

Minute of Council Meeting
held on the 28th January 2025 at Chap Construction Head Quarters

Present:	A. Gordon	(Captain)
	C. Watson	(Vice Captain/Finance Convener)
	J. Gove	(Past Ladies Captain)
	H. Craigie	(Junior Convener)
	A. Powell	(President)

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

Apologies:	S. Hutchison	(Match & H'Cap)
	P. Reilly	(Interim Greens Convener)
	J. Henderson	(Ladies Captain)

1. Welcome:

AG welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minute of Council held on 19th November 2024

The minute of the Council meeting on 19th November was approved with one amendment.

3. Matters arising from the previous Minute:

- CBEC will be on site on the 13th February to carry out a survey and check various paths, drainage and silt issues before submitting the output report within one month. NM to reply to CBEC accepting the terms and conditions. AG will be in attendance at the meeting.
- Strategy Plan – AG/SH to finalise the terms of reference for the Strategy Plan Sub-Committee. It was agreed that CW will chair the sub-committee which will be finalised by the end of February. JG, DP and two other members to sit on the sub-committee. The draft Strategy Plan 2026 – 2030 to be presented to Council at the July meeting for approval prior to presenting to the membership.
- Club Refurbishment – Communication to be sent to members after the progress meeting on 30th January.
- NM – The post and wire fence work along the river boundary from 5th Green to the 11th Tee will commence once gate next to 5th tee is ready.
- NM to erect the signage along the path route as agreed. Further pictorial signage to be investigated. NM/DP to action.
- NM/GN review additional closer targets on the Driving Range.
- The feedback on the proposed new format of the Strokeplay Championship has been well received by members.
- Winter Golf –Teeing off earlier on a Saturday has improved the flow of play. AG to draft five different options on Saturday play and circulate to all those who have participated in the winter eclectic and Winter fours for comment. It was agreed that the wider membership should be involved in the decision to encourage more members to play during the winter. It was agreed that a decision would be made in April. AG will then

review the Winter Fours format for next year and discuss with the Winter Fours conveners. Various options were discussed including reverting back to foursomes.

- AG met and played golf on Haughton with some individual members who had concerns about the bunker plan. It was agreed that when James Edwards is back on site, AG/NM would arrange a member forum to update members on the bunker programme, course design and the philosophy behind the design.

4. Health and Safety

- First Aid refresher courses have been completed.

5. Convener Reports

Captain's Report

- AG/DP to arrange a “welcome back” members afternoon/evening in early March.

Finance Report

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

- The net loss for the quarter of £26.4k compares favourably to a budgeted loss of £92.4k with the main variance being a reduction in course costs due to the timing of certain expenditures and some savings/recoveries, and improved contributions from F&B and Golf Operations. The Q1 loss is slightly higher than the loss at this stage last year primarily due to lower entry fees than were collected at this stage last year and higher course costs due to salaries, clubhouse utility bills and upkeep. These variances were offset by the much-improved contribution from F&B and Golf Operations.
- The net loss from **F&B** for YTD is significantly better than the budget and prior year figures due to a very busy period leading up to the closure of the clubhouse.
- The net loss from **Golf Operations** for the quarter is better than budgeted driven by very strong Q1 sales perhaps driven in part by the new loyalty points scheme which has been introduced.

Balance Sheet Review

- **Bank Balances at 31 December 2024 – total of £784k.** This represents a reduction in the total cash of £82k with the largest payments being the deposit for the new furniture and continuing spend on the bunker project. We will see a further reduction in cash in Q2 as we pay for the next phase of the clubhouse refurbishment in February and March and also the delivery of a new tractor.
- **Cash Reserves Requirement for Operations** – Based on budget the requirement is £540k, leaving about £244k for capital improvements. We will exceed this and dip into our reserves which was always expected but this should reverse in the coming year once the refurbishment is complete.
- **Capital Expenditure on improvements** - During Q1, £16k was spent on new bunkers programme and winter tee mats.

Clubhouse Refurbishment

- The cash spent on the refurbishment in Q1 was about £50k for furniture and professional fees. We also incurred about £32k in the prior year for the deposit on the carpet.
- The total cost of Phase 2 was estimated at £352k including £20k of contingency and £15k of project management costs. The current estimate based on known variations is £355k which includes a reduced contingency of £8k. The total variations are £15k comprising of pipework, a new sound system and various additional lighting costs.

There are other additional items of spend that are not part of Phase 2, including the new balcony door (part of the external refurbishment cost - £7.5k) a new coffee machine (£7.5k), and new crockery and glassware (£8k).

- Given the additional outlays and pressure on cash reserves, CW recommended that Council do not proceed with autonomous mowers for Haughton course in the current year and defer this decision for a year. This would be a capital/cash saving of £130k as budgeted. After discussion it was agreed that NM would discuss options with Husqvarna including phasing the purchase of the mowers over the next couple of years.

Greens Convener and Course Manager Report

The full report was circulated in advance. To summarise:

- After the snow, work has resumed on the bunker at the 7th hole. The area has now been turfed, with the concrete liner being laid within the next couple of weeks.
- Both paths leading from the 1st tees have been lifted. The grey dust path will be installed and completed before the end of February.
- The fencing project and gate installation are scheduled to proceed as soon as the gate is delivered on site.
- The signs previously approved by Council, warning walkers on the course will be erected in the coming weeks on the new fence posts and at key access points to the course.
- Clancy's team was on-site last week and successfully sealed the final manhole. Chap is currently devising a plan to resolve the issue with the inspection chamber.
- Following the STRI report and recommendations, the following initiatives will be implemented:
 - NM to trial the use of Yellow Rattle in specific areas of the course, including around the 3rd tees and one of the mounds on the 9th hole. Yellow Rattle is a plant that visually resembles fescue grasses but suppresses the growth of grasses beneath it. This reduces excessive density during periods of strong growth, making it easier for players to locate golf balls.
 - Scarifying and Topdressing Enhancements: To better manage thatch levels, NM will increase the frequency of scarifying maintenance and ramping up topdressing applications to help dilute the thatch.
 - Tree Root Management Plan: Tree roots have been pruned as part of initial maintenance. To prevent mower damage and reduce wear and tear, NM to develop a plan to cover exposed roots with appropriate materials. This approach will also help protect the root systems and maintain the overall health of the trees.
- Struan Dalgleish, the arboriculture consultant, conducted his annual survey in December 2024. Overall, the survey was positive and recommended some crowning work to be carried out on two trees and to monitor a further 25 trees. NM to follow up with Struan Dalgleish on the five-to-ten-year tree strategy.
- Safety on the course - The Raised Tee Frames have been in use since October and their use will be reviewed at the end of the season. In the meantime, a safety issue was identified and as a result a safety notice was emailed to all members and placed on noticeboards.
NM has been updating the "risks" from the course walk through last year.
NM/DP in conjunction with the Club Health & Safety Advisor have been working on a Risk Assessment for playing the course.

- CBEC - At the November Council meeting Council agreed to engage the services of CBEC Engineering. CBEC will assess the existing drainage network across the course and the interaction of the River Dee with the course; from the outcome of this assessment CBEC will recommend potential options for:
 - improving drainage across the site.
 - reducing levels of fine sediment deposition during flood events, and,
 - the potential for reinstating a public path between the River Dee margins and the golf course
 - This work is due to take place in January to March
- Course Closure Record - A new spreadsheet to track course closures on an annual basis has been created, this was circulated to Council.
- After discussion it was agreed to start and finish bunkers at the 9th, but leave the 17th till later to focus on Spring Course maintenance.
- NM to follow up with Scottish Water/Chap regarding the non-return valve issue at the Course toilets. It was agreed to progress with the quote to take out Chamber and solid pipe to the sewer.
- NM confirmed that Granite City Survey had been on site to take further measurements of the alternative 18th path option. The updated drawing will be circulated in due course.

Ladies' Captain Report

The full report was circulated in advance. To summarise:

- The Ladies Captain's transition took place during the Ladies Business Meeting at the Cults Hotel on Saturday 18th January. The meeting was well attended, with 50 ladies present and 32 apologies received. Jackie Henderson has now established her Ladies Committee. JG wished JH and her committee every success in the year ahead.
- JH submitted apologies for the January Council meeting.
- JG will attend the Council meetings as requested until the refurbishment of the club is completed.
- Last month the Ladies section held their Prize Giving Dinner. It was a special evening, made even more so by the announcement of our 2025 President - Past Captain Margaret Parkinson.
- JG took the opportunity to thank Council for their support over the last two years. JG expressed it had been a genuine pleasure to work alongside Council including past Captains Simon Cruickshank and David Halliday, as well as our current Captain, AG.
- JG also recognised her excellent committee. JH, Sally Gordon (Friendlies) and Carol McGregor (County). Additionally, a special mention to Club Manager DP - her support was truly invaluable. JG said it had been an honour to serve as the Ladies Captain, and she couldn't have done it without these ladies.
- JG also thanked GN and his team, Kevin & Sam. They are truly the backbone of the club. Nothing is ever too much for GN, he was always available to bounce ideas off, give advice at the ladies monthly meetings and provide support whenever needed. Deeside are incredibly lucky to have such a Professional team.

Match & Handicap Report

- Nothing to report

Junior Report

- Sam has kindly organised another trip to St Andrews for 21 Juniors, on 9th March. Fingers crossed it will be warmer than last year.

- Junior Pennant - HC has confirmed that Deeside intends to enter two teams into the Junior Pennant League again this year. The ADJGT AGM is being held on 2nd February at Royal Aberdeen, HC will attend.

Pro Shop Report

A full report was circulated in advance, to summarise:

- GN has taken delivery of the new Alan G Ross salver which looks beautiful. This is for the best gross score each year won by Jason Bruce in 2024.
- Apart from one or two ladies 'fun competitions' using the green course, it has not been utilised at all. Decision to be made whether these tees remain.
- It would appear there are a handful of ladies wishing to play on Tuesdays & Fridays before the competition zones. It is also apparent that tee times are being released from the last zones on these days too. GN recommends that the tee times are moved forward from 8.42-10.48 to 8.24-10.30. This was approved.
- The Christmas Lunch/Cross Country event will be moved from the Saturday before Christmas to two Saturdays before Christmas as a trial for 2025. This was approved.
- It has been highlighted/requested that from 2025, a referee is assigned to each Club Matchplay Final after the issues experienced in the Sir Thomas Jaffray last season. It was agreed this is not necessary; there have been no other similar incidents in recent years of any match play final and Council viewed that the matter had been addressed and was a one off incident.
- GN to request a quote from General & Technical to replace the carpet in the Driving Range. DP to speak to Mike Hamilton on woodwork in Driving Range.
- It was agreed to proceed with the reciprocal with Haywood Downs in North London.
- As requested the Flag colours on the driving range have been updated.
- Square mats now in the driving range. These have been well received.
- Saturday intervals now 8/9 with buffer for Fours in Winter.
- Border for the Trackman boundary updated so that greens sheds are outside boundary. There have been a huge number of border breaches in the first 4 days (c12 a day).

Club Manager Report

- Membership Numbers:

Full members	791
Senior members	124
Associate 30 – 34	13
Associate 24 – 29	18
Young Adults	23
House/Non Playing	180
Senior VIP	10
House 5 Day	2
Country	16
Junior 12 – 18	114
Junior under 12	61
Non Resident	68
Life	15
Honorary	7

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

Cat	Name	Proposer	Seconder
Full	Mark Brown	Neil Gordon	Gordon Shepherd
Full	Barry Gibson	Graeme Nisbet	Paul Young
Full	Gregor Kelly	Graeme Bone	Paul Lefevre
Junior	Felix Rennie	David Rennie	Tom Rennie
Full	Tiffany Rothwell	Kenny Riach	Trevor Mackie
Full	Kevin Johnston	David Johnston	David Landsman
Junior	Henry Johnston	David Johnston	Gordon Buchan
Junior	Riley Wilson	John Swan	Alison Swan
Full	Mark Klein	Gary Innes	Craig Yeats
Full	Fraser Mackie	Iain Clark	Ronald Keenan
Junior	Struan Mackie	Iain Clark	Ronald Keenan
Full	Ramsay Pirie	Lesley Nicholson	Nicola Henderson
House	Norma Robb	Gordon Williamson	Alex Urquhart
Full	Mark Walters	Matthew Duncan	Andy McDonald
Full	Stuart Rochow	Kevin Cooper	Andrew Imrie
Full	Michael Innes	Graeme Clark	Roddy Mitchell

- **Transfers from within the membership**

Helene Rose from Full to Non Playing

- **Resignations**

Jon Brown – Associate 30 – 34

Jamie Ireland – Full

Roger McIlroy – Non Playing

- **Deceased**

Rod Coffey – Non-resident

Archie Robb – House

Val Stewart – House

Quintin Aitken -Senior VIP

Frank Hartnett – House

Mike Stewart - House

- **New members**

Angus Atkinson – Junior 12 – 18

Charlie Blacklaws – Junior 12 – 18

Finn Dalgarno – Junior <12

Jacob Spearritt – Junior <12

- **Waiting List**

Analysis of annual applications:

2021 27

2022 110

2023 87

- AGM**

No further nominations were received for Council positions. The Annual Report is available on the website with hard copies available from the office or the Pro Shop.

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	6211	4745	38810
2024													
2025	3373	2494	1983										

General Information/Actions/Requests etc. for discussion

The complimentary coffee machine downstairs has been well received by playing members and the system is working well. We will add a pour over coffee machine on a Saturday as requested.

6. November Agenda Items

- 18th Path Options – covered in Actions.
- Refurbishment Update – covered in Actions.
- Terms of Reference for SP sub committee – covered in Actions.
- Long term sustainability sub committee for flooding etc. To be discussed at next Council meeting.

AOCB

- DP/GN look at bag tags with your name on it.
- AG thanked Andy Powell for his time on Council as President
-

Next Meeting – 18th February @ 5.30pm - Ladies Changing Room

Actions

AG/NM	Meet with CBEC on 13 th February. Arrange a members forum with James Edwards.
AG/SH	Finalise terms of reference for sub committees for Strategy Plan.
AG/JG/DP/CW	Attend meetings and continue with progress on the Club Refurbishment. AG to update members.
DP/NM	Look at further pictorial signage.
NM/PR	Follow up on the survey and cost on alternative 18 th path option.
CW	Progress with Strategy Pan sub-committee before end of February. First draft of plan to be presented to Council at July meeting.
NM	Install signage along boundary and outside the Clubhouse. Complete work along the back of the 13 th boundary once the fence is erected. Follow up with SW/Chap on the return valve at the course toilets. Discuss tree Strategy with Hamish Struan. Implement recommendations highlighted in the SATRI report. Contact Struan Dalglish to progress with 5 to 10 year tree strategy. Continue to update the risks from the course walk.
GN/DP	Get a quote from General & Technical for Carpet in driving range. Speak to painter Mike Hamilton about options for woodwork in driving range. Arrange reciprocal with Haywood Downs. Source new bag tags with name on the back.
AG	Finalise format of Strategy Plan document for sub-committee. Draft five options for Winter Golf. Review Winter Fours format and meet with WF's conveners.
AG/DP	Arrange members evening for re-opening.
Council	Decision on green tees.

