

**Minute of Council Meeting
held on the 18th February 2025 in the Pro Shop @ 5.30**

Present:

A. Gordon	(Captain)
C. Watson	(Vice Captain/Finance Convener)
P. Reilly	(Greens Convener)
M. Parkinson	(President)

In Attendance:

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

Apologies:

J. Henderson	(Ladies Captain)
J. Gove	(Past Ladies Captain)
S. Hutchison	(Match & H'Cap)
H. Craigie	(Junior Convener)

1. **Welcome:**
AG welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **Minute of Council held on 28th January 2025**
The minute of the Council meeting on 28th January was approved.
3. **Matters arising from the previous Minute:**
 - Two representatives from CBEC were on site on the 13th February to assess the ditch and outflow work. They met with PR & NM. CBEC have been collating data from various sources up the river Dee including the River Dee Trust. They now have all the information they require from the Clubs perspective and will produce a detailed report in the coming weeks. NM to send drone footage to CBEC.
 - Course Architect James Edwards was on site on Tuesday 25th February. He was particularly pleased with the 7th hole remodelling. He had some thoughts on the left-hand side of the 7th fairway, but it was agreed to leave it as it is for now. Possible mounding at a later date could be installed, as there is plenty of material in there to make something of it. James will come back up and host a members' forum in late Spring (depending on availability). This will be a walk round first then a Q&A in the trophy room. PR to action.
 - NM circulated a course update to members. PR to circulate a Greens Convener update in the next few weeks. It was agreed that a course update was only required once a month, unless there was something specific to communicate.
 - The post and wire fence work along the river boundary from 5th Green to the 11th Tee was completed on Friday 14th February. By 7.00am on the 16th the fence had been professionally cut in two places. It was agreed that two more posts would be installed to give walkers access but stop bike access. PR to meet with Iain Clark from the CMBCC to discuss other options.
 - NM to speak to Aberdeen City Golf about signage. There are eight case studies on Scottish Golf website on managing public access and right of way.
 - Granite City Surveys have completed a survey on the gradient of the 18th path to look at a different option. NM circulated level drawings to Council for a proposed new pathway leading from the 18th and 9th greens. This information has been passed on to Kirsty from Design Scotland for design input and shared with a contractor to obtain a cost estimate for the work.

- Chap Construction will be on site to remove the leaking manhole attached to the main sewer at the toilets and replace with a pipe over the weekend 22nd/23rd Feb. Scottish water have removed the valve and inserted a new pipe.
- Driving Range upgrade. Awaiting a quote and options from G&T carpeting. Fiona Young from Cumming & Co to come and have a look at woodwork options. It was agreed to remove the basket shelf and use that wall for rules, instructions etc. GN to action.
- Get rid of basket shelf and replace with holders for golf ball buckets and put Range rules up on wall. GN action.
- GN has been in touch with Harewood Downs Golf Club in London regarding a reciprocal arrangement.
- GN/DP have researched a couple of options for personalised bag tags. Some more details required.
- CW has formed the Strategy Plan 2026 – 2030 sub-committee. CW will arrange a meeting in due course. The first draft of the plan will be circulated to Council for review at the July Council meeting.
- AG will draft five different options for future winter golf which will be discussed with representatives from both the Winter Fours and the Winter Eclectic in April. A survey will then be carried out on members who played in the Winter eclectics and the winter fours this season.
- After discussion it was agreed to remove the green tees from the Houghton Course. If members want to organise a short course competition, the blue tees will be brought forward.

4. Health and Safety

- It was agreed that NM would prepare a H&S document for all contractors working on site.
- NM continues to work through the course risk assessment from the course walk last year.
- NM/DP in collaboration with the Club Health & Safety Advisor, continue to work on a comprehensive Risk Assessment for playing the course. This remains an ongoing project.

5. Convener Reports

Captain's Report

- AG reported a successful AGM and thanked Council for their support.

Finance Report

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

- The net loss for the month of January of £11.5k is driven by the closure of the clubhouse but compares favourably to a budgeted loss of £21.1k with the main variance being higher entry fees of £8.2k. There was a credit taken for old loyalty card balances (>6 years old) which had been budgeted. The loss for the month is at a similar level to last year despite the clubhouse closure.
- The loss YTD of £37.6k compares to the budgeted loss of £113.4k loss with higher gross profits and lower course costs (machinery maintenance, fuel and building materials all less than budget). The higher loss, than at this point last year, is mainly due to the clubhouse closure and the costs of trackman with increased income offsetting inflationary increases in costs.

- The net loss from **F&B** YTD is £37.6k which is significantly better (£13k) than the budget, due to a very busy period leading up to the closure of the clubhouse, but down on last year because of closure in January. The Gross Profit from catering was 62% YTD in line with budget and 2% up on last year.
- The net loss from **Golf Operations** YTD was £17.5k, which is £4.5k better than budget £6k, and better than last year driven by strong sales due to better weather and the new loyalty scheme. The closure of the clubhouse does not seem to have adversely impacted the pro-shop sales too much.

Balance Sheet Review

- **Bank Balances at 31 January 2025 – total of £686k.** This represents a reduction in the total cash of £98k in the month with the largest payments being the payment for the new tractor, course development costs, and the new pro-shop stock. We will see a further reduction in cash in February and March as we pay for the ongoing clubhouse refurbishment in February and March.
- **Cash Reserves Requirement for Operations** – Based on budget the requirement is £540k, leaving about £146k for capital improvements. We will exceed this and dip into our reserves which was always expected, but this should reverse in coming years once the refurbishment is complete.
- **Capital Expenditure on improvements** - During January £13k was spent on the bunkers programme and £52k on the new tractor. (Amounts are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.)

Clubhouse Refurbishment

- There were only limited amounts spent on the new clubhouse in January related to the removal of the kitchen appliances. There will be significant payments made in February – overall the costs remain in line with our current year budget.
- The annual F&B members unspent balances from 2024/25 bar/catering charge will be forfeited on 1st May 2025.

Greens Convener and Course Manager Report

The full report was circulated in advance. To summarise:

- February has been a productive month, with significant progress made in preparing the golf courses for the upcoming season. The team has successfully hollow-cored all tees on both courses, and we are now focusing on the approaches. Both sets of approaches will undergo deep scarification, with additional hollow-coring planned for the wetter areas to improve drainage and playability. Once this phase is complete, the next step will be to scarify the greens and perform sand injection across all putting surfaces. Weather permitting, this work will be completed by mid-March, ensuring minimal disruption to the playing season.
- Two new pathways have been installed, one on each of the first holes. While the main construction has been completed, some minor turfing work remains to fully integrate them into the course landscape.
- Sewage Management - The go ahead was issued for the removal of the chamber near the non-return valve at our on-course toilet facility.
- Bunker Construction - The bunker development project is progressing well. Work on the 8th hole is nearly complete, with only the liner installation remaining. Construction has now moved on to the 9th hole, and good progress is being made.
- Tree Work - As identified in the recent tree survey, two trees require crown reductions. This work is scheduled to take place in late February. Following further consultation

with the tree surgeon, he has recommended that one of the larger trees be removed instead of pruned. A final decision needs to be made regarding this recommendation. After discussion this was agreed. The trees along the left-hand side of the 4th hole on the Blairs course require pruning, this work will be carried out while the cherry picker is on-site. It was agreed that the Arborist (Struan) and the Course Architect (James) should meet on site for a Course walk round. NM to arrange this in the coming months.

- NM confirmed that 14th hole would be open by mid-March and the remaining holes would be completed in time for the 1st medal of the season.
- NM/PR to meet and discuss updating the Course Policy. It was agreed that member updates should be monthly and not weekly. PR is meeting with the greens team during the first week of March.
- Mats will come off once ground conditions allow. It was agreed that mats should be removed a couple of weeks before the first medal of the year.

Ladies' Captain Report

- The full report was circulated in advance. To summarise: The Ladies Committee for 2025-26 have their first meeting at the end of February. At the ABM it was agreed to align with the gent's competition entry rules and make it as easy for all ladies to play. GN has also adjusted the ladies tee times on Tuesdays and Fridays to accommodate ladies who wish to play earlier. The winter golf programme has been well supported and the ladies have appreciated how well the course has stood up to winter conditions. The last event of the winter calendar is the Chris Wilson Stableford on Tuesday 18th March.

- **Match & Handicap Report**
- Nothing to report

Junior Report

- Sam has organised for the 8 lowest handicap juniors to play a friendly match against Cruden Bay, home and away. Away tie is being played this Sunday coming, with the home leg on Sunday, 23rd March. Cruden Bay's teaching pro, Murray Patterson, is going to take a session and show the boys his force plates, which shows ground reaction forces during their swings.
- Junior Pennant – HC attended the ADJGT AGM on 2nd February at Royal Aberdeen. They are struggling for volunteers to take on the management roles, but a way forward has been provisionally agreed.

Pro Shop Report

A full report was circulated in advance, to summarise:

- The Pro Shop continue to monitor the errant golf balls from the driving range. During the month there were 48 out of bounds, 9 down the left and the rest on the sheds.
- The launch of the new Ping G440, TaylorMade Qi35 & Wilson Dynapwr series has kept Kevin busy with custom fits & orders. GN thanked to the membership for their continued support.
- GN has upgraded the teaching bay/performance suite so that our fitting equipment is visible during lessons/ittings.
- GN has moved the astro putting green into shop to encourage members to try putters & increase our putter presence.
- The stocktake is nearly completed for February.

- Gents & Junior Competitions are in ClubSystems, Ladies will be completed by end of Feb.
- GN shared details on new bag tags. This needs some more research.
- Driving Range targets is work in progress. Further discussion required with NM & PR
- GN has placed the order for Pennant clothing with Oscar Jacobson as agreed at a previous meeting.

Club Manager Report

- Membership Numbers:

Full members	826
Senior members	124
Associate 30 – 34	13
Associate 24 – 29	18
Young Adults	24
House/Non Playing	175
Senior VIP	10
House 5 Day	2
Country	16
Junior 12 – 18	113
Junior under 12	61
Non Resident	67
Life	14
Honorary	7

- Applications for membership – Oct. All approved by the membership sub-committee.

- Applications for membership – Jan - Feb All approved by membership sub-Committee

Cat	Name	Proposer	Seconder
Full	Luke Girling	James Stewart	Steve Taylor
Full	David Laing	Tony Laing	David Dempsie
Full	Keith Thomson	Simon Cruickshank	Simon Cruickshank (Jnr)

- **Transfers from within the membership**

JD Craig from Full to Country
 Sarah Gordon from Country to Full
 Ben Smith from Junior to Young Adult

- **Resignations**

Muriel Reekie – House
 Ian Strachan – Full

- **Deceased**

Sheila Joiner – House
 JD Smith – House
 J Stewart Spence – Life member
 Steven Wilson – Non resident

- **New members**

- **Waiting List**
Analysis of annual applications approved at Council:

Full Member Waiting List

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
January	0	7	6	4	11
February	6	5	12	0	
March	2	19	8	9	
April	4	5	4	3	
May	1	8	15	2	
June	1	16	7	5	
July	2	3	7	10	
August	1	14	17	6	
September	4	19	6	12	
October	1	0	5	7	
November	5	14	0	4	
December	0	0	0	0	
Annual	27	110	87	62	11

- Offers of membership
From the 23 deferred members from 2024 6 have accepted, 12 have requested to be taken off and 5 have not responded to reminders (They will be removed)
- 75 1st time offers have been sent out for full membership. So far 31 have deferred 33 have accepted and 11 still to reply.

Course Usage – H & B

[illegible]

General Information/Actions/Requests etc. for discussion

- The marquee will open towards the end of March depending on the weather.
 - Full-time clubhouse staff have been in and out at various stages carrying out duties, administration, training etc as required. Interviews are taking place for new part-time staff, who will start with some training the weekend before we open.
- The AGM had 45 members in attendance. Facebook live has reported 214 views.

6. November Agenda Items

- Club Refurbishment – AG reported that SIR Joiner had gone into administration, however Donview Construction have taken over the contract and the work has been completed. We expect that there will be no financial impact to the club with SIR's administration.

AOCB

- NM to forward the plans for the ramp at the balcony.
- It was agreed to review the need for the course flooding sub-committee until after the CBEC report has been received. Any actions will be covered in the Strategy Plan.
- NM is going to trial the Yellow Rattle plant in some areas. It is a tall fescue plant that slows down thick grass growth.
- It was agreed to paint some of the boundary fence posts with white paint as out of bounds markers.
- PR asked about EV charges. DP/AG explained that this had been thoroughly researched a few years ago and it was agreed it was not required at this point in time.

Next Meeting – Wednesday 26th March @ 5.30pm in the Trophy Room

Actions

AG/NM/PR	Arrange a members' forum with James Edwards in the Spring.
AG	Draft options for winter golf and create a survey for members who play winter golf.
DP/NM	Continue to work on full course risk assessment from playing the course
NM/PR	Prepare a Greens Convener update in the next few weeks. Arrange a joint meeting with Struan (Arborist) and James (Architect). Meet to update Course Policy. Meet with Iain Clark from CMBCC to look at options on the river path.
CW	Progress with Strategy sub-committee. First draft of plan to be presented to Council at July meeting.
NM	Send drone footage to CBEC. Create a H&S document for contractors on site for course work. Complete work along the back of the 13th boundary once the fence is erected. Speak to Aberdeen City Golf about signage on managing public access. Follow up with Chap Construction on completion of the non-return valve work Discuss with Struan Dalglish a 5 to 10 year tree strategy. Continue to update the risks from the course walk. Remove Green tees. Forward plans to AG for access ramp to replace balcony steps.
GN/DP	Follow up on quote from General & Technical for Carpet in driving range. Follow up with painter Mike Hamilton about options for woodwork in driving range. Arrange reciprocal with Harewood Downs. Follow up on new bag tags with name on the back.

