

Minutes of the Village Golf Club Annual General Meeting

Thursday 29th November 2018

Present: 14 people attended the meeting

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Keith Herbert, Pam Jameson, Callum Findlay, Arthur Sales, David Kelly, Keith May, Mick Eastland, Paul Edge, Trevor Phipps and Sean Harvey.

2. Minutes of the last AGM

The Minutes of the AGM held on 29th November 2017 were agreed as a true and correct record and were signed.

3. Chairman's Report

I started last year's AGM by stating that we had had a hugely successful year and that the club was in a stronger position than it had been for years. Well, I am delighted to report that 'The Club' has gone from strength to strength and that we finish this year in an even better position than last year.

As you will hear from the other reports membership has increased, machinery has been enhanced and significant improvements have been made to the course. But none of these things would have happened had we not received tremendous support from the community, committee and our membership.

An AGM is the ideal place to acknowledge significant contributions and I would like to recognise the fantastic support that has been given to the club from the community payback scheme. The work they have undertaken from clearing the Car Park, cutting back the hedge lines, raking leaves and erecting new tee fencing has been invaluable. However perhaps their most significant achievement was the demolition of the old pavilion which was a major feat, and which has opened up a number of possibilities for the future development of the course. This will allow us to develop an additional 3 holes on the site of the old football and cricket pitches and it is hoped that we will be able to create at least one of these during the course of the next year.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express our special thanks to Peter Ross, a former founder of the course, a long-time member and most recently our President. Unfortunately for us, Peter and his wife decided to move to Cornwall this year to be nearer family and they moved in the summer. Peter is a huge loss to the club. He is a man of many talents, he could be relied upon to always come up with a practical solution to any problems we encountered, to make bespoke fixtures or fittings and to see the best in people. We certainly miss his words of wisdom – or wit as the case may be at our committee meetings. Although we are very sad to lose Peter as President I am delighted to report that we have been fortunate enough to persuade Mick Collins to become our new President and as such we have secured a very worthy successor for Peter and I am sure this is something he would fully endorse.

As a mark of our appreciation for all that Peter has done for the club we will be installing a bench in his honour down by the 5th tee. To make it even more special one of our members has agreed to sculpt it for us from wood derived from the course. We look forward to using it in the New Year.

As always there are many people who make significant contributions to the club and at the risk of missing someone out, I would like to publicly thank John who does a brilliant job looking after the course and making significant year on year improvements. To Chris Holness who continues to lock and unlock the gates every day irrespective of the weather or his own difficult circumstances. To Brian Ball who made and fitted all our water point covers and to Gerry Randall who commissioned his nephew to work on the course for a week in January undertaking vital tree work for us. However there is one person without whom the club would not exist and that is Jane, She keeps a tight rein on our finances, our legal standing, our equipment and our security – the work she undertakes has ensured the club is in a strong position for long term survival.

During the course of this year Jane has undertaken significant work on the GDP Regulations to ensure that the club is fully compliant. She has driven the agenda alongside Mick to ensure all legal documents have been updated, the land which is held in trust for the golf club has been recorded correctly with HM Land Registry and the charity commission records have been updated.

Callum organised and led another very successful Junior coaching course again this year and it was very pleasing to see many returning young players. Competitions have continued to be very successful and we have, on occasions, had over 20 players in our Sunday morning competitions. We were delighted to host a competition against The Kings Head in the summer and this turned out to be a very sociable occasion which we hope will become an annual event. We are considering running a Knock out competition next year that will run over the whole summer and if anyone would like to donate a trophy for this competition I would be delighted to hear from them.

We have unfortunately had two negative experiences this year the first being what could have been a very nasty accident when the John Deere erupted in flames whilst John was still sitting on it – I understand his speed running between the fire and the pond to collect buckets of water was very impressive – but sadly the fire won and the John Deere was left a write off. We are still in discussion with the insurers to see if we are entitled to any compensation. Fortunately for us John was unharmed and we managed to find another almost identical machine for sale in the vicinity. The other disappointment was another attempted break-in to the equipment container. The would-be thieves managed to cut the casing covering the lock off the container but could not bypass the lock so were unable to steal anything. As a consequence of this attempted theft we have replaced the lock housing with an even heavier-duty, metal casing and we have also installed security posts in front of both containers which mean that even if the lock is forced the doors will not open past the security posts. Hopefully the posts will act as a further deterrent to any would be thieves – we do hope so!

Despite the two significant challenges I have just reported on - as I started by saying this year has gone from strength to strength and I anticipate even better next year – The Village Golf Club really is now on the Map and long may it always stay there.

4. Treasurer's Report

Jane Annetts (JA) explained that she had continued to stand in for Keith Herbert as Treasurer this year and was therefore delivering this year's report.

JA distributed copies of the Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure reports for the year. The accounts have been reconciled with the bank statements and have been audited by Keith Herbert. The accounts have been prepared on a simple cash accounting basis and therefore reflect income actually received and expenses actually paid up to 31st October 2018.

The accounts indicate that funds currently stand at £7,296, which is almost £1,100 more than the balance held at the 2017 year end.

You will see that there is a reduction in both income and expenditure for the year when compared to 2017. Total income was £20,426, a decrease of £4,239. Total expenditure for the year was £19,329, a decrease of £5,337 over last year. The overall effect therefore is to increase the funds carried forward this year by £1,097.

I would like to expand on the reasons for these differences and comment on some of the larger amounts shown in the accounts:-

Income

- Membership Fees – After seeing a significant increase last year and the year before that, it is pleasing to note that membership fees have increased by a further £1,609 this year.
- Green Fees - Last year's green fees were £1,330 higher than 2016 and it is great to see that this increase has been sustained and slightly improved upon this year, with a total income of £2,250 from this source.
- Grants - This year we received a grant of £1,600 from a local Staplehurst charity called the Newlyn Trust. This was used to resolve the issues we were facing with the toilet and cesspool.
- The apparent decrease in overall income this year results from two items in the accounts. In 2017 we received a total of £5,757 from an insurance claim and from the sale of some machinery.

Expenditure

- AGM and membership renewal costs have increased by £268 over last year. However, this year's costs include £439 for a supply of new membership bag tags, which should be enough for the next three to four years.
- Machinery repair and maintenance costs have again reduced by £610 this year, reflecting savings from the newer and more reliable machinery we now have.
- The expenditure shown under Other Repair and Maintenance is mainly concerned with the repair of the cesspool, the large container following a further break-in attempt, the replacement of the toilet door and purchase and installation of two new security bollards to protect the containers. (The higher expenditure last year was a result of replacing the tee mats.)
- Expenditure shown under the heading of Course Maintenance includes the cost of materials for the new security fencing around the tees in addition to the regular items such as hedge cutting, seed and fertiliser, etc.
- Wage costs have increased by 11.5% resulting from increased hours worked by John and the hourly rates paid.
- Of the amount shown under the heading of General Expenses £380 represents the cost of providing lunches for the Community Payback Team who have worked on the course most weekends over the year.
- Despite the fact that John is now spending longer on mowing a far larger area than previously, Fuel Expenses have decreased by £240 as we now have almost entirely diesel machinery and are able to use cheaper red diesel.
- Publicity and advertising - In addition to placing two press advertisements, these costs include the renewal of our web-site hosting, the renewal of our web-site domain name registration and reprinting the club's leaflets.
- Purchase of Equipment includes, £1,100 for a new rotary mower for the greens surrounds and £4,800 to replace the John Deere mower used for the fairways (last year's costs included the zero-turn Kubota mower and powered leaf sweeper).

Looking forward

It is important to consider the next few months as, as always at this time of the year, we now have a further four months of expenditure to fund.

Projected costs for the period between November and February next year are £4,900. This includes wages, fuel, insurance premiums, water rates, hedge cutting, tree surgery and a contingency for any machinery servicing and repairs.

On this basis we should have approximately £3,000 in funds by 1st March when we will begin to receive further income again.

Our intention is to continue to replace and upgrade the machinery we have whenever possible and in terms of any major expenses next year, subject to funds being available, it is intended that we source and purchase a new (used) greens mower to replace the current aging machine. If we benefit from a further good year financially, it may also be possible to replace the very old and tired compact tractor with a suitable alternative.

5. Membership Report

Jane Annetts reported that at the time of last year's AGM we had 171 members. Presently we have 178 members, which represents a further small increase in membership and is the highest number of members the Club has had since I became Membership Secretary in 2010. By the end of the last membership year in February 2018 we had 175 members, so we have already exceeded that number and have the possibility of adding a further 1 or 2 members before February 2019.

The aim of the Club is to make golf accessible to all by being an affordable local community facility that encourages a wide range of people, including children, new players and older members to participate. It is therefore pleasing to note that this year 48 (27%) of our members are made up from family or junior memberships.

As you will have seen from the Treasurer's report our income from membership fees this year was £15,280, an increase of £1,600 over last year. This is nearly double the income we were receiving only 4 or 5 years ago.

Each year approximately 30% of the previous year's members do not re-join in the following year. It is therefore important that we do not relax our efforts to recruit new members. This year we have placed two press advertisements; one in the Downs Mail at Easter when a special deal allowed us to place an advertisement with an additional 150 words of copy and one during the summer in mid-Kent Living magazine.

However, the majority of our new members have come from people viewing our web-site, from recommendations by existing members and from local residents driving past the course and seeing the sign and banners on the containers.

With this in mind this year I have added Village Golf Club to Google's My Business, which means a profile of our club's details now shows up in a panel when anyone searches for us or searches more generally for golf clubs in our area. Next year, rather than repeating press advertisements, we will consider renewing the banners on the containers if they appear to need refreshing.

Finally, with regard to next year's membership fees, I am pleased to confirm that the Committee have agreed to maintain these at their existing levels of:-

Adult - 7 Day	£115
Adult - Weekday Only	£97
Junior	£55
Family - 2 Adults, 2 Children under 16	£240
Family - 1 Adult, 2 Children under 16	£160

Green fees for members' guests will remain at the current level of £5 per guest.

6. Ground Staff Report

As stated earlier in Annette's report the cutting season certainly started with a bang; literally as the fairway mower blew up from under me. I can't quite remember the last time the earth moved for me like that!!

That unfortunate event aside, I feel confident in saying the course is progressing well year on year!

If there were any real problems on the course for me this summer, it was the very unusual hot and dry weather that went on for several weeks. Great for playing golf, but keeping the greens in a reasonable condition for putting was quite a problem, as I just never seemed to be able to get enough water on them before they dried out and needed more.

Anyway they survived and are now responding well having been fertilised, over-seeded and spiked in early autumn. The fairways, semi-rough and greens surrounds coped much better than the greens and I think these parts of the course are getting better and better.

October and November of course are very busy months with the leaves dropping, and since we purchased the leaf collector last year I believe we have coped pretty well with what must be tons in actual weight of leaves.

Thanks to the payback gangs for the work at weekends with the moving of leaves to bins and bonfires. Yes of course somebody has to actually do the manual part of the work and thanks must go to Jane and Annette for again covering for me whilst I was on holiday, but much of the on-going improvements on those parts of the course are down to the purchase of the appropriate machines that are meant for those particular functions. I'm rather hoping that this trend will continue, with the purchase of a more up to date greens mower next summer.

I'd like thank the committee and the handful of members of the club for the help around the course over the past year as without that help I just would not have the time for the things that need doing on an almost daily basis.

Before I finish I just want to say that despite two or three years on the trot of unwanted problems with stolen mowers, serious break downs, burnt out machines and more attempted break-ins, the club led by Annette and Jane in my opinion continues to go onward and upwards mainly due to their enthusiasm and hard graft.

7. Election of Officers

Annette Scott explained that Keith Herbert had decided to resign from the Committee, but that he was very happy to maintain a close relationship with the Club and was more than prepared to assist in any way possible. Annette expressed her thanks for all he has done for the Club.

With the exception of Keith Herbert, the current committee were prepared to stand again and were voted in en block. Additionally Chris Castledine had expressed an interest in joining the Committee. All current and new members were proposed, seconded and elected.

8. Any Other Business

Mick Collins introduced himself to the meeting and explained that not only was he one of the Trustees of the Dawkins Trust that owned the grounds, but also that he had been involved in the establishment of the original sports grounds at Clapper Lane, had acted as groundsman for many years and had continued his long association with the Club since then.

Annette Scott announced the Club 'Player of the Year' results, which are based on points accumulated from competitions played throughout the year:-

In 3rd place was Lindsay Edwards

In 2nd place was Chris Castledine

In 1st place and winner of the shield was Tim Scott.

The Meeting closed at 7.32 p.m.

Attendees:

Jane Annetts

Brian Ball

Mick Collins

Carol Edwards

Lindsay Edwards

John Gower

Andrew Norman

Terry O'Connor

Ursula O'Connor

John Reese

Annette Scott

Dave Tremain

David Williams

Jenny Williams

Village Golf and Sports Club

Balance Sheet as at 31st October 2018

	2018	2017
	£	£
Balance Brought Forward	6,199.60	7,296.81
Balance from Income and Expenditure	<u>1,097.21</u>	<u>-0.72</u>
	<u>7,296.81</u>	<u>7,296.09</u>
Represented By:		
Current Account - NatWest	7,296.81	6,199.60
Cash	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
	<u>7,296.81</u>	<u>6,199.60</u>

Village Golf and Sports Club

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ending 31st October 2018

	2018	2017
	£	£
Income		
Membership Fees	15,280.83	13,671.00
Donations	401.00	498.00
Green Fees	2,250.00	2,214.00
Competition Income	420.00	400.00
Insurance Premium Refund	0.00	58.04
Sale of Wood	0.00	70.00
Junior Golf - Profit	225.00	250.00
Grants	1,600.00	1,517.50
Sponsorship	200.00	100.00
Adult Coaching Income	0.00	80.00
Insurance Claim	0.00	2,190.54
Sale of Equipment	50.00	3,616.90
	<u>20,426.83</u>	<u>24,665.98</u>
Expenditure		
AGM & Membership Renewal	650.42	382.24
Machinery Service, Repair & Maintenance	367.06	977.57
Other Repair & Maintenance	2,015.87	1,181.53
Course Maintenance	1,049.93	5,496.75
Wages	6,654.00	5,970.00
Expenses - General	596.38	356.99
Expenses - Fuel	607.47	848.77
Publicity & Advertisements	489.59	153.01
Insurance Premium	512.04	552.14
Water Rates	377.36	290.89
Affiliation Fee	25.00	25.00
Sandvik Ground Rent	0.00	0.05
Purchase of Equipment	5,984.50	8,431.76
	<u>19,329.62</u>	<u>24,666.70</u>
Balance to Accumulated Fund	1,097.21	-0.72