

Minutes of the Village Golf Club Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 27th November 2019

Present: 15 people attended the meeting

Annette Scott thanked everyone for attending and opened the meeting at 7pm.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Pam Jameson, Brian Ball, Paul Edge, Gavin Fuller, Michael Hollman, David Kelly, Keith May, Andrew Norman, Mark Redman and Arthur Sales

2. Minutes of the last AGM

The Minutes of the AGM held on 29th November 2018 were agreed as a true and correct record and were signed.

3. Chairman's Report

Having just read last year's report which outlined how well the club had developed in 2018 and the optimism the committee had for future developments in 2019 - it has made this writing this report very easy as I am going to repeat the same messages but with even more enthusiasm and certainty.

As you will hear from Jane and John the course has continued to improve, membership has increased, finances are secure and disasters have been averted!

You will no doubt have noticed that we have undertaken a lot of work on the old football and cricket pitches. Since these areas were no longer viable for competitive football games, as there were no suitable changing areas, the committee have for a long time been concerned that we were spending time and money cutting the grass and not getting any benefits from one of the best drained areas of the site. Consequently over the last year we have redesigned the course to include an additional 3 holes 1 x par 3 and 2 x par 4 holes. The way we have designed this extension to the course means that it will be possible for players to play the existing course if they wish or to play a slightly more challenging 12 hole round. Additionally it will provide the groundsman with the flexibility of putting some of the waterlogged areas alongside the railway line out of play during the worst of the weather. A lot of work was necessary to secure this course extension including knocking down the old pavilion, removing some trees, levelling the field, building new tee bases and greens as well as extending water feeds to each green. Most of this infrastructure is now complete and we just need nature to be kind to us so that the grass grows well and is strong enough to be played on. Hopefully some areas will be playable later next year even if we need to make some temporary greens. Obviously this work has incurred significant costs and we have been fortunate in that grant funding via Maidstone Leisure Trust has been awarded and we are hoping some Section 106 monies will be allocated to us by the Parish Council.

No year is going to be without some difficulties and the main challenges we have faced this year have been the need to fell several trees around the pond which were in danger of coming down on either the footpath or railway line. The high winds in early autumn really identified how dangerous they were. Although the felled trees are a bit of an eyesore at the moment it will not be possible to clear this area until next year when hopefully the pond dries out. The other major challenge was when we

discovered a water leak that had leaked thousands of litres of water and which could have cost us £4,500 – enough to have put the clubs finances into jeopardy! Fortunately the water company operates a leakage allowance and we were not billed for this leak– however if it happens again we will be liable – hence we now monitor our usage so that we can identify a problem a lot earlier.

As you may know the land that the golf course is on is owned by trustees and unfortunately one of our trustees, Lawrence Whittle has resigned due to other commitments. However, we are delighted to report that Paddy Riordan has agreed to take his place. In addition to his other skills Paddy also provides a strong link with the Parish Council and he has already assisted us in applying for financial support.

Competitions have been well supported again this year although sadly the last 2 competitions were cancelled due to poor weather conditions. The Inter Village competition between the Club and Kings Head was played in very good spirit and I am pleased to report that the club's team did us proud. Our thanks go to Jo and Bob Whiley who sponsored a trophy for the competition.

As always a community club such as ours only survives due to the support provided by volunteers and at the risk of missing someone out can I thank:

- The working parties that have helped move sand, soil, trees and leaves over the course of the last year.
- Roland Moodie who carved the lovely bench by the 5th tee.
- Maidstone Leisure Trust
- Hopefully, the Parish Council who may support us with grant funding.
- The committee for their continued support and commitment and especially to Callum who ran another successful programme of junior coaching.
- Chris Holness for locking and unlocking the course every day irrespective of the weather.
- David Williams for his continued sponsorship.
- Brian Brooks who has taken over from Pam in swishing the greens.
- The Community payback teams who made such a huge impact on the course over the winter and spring. We hope to see them again soon.
- Lastly thanks to Jane and John for their outstanding contributions as without their hard work, attention to detail and commitment to the club it would be hard for us to survive.

The long term vision of the committee has always been to get to the stage where this club will be placed on such a secure footing that it will be a forever resource for this community and I am delighted to say that this is fast becoming a reality.

4. Treasurer's Report

Jane Annetts 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 Mick Collins.

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 2019.

At the year end funds stood at £9,809. You will see that there has been an increase of more than £2,400 in income when compared to 2018. Expenditure for the year increased by just over £1,000 compared to last year. The overall effect therefore is to increase the funds carried forward this year by just over £1,415.

I would like to expand on the reasons for some of the changes to income and expenditure over the year and comment on some of the larger items shown in the accounts:-

Income

- Membership Fees – Have continued to increase with the growth in membership, increasing by a further £1,397 this year.
- Green Fees - It is pleasing to note that the significant increase in green fees received in the last two years has been sustained and improved upon again this year, with a total income of £2,325 from this source.
- Following a 13 month battle with our insurance company, in May 2019 we were eventually paid £2,500 for the John Deere fairways mower that caught fire in April 2018.

Expenditure

- AGM and Membership Renewal costs have decreased by £537 since last year. The change is mainly because last year's costs included the purchase of new membership bag tags which will be enough for several years.
- The expenditure shown under Other Repairs and Maintenance has reduced from over £2,000 last year to a more normal level of £745 this year. Last year's costs included a number of exceptional items such as the repair of the cesspool, the large container, replacing the toilet door and installing security bollards in front of the containers.
- Expenditure shown under the heading of Course Maintenance has increased from £1,049 to £3,692 this year. In addition to the regular items such as hedge cutting, seed and fertiliser, this year's expenditure includes £1,200 on tree surgery, £630 to replenish the bunker sand around the course and, although we dodged the bullet of a massive water bill, we still had to repair the water leak, which cost £840.
- General Expenses have reduced from almost £600 last year to £164 this year. The majority of last year's expenditure was concerned with the cost of providing lunches for the Community Payback Team, which is an expense we have not incurred this year.
- The use of more diesel machinery and red diesel means that there has been a further reduction Fuel Expenses. This year our fuel bill was some 55% less than it was in 2017.
- Publicity and advertising has reduced by £450 since last year. Last year's costs included press advertising, printing of leaflets, and the renewal of our web-site hosting and domain name registration. In view of the continued increase in membership we took the deliberate decision not to place any press advertisements this year.
- Purchase of Equipment relates mainly to the new greens mower purchased at the beginning of the season, (last year's costs were for a new rotary mower for the greens surrounds and replacing the John Deere fairways mower).
- Course Extension - a new category of expenditure relating to the project we are working on to add 3 new holes to the course. Expenditure so far amounts to £3,548 for tree surgery, topsoil, seed for the fairway and greens and 3 tee mats.

More Detail on Course Extension Costs

We have estimated that the total cost of the 3 additional holes will be approximately £12,600. To date we have spent £4,300 and are committed to a further £2,000. We have already received a grant of £1,000 from Maidstone Leisure Trust and are very hopeful that we will receive a further £7,000 from Staplehurst Parish Council (SPC). Providing the money from SPC materialises, the Club will only need to fund a further £1,000 over the course of the next year to complete the project.

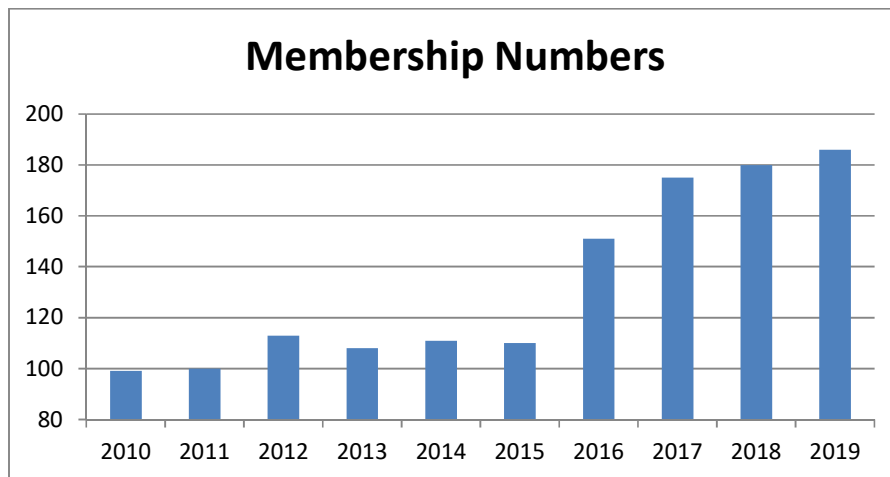
Looking Forward

Since the 31st October year end we have received roughly £1,500 (including the £1,000 grant) and paid out £1,650, leaving a current balance of £9,666.

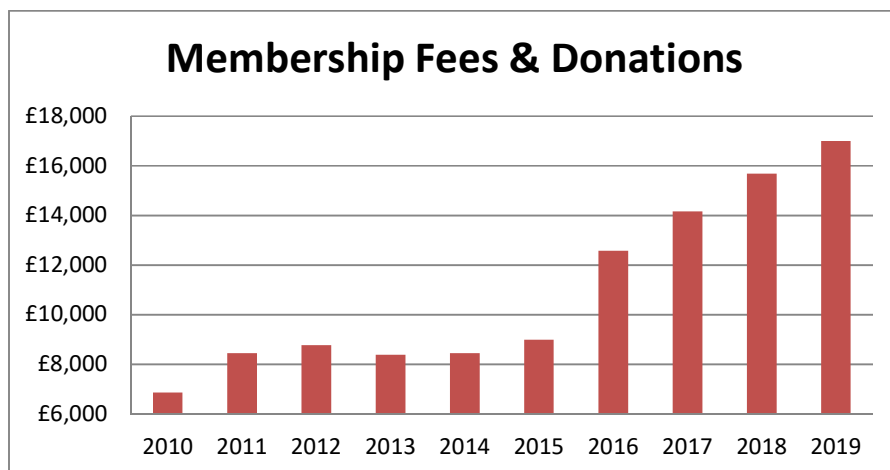
We will have no further significant income until March 2020 when the new membership year starts. Projected costs until then (e.g. wages, insurance premiums, water rates, hedge cutting and winter servicing of machinery) means we are forecasting a balance of approximately £6,800 by 1st March next year. It is worth noting that this will be £3-£4,000 more than we have had at the same point in recent years. Considering that we have now spent over £4,000 on the course extension, this demonstrates how much stronger the Club's finances are and that barring any unforeseen issues arising, should allow us to invest further in improvements to the course and facilities over the coming year.

5. Membership Report

This is a very short but entirely positive report. At the time of last year's AGM we had 178 members. Presently we have 186 members, representing a further increase in membership. By the end of the last membership year, i.e. in February 2019 we had 180 members, so we have already exceeded that number and have the possibility of adding a further 1 or 2 members before February 2020.



As you will have seen from the Treasurer's report our income from membership fees and donations this year was just under £17,000, an increase of £1,300 over last year. This is double the income we were receiving in 2011.



Our aim has always been and continues to be, to make golf affordable to all. With membership numbers continuing to increase the Club's finances are secure and I am therefore pleased to confirm that the Committee have agreed to maintain membership fees 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

I think this is my 5th annual ground report since I started working for the golf club, and for the first time I am able to say that I do not have to sit in front of you and report on major breakdowns or exploding mowers that have cost the club a considerable amount of money to repair or in some cases replace as in previous years, which in turn have affected the day to day upkeep and maintenance of the course, and my down time of course (apart from one small hydraulic hose on the fairway mower and one puncture). All the fit for purpose mowers and machinery that have been purchased by the club in the last couple of years have proved invaluable and as far as I am concerned have kept the course in very good order throughout the spring and summer months.

The new bunker sand that was purchased and laid by committee members and volunteer members has improved them no end, to the extent that even I can play out of them now!

One of the big jobs around the course at this time of year, namely the dreaded leaf collection, especially on the fairways, has been badly hampered by the very wet October and so far November as I have not been able to get the leaf collection machine out as often this autumn as required. In fact I have only been able to use it twice. But we will of course continue to do what we can in the coming weeks to deal with that situation.

As I am sure those of you who play the course regularly will have noticed, two of the three new greens and fairways we intend to add have been started, and two tee bases already in place.

I would like to think, although I have absolutely no experience of having laid new greens before they will be introduced to the course by the middle of next summer, but my gut feeling would be the spring of 2021 to let them settle and the new grass seed to mature and thicken. The main reason for that suspected time frame is that the first of the three has not yet been laid due to the fact the Club needed to get the rough ground prepared which was out of our control. But we should be able to start on this (weather permitting) early next spring.

As in previous years I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who volunteered to help around the course over the past year helping to keep the course in good order with raking bunkers and leaf collection, and especially those who helped with the bunker sand and the tons of top soil for the new greens! Thank you.

7. Proposed Amendments to Constitution

Jane Annetts presented the proposed amendments to the constitution as previously circulated to all members, and outlined the reasons for the changes.

The proposed changes were accepted by all of those in attendance and were adopted.

8. Election of Officers

Annette Scott confirmed that the current committee were prepared to stand again. All current members were proposed by David Williams, seconded by Ursula O'Connor and voted in en block.

9. Any Other Business

9.1 Mick Eastland asked to record his appreciation of the work undertaken by the Committee for the Club and to say that it was greatly appreciated.

Mick Collins stated that he thought Jack Dawkins, the original founder, would have been very pleased to see that the Club was still flourishing.

9.2 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 Brian Brooks

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

The Meeting closed at 7.42 p.m.

Village Golf and Sports Club

Balance Sheet as at 31st October 2019

	2019	2018
	£	£
Balance Brought Forward	7296.81	6,199.60
Balance from Income and Expenditure	<u>2512.96</u>	<u>1,097.21</u>
	<u>9,809.77</u>	<u>7,296.81</u>
 Represented By:		
Current Account - NatWest	<u>9809.77</u>	<u>7,296.81</u>
	<u>9,809.77</u>	<u>7,296.81</u>

Village Golf and Sports Club

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ending 31st October 2019

	2019	2018
	£	£
Income		
Membership Fees	16,678.00	15,280.83
Donations	319.00	401.00
Green Fees	2,325.00	2,250.00
Competition Income	400.00	420.00
Junior Golf - Profit	215.00	225.00
Grants	125.00	1,600.00
Sponsorship	200.00	200.00
Insurance Claim	2,549.00	0.00
Sale of Equipment	95.00	50.00
	<u>22,906.00</u>	<u>20,426.83</u>
Expenditure		
AGM & Membership Renewal	112.56	650.42
Machinery Service, Repair & Maintenance	469.95	367.06
Other Repair & Maintenance	745.79	2,015.87
Course Maintenance	3,692.76	1,049.93
Wages	6,375.00	6,654.00
Expenses - General	164.61	596.38
Expenses - Fuel	391.83	607.47
Publicity & Advertisements	40.00	489.59
Insurance Premium	550.56	512.04
Water Rates	76.79	377.36
Affiliation Fee	25.00	25.00
Sandvik Ground Rent	0.00	0.00
Course Extension	3,548.19	0.00
Purchase of Equipment	4,200.00	5,984.50
	<u>20,393.04</u>	<u>19,329.62</u>
Balance to Accumulated Fund	2,512.96	1,097.21