up member forums in September. Arrange a meeting with some members regarding the 18 th path. Progress with the appointment of the Greens Convener. Follow up with Ballater Golf Club on flooding issues Progress with Course Risk assessment
AG/JG/DP/CW	Progress with Clubhouse refurbishment with Cummings & Co.

AG/DP/GN Council	Progress with website design. Feedback comments to DP on first draft
AG/NM	Progress with Business Plan for the purchase of more autonomous mowers Follow up with hydrologist to arrange an onsite meeting Progress with the detail on bunker projects for winter 24-25
AG/DP/NM	Meet with Bielside Community Council to discuss the boundary path.
AG/CW/DP/GN	Meet with Mearns & Gill for “Discovery Session”
NM	Progress with signage for boundary. Cost and trial new material on the approach to the 1 st tee on Haughton Progress with costs for fencing along the boundary. Circulate video and rules on the wizard rakes to members when they arrive on site.
GN	Upload updated regulations for play to ClubV1 documents and website (old and new) Finalise and order new score cards
DP/NM	Investigate more CCTV along the boundary line
DP/GN	Create text and rules for Trackman use and booking
Council	