

**Minute of Council Meeting
held on 23rd April 2024 in the Conference Room**

Present:	D. Halliday	(Captain)
	C. Watson	(Finance Convener)
	H. Craigie	(Junior Convener)
	J. Gove	(Ladies Captain)
	A. Gordon	(Greens Convener)
In Attendance:	D.P. Pern	(Club Manager)
	N. McLoughlin	(Course Manager)
	G Nethercott	(Head Professional)
Apologies:	S. Hutchison	(Match & H'Cap)
	A Powell	(President)

1. Welcome:

Captain DH welcomed everyone to the meeting.

As per Rule 5.15, Council have Co-opted Sandy Hutchison to act as Match & Handicap convener for the year 2024 – 2025. Sandy was proposed by David Halliday and seconded by Chris Watson.

DH confirmed Andy Powel has accepted invitation to attend future council meetings as President.

2. Minute of Council held on 19th March 2024

The minute of the Council meeting on 19th March was approved.

3. Matters arising from the previous Minute:

- The Course policy document to be reviewed by AG before uploaded to the website.
- Still waiting for a response from Fairhurst & Partners on the Hydrologist site survey.
- Winter Fours DP reply to Iain Hunter confirming Councils support of continuation of Winter Fours and request IH discusses with GN options
- Scottish Water invoice – AG/NM & DP to meet and finalise interim Invoice which will be sent to Scottish Water.
- NM to follow up on anti-slip options for the 1st tee.
- Trackman – GN/DH & AG to meet with Trackman and progress with install.
- DH to carry out a feasibility study for indoor simulator studio after the Trackman Range has been installed.
- Following a discussion on driving range tokens it was agreed to continue using the tokens for now. It is hoped that within the next year CClubV1 will link to the ball dispenser and Club swipe card can be used.

4. Reports

Captain's Report

- DH updated Council on the meetings he held with members. DP to circulate the summary document to Council. Strategy Plan, communications, sub committees, member benefits, governance and golf courses were all highlighted by members during the meetings.
- DH reported that the feedback (both written and verbal) on the golf courses for this time of year and considering the amount of rain, has been very positive. The courses have been set up well and now just need some dryer weather and sunshine.
- DH highlighted the success of the Masters evening which was well received by all those who attended. Special thanks to Clubs front & back of house team as well as the pro team in preparing a fantastic menu and service throughout the evening. Suggestions have been received and will be implemented for next years event.
- Kirsty McLean from Design Scotland has provided a quote for further landscape designs including paths from 18th & 9th green to clubhouse. It was agreed to proceed with this.
- Council have agreed to a group of members request for the club to introduce a new salver/trophy for the lowest gross score of the year in memory of Alan Ross. DH to contact Alan's family to acknowledge and seek their blessing. .
- DP to source sun cream dispensers and water dispensers, by the course toilet block.

Finance Report

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

- The net profit for the month of £55.7k included a gain on sale of old equipment of £18.5k. Also, course costs were well below budget as the building material costs that we intend to recharge to Scottish Water have been reversed and held as a prepayment on the basis these costs will be recompensed by Scottish Water. The net loss YTD of £4.2k compares to a budgeted loss of £100.7k with the main variances being an overall shortfall in course costs due to weather delays, higher entry fees, and savings on clubhouse and admin costs compared to budget (£28k variance) and interest received.
- The net loss YTD of £4.2k compares to a net profit for the same period last year of £44.4k. A large variance compared to last year relates a lower irrecoverable VAT expense. It is hoped there will be a reduction to book once the VAT return has been finalised. There have been increased losses in F&B and Golf Operations which are covered below.
- The net loss from **F&B** for YTD Is £44.4k, being a loss of £24.9k plus members' loyalty discount of £19.5k. Overall this is close to budget due to lower staffing costs but is worse than last year due to the increase in salaries. The Gross Profit from catering was 60% YTD compared to a budget of 63% but is slightly better than last year.
- The net loss from **Golf Operations** for the month was £1.3k which is only slightly higher than budget with the margins back in line with budget in the month. The YTD loss is £31.2k and the variance to budget is £8k. While sales were ahead of budget the lower margin is due to the sale of older stock at heavily discounted prices with YTD margin at 26% v budget of 35%. Coaching and trackman income are ahead of both budget and prior year.
- **Balance Sheet Review**
Bank Balances at 31 March 2024 – total of £1099k. This represents an increase in cash of about £150k.
- **Cash Reserves Requirement for Operations** – Based on budget, the requirement is £540k, leaving about £559k for working capital requirements and capital improvements.

- **Clubhouse Refurbishment**

Council will continue to review the clubhouse refurbishment plan and cost estimates versus budget some of which are coming in above the budgeted amount.

- **Financial Projections**

It is currently projected that the profit for the year should exceed the budgeted level for the following reasons:

- Unbudgeted gain on sale of equipment
- Recovery of costs from Scottish Water
- Increased entry fee income
- Interest income from investments
- Expected recovery from old loyalty card balances
- Potential reduction in irrecoverable VAT

Greens Convener and Course Manager Report

The full report was circulated in advance. To summarise:

- April has presented significant challenges with prolonged periods of rain severely impacting our maintenance and development efforts across the courses. Typically, by this time, greens would be cut to 4.5mm, but currently it's at 5mm, with the aim to reduce this in the coming days. Fertilisation efforts have also been hampered by the weather conditions. Since October 1st, there has been over 730mm of rain, which surpasses our annual average.
- Sewage Management:
Regrettably, the repair work on the sewers conducted by Scottish Water proved unsuccessful. They will return to implement more robust repairs once ground conditions permit.
- Bunker Construction:
Construction of the 16th Bunkers is nearing completion. The aim is for the bunkers to be in play by early to mid-May. It was agreed not to proceed with hole 17 until the end of the season.
- Houghton And Blairs Course Winter Work:
Efforts to clear debris from tree removal near the 15th tees and grind remaining stumps on both courses have been completed. Work will commence on the 11th path and bridge end repairs in the coming weeks. This has been delayed due to adverse weather and ground conditions.

Ladies' Captain Report

The full report was circulated in advance. To summarise:

- Weather impacted the early April fixtures. The first friendly match against Peterculter was rescheduled due to course/weather conditions.
- It was agreed to extend the cutoff for signing up for knockout competitions by a week to encourage more ladies to participate.
- JG and the ladies committee hosted an evening for new ladies. 11 attended, JG introduced them to the CLUBV1 & HowDidIDo apps, how to sign up for friendly matches and ALCGA competitions.
- The Pink Elephant Charity Golf Day was cancelled twice. Replaced with a successful golf quiz, coffee & cupcake morning, and raising funds for The Breast Unit Fund at ARI. New member Susan Gordon shared her journey with breast cancer. Graeme Nethercott,

assisted by Emily, displayed new clothing and accessories for purchase. An excellent turnout of ladies dressed in Pink. £601 was raised for the Charity. After Council discussion it was agreed to increase this donation to £1000 from the Club. DP to action.

- Margaret Parkinson, the winner of our winter Stableford competition was presented with a Deeside Gift Voucher.
- Positive feedback is always encouraging, especially when it comes to the arrival of the ladies clothing which will be worn when representing the club in friendlies and matches. As before this is a “wash and return” policy with the clothing.
- Fiona Lane & Anne Kelman qualified for the Storm Frank Knockout competition.
- DGC was well represented yesterday in the first ALCGA (County) competition of the season at Ballater GC.
- Ladies committee monthly meeting was held to finalise details on fixture list amongst other things.
- JG attended various meetings with DP & Fiona Young of Cumming and Co regarding refurbishment plans for ladies lockers and clubhouse facilities as per strategic plan.

Junior Report

The full report was circulated in advance. To summarise:

- Flag Competitions
The first Deeside Flag competition was successfully held on Sunday 7th April. There were 19 entrants in total with Division One won by Arran Milne and Division 2 by David Shepley-Blease.
- Junior Pennant Team
A further three clubs have withdrawn, Peterculter, Royal Aberdeen and Kemnay. This means that rather than each Deeside team having 7 matches, they’ll only have 5 each. With the help of the pro shop team, I have been collating which juniors want to play and their availability. We are still short of a full complement for every fixture, but I am confident that we should manage to field a full team for each tie.
- Junior Littleway Trophy and Angusfield Knockout Competitions
There are 10 entrants to the Littleway (Handicap) and 5 entrants to the Angusfield (scratch) competitions. Sadly, our Junior Captain, Callum Bruce is away for finals day so has not been able to enter the Angusfield.

Pro Shop Report

A full report was circulated in advance, to summarise:

- The recent continued poor weather has meant that the traffic through the Professional Shop has reduced in comparison to previous years. Here’s hoping for better weather towards the end of April and into the golfing season.
- Wilson & TaylorMade were at the Club conducting fitting events at the start of April. Both events were full with over half of those attending placing orders. It is hoped to see both TaylorMade, Wilson & Ping back at Deeside in the middle of summer.
- The Professional Shop Team have recently conducted a Price Comparison Report against the leading online retailers (American, Clubhouse, Affordable & Complete) after it was suggested that our prices are higher than online. Of the 14 hardware products we beat online prices 5 times, matched 7 times & were higher 2 times albeit by a handful of pounds. Of the 18 soft goods we beat online prices 9 times but were also higher 9 times, albeit again by a maximum of a handful of pennies & pounds on most occasions. It should be highlighted that the Pro Shop offers additional services that online cannot compete with such as a fitting service (clubs, shoes & clothes) which offers greater value;

most of our clothes are logo'd, which comes at an additional cost to the club; We are far easier to deal with on any returns/after sales too. As usual the support of the Professional Shop from the membership is always greatly appreciated. If the Pro Shop does not have the goods in the shop, the team will always try their best to source from elsewhere. DH to add a paragraph on this in the next Captain's update.

- Good luck to Sam Kiloh & Kevin Duncan who are both sitting their Year 3 PGA Exams at the end of April.
- Harry Kellock, who has been in the Shop as a Golf Ops Assistant since March 2022 will be leaving us on completion of his University. Thanks to Harry for all his help, commitment & pleasant attitude in all dealings with the membership. Ben Smith, one of our Young Adult members will be starting in the shop in May.

Actions

- Podium Ordered which will hopefully arrive before the second week of May.
- Trackman are currently creating a scope of work for the driving range. GN has also had a local drone company acting on behalf of Trackman introduce themselves with various questions. They will complete all the topography/drone work for the driving range & virtual golf.

Club Manager Report

- Membership Numbers:

Full members	801
Senior members	125
Associate 30 – 34	17
Associate 24 – 29	20
Young Adults	25
House/Non Playing	192
Senior VIP	11
House 5 Day	2
Country	16
Junior 12 – 18	97
Junior under 12	44
Non Resident	66
Life	15
Honorary	8

- Applications for membership – March April

Full	Bradley Taylor	Curt Keenan	Henri Charles
Junior	Blake Innes	Pro Shop recommendation	
Full	Gary Smith	Neil Gordon	Bryan Yule
House	Neil Murray	Ian Birnie	Jim Stephen
Full	Kyle Robertson	Philip Sutherland	Avril Freeland
House	Christina Allan	Isobel Watson	Douglas Benton

- **Transfers from within the membership**
Brian Anderson from Senior to House

Mary Anderson from Senior to House
 Aileen Davidson from Non resident to Full
 Ian Gellatly from Full to House
 Ian Lakin from Full to House
 Richard Macklin from Senior to Full
 Chris Ness from Full to Non Playing
 Paul Shotter from Full to Non resident
 Hamish Sutherland from Non Resident to Country
 Robin Whyte from Senior to Non Playing

- **Resigned**

Murray Buchan – Junior
 Finlay Buchan – Junior
 Gordon Green – Full
 Jeff Hall - Full
 Chloe Hunter – Junior
 Sophie Hunter – Junior
 Vikram Gavi – Full
 Paul Moir – Full
 Elizabeth Paterson – House
 Lottie Rhodes – Junior
 SM Robb – Non Resident
 Gary Ross – Full
 Alastair Sinclair – Country
 SB Stuart – Non-Resident
 John Verling - Full

- **New members**

Alison Anderson – House
 Thomas Fraser – Junior
 Jack Henderson - Junior
 Charlie MacDonald – Junior
 Harry Notman – Junior

- **Waiting List**

292 on Full waiting list
 5 on Senior waiting list
 23 on deferred list (2024)
 House list has been cleared.

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		2184	1033	943	1704	1202	1928	0	773	7359	6823	7413	5374
2020													36736
2020		3873	3869	809	0	0	2451	5930	5435	7156	6939	6244	5130
2021													47836
2021		3659	2131	1843	2926	2250	3502	4501	5221	5548	5495	5362	5236
2022													47674
2022													
–													
2023	3179	1361	90	1245	2355	2220	4073	5548	5288	5684	6381	4880	42304

2023 -													
2024	1078	1286	495	2088	2436								

General Information/Actions/Requests etc.

- Following email approval, DP now confirms that the Club Regulations have been updated and will be uploaded to the members area of the website.
- DP will arrange for the Photographer to come along to the May Council meeting to update all the Council photos.
- GN and DP have had three quotes for the electrical work required on the Driving Range to install the new trackman bays. It was agreed to appoint the preferred provider.
- DH/GN/DP met with Platform77 (Liam) and MorganSpeirs (Wendy) to discuss the website, comms and Social Media etc. The infrastructure of the website is in place, and the timeline of July launch will be met.
- Several meeting have taken place regarding Phase One of the refurbishment which will commence on 29th April.

5 Capital Projects

- Refurbishment – lower ground starts on Monday 29th. DH updated Council on timeline etc.
- DH carried out an external survey on the Clubhouse and surrounding area. It was agreed to progress with quotes to upgrade/refurbish certain areas around the Clubhouse, Driving Range, sign boards, picnic tables.

6 Marketing

- DH/DP/GN met with Platform77. The website is on time for launch in July. Work is continuing to streamline the Social Media Platforms, comms etc.

7 Strategic Plan

- The Strategy Plan will be reviewed and updated over the coming months.

8 Health & Safety

Nothing to report.

9 AOCB

- It was agreed to have the H&S section at the top of the Agenda.
- Better communication required on Clubhouse closing times for both kitchen and front of house. DP to action.
- Review of membership application approval process agreed. New applications will be reviewed first by selected council members prior to Captains approval each month.

Next Meeting – 28th May @ 5.30pm in the trophy room

Actions

DH	Contact Alan Ross' family re new prize. Also follow up with members who suggested it.
NM/AG	Follow up with Fairhurst & Partners
DP/GN/DH	Progress with website design. Branding etc
DH/DP	Reply to member regarding the Winter Fours future
DH/DP	Arrange to meet with AGM members (last one)
DP/DH/JG	Progress with internal refurbishment
DP	Upload Course Policy to website once confirmed by AG
NM/AG/DP	Finalise Interim Invoice for Scottish Water
NM	Anti Slip strips on path to Black tee at the 1 st hole progress
DP	Circulate "Meet the Captain" Summary to Council
GN/DH	Progress with Driving range Technology and refurbishment
DP	Source Sun Cream dispensers and a Water fountain/dispenser at the 10 th .
GN/NM	Research alternative options to Driving range tokens
DH	Progress with discussion on external maintenance /roof cleaning