



MINUTES OF THE 54th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF REAY GOLF CLUB HELD IN THE CLUBHOUSE ON FRIDAY 27th FEBRUARY 2015

Present:

G A Dunnett, G Coghill, J Eunson, Miss M Mackay, F Groves, T Hawes, C Ross, J Disbury, C Munro, C Paterson, L Malcolm, A Bain, F Organ, I Ritchie

Approval to Convene

The Captain, G A Dunnett, welcomed members to the 54th Annual General Meeting of Reay Golf Club, before seeking permission for the meeting to convene. This was duly accepted, proposed by Mr J Eunson and seconded by Mr C Paterson.

Apologies for Absence

I Mowat, E. Sutherland, D Mowat, Mrs S Hawes, Mrs A Ross

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the 53rd AGM were adopted on the proposal of Mr L Malcolm and seconded by Mr A Bain.

Matters Arising

It was confirmed that the Club has had talks with the new owners of Sandside Estates – Reay Farms Ltd.

“It was asked that when the Club enters into talks with the new owners there should be agreement on a lease being put in place. There is legal precedence for not having a lease and, although grant bodies do prefer a lease they will proceed if there is confirmation of occupation from the landowner. Thus a lease will be sought but, provided it is in the best interests of the Club”.

Further discussions relating to the current situation between the Club and the landowners are noted below.

Reports:

1. Captain's Report

General – It has been an honour to serve as the Captain of the club for a second spell, and after three years I will be standing down.

The club has continued to build on progress made during the last couple of years both on and off the course. The Treasurer will report shortly, but once again the club has ended the year with a surplus, largely due to the significant voluntary contributions made by members of the Council and other members of the club.

The course has continued to play well, with some significant work done to improve the existing bunkers over the winter months, with a number of volunteers assisting Jimmy with this work. The course has once again attracted favourable comments on its condition and layout from visitors and members alike. Efforts to increase incomings and reduce outgoings have continued, and further efforts will need to be made, particularly as the new drink driving laws are expected to impact on bar takings. Efforts have been made to attract new members and visitors have been made, and these will need to continue using as many different mediums as possible (social media, word of mouth, press, etc).

Course purchase update – Discussions have been held with the new owners of Sandside Estate, Reay Farms Ltd, and these are ongoing. A statement on the current status of the course purchase project has been agreed between the Council and Reay Farms Ltd, and this will be read to attendees later in proceedings. Although standing down as Captain, I intend to remain involved in the course purchase project to assist the new Council and to provide continuity between the club and the sellers during this process.

Membership – Membership income has been slightly up on the previous year, but it is an area which remains important to the club's overall income and efforts are required to improve this situation further where possible. All members are encouraged to attract new faces to join the club.

Course – The course has been maintained to a very good standard throughout the year, with continuous ongoing improvements being made. Jimmy continues to do an excellent job keeping on top of the course and maintaining equipment on limited resources. The voluntary support received by Jimmy from members is invaluable in this process. Anyone else who is keen to assist is encouraged to contact one of the Council Members to see how they may be able to help. There have been a number of occasions during the season where equipment and resources have been shared with the other local clubs, and such arrangements will continue wherever possible as they bring a number of benefits to ourselves.

Bar – A big thank you to all of the bar staff who have been involved during the past year, with a special mention to Davie for assisting with the banking and stock. The club is always on the look-out for people who may be able to assist with the bar rotas, so anyone interested should let the bar manager know. Thanks to all volunteers who have assisted in maintaining the clubhouse infrastructure throughout the year.

Sponsorship/donations – once again we have enjoyed some excellent support from both long-standing and new sponsors, and the work done by Fred in particular to attract these sponsors is greatly appreciated. If you know of any new potential sponsors that would be worth approaching please let Fred know

Club communications – work has been ongoing to update and improve the club website and this will continue in to the new season. In addition efforts will be made by the club to become more proactive on social media such as Facebook in order to update members on club news such as competition results, fixtures, course closures, and social events. If you are interested in helping out please let me know.

Future – a key focus in the coming year will be the course purchase project, which will require a number of discussions with potential funding bodies. In tandem with this, the club will need to focus on the day to day activities of growing the membership and maintaining/improving the course. Once again, any help that members can offer in any area would be greatly appreciated.

Finally, thank you to the Club Council, staff and members alike for all the support and enthusiasm they have given to me and the Club during the past three years. I think I will be leaving the club in a healthier state now than it was when I took up the reigns three years ago, and this would not have been possible without the help of a dedicated and hard-working committee. I will continue to maintain an active interest in the club and will assist the new Council in any way I can. Many thanks for all of the support received from Council members and general members alike.

2. Treasurer's Report

A formal audit of the 2014 accounts was not available for the meeting.

Overall 2014 saw an excess of income over expenditure of £17.6k. This is the third year in which we have seen income exceed expenditure. Income from membership is the highest for ten years at £45.6k. We have reversed the decline in green fees, this year making £10.5k against last year's £7.5k. Some of this is due to the fact that we no longer have to account for VAT on green fees. Income from Competitions has also increased and is now at £10k for the year. This year also saw a grant of £3.6k to pay for Capital equipment purchased in 2013. Sponsorship also brought in a further £4600. In 2014 expenditure has been kept under control.

Most of the budget lines have been in line with previous years. We have seen small increases in both the upkeep of the machinery and the Clubhouse, at £6.8k and £2.8k respectively. Course treatment at £2.7k is in line with what is normally spent.

Again this year we paid no rent for the use of the course.

The bar this year operated at a small loss of £500.

Sandside Estate/Reay Farms Ltd

The following statement was read out to the members by Mr G Coghill:

The new owners of Sandside Estate, Reay Farms Limited, have been in touch with the golf club and intimated that they would like to sell the land currently occupied by the golf course, some 104 acres.

They have very kindly given the golf club the first opportunity to purchase the land.

The first stage in the process is to get a valuation done by a Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) registered valuer and this has been done. The valuer came from the Government Valuation Office Agency – District Valuer Services in Inverness and his report is expected shortly.

On receipt of the valuation we will have meetings with Reay Farms Limited to agree a sale price and then approach funding agencies for support.

We have already started discussions with HIE and NDA in anticipation.

We appreciate this 'once in a lifetime' opportunity given to us by Reay Farms Limited and hope that we can bring this project to a satisfactory conclusion.

The sellers do not wish to conduct this transaction under the spotlight of press attention so would very much appreciate the members handling this information with sensitivity and discretion at this early stage of the process.

This statement for the AGM on 27 February 2015 has been agreed for release by the sellers.

Changes to the Constitution

Changes to the constitution are put forward to cover the following points:

1. To conform with conditions that the Club is open to the community. This is generally required by funding bodies that deal with high value grant aid.
2. There is to be introduced a new membership category for Juniors aged between 4 years and 9 years. This will be more fully defined in the By-Laws.
3. The membership category for Couples is to be removed, as intended in line with the Equality Act.
4. The Ladies' Representative on the Council will no longer refer to the Ladies' Captain.
5. Other points to tidy up the wording in the Bye-Laws will be implemented.

The above changes were all agreed by the members nem. con.

Election of Office Bearers and Council Members

The captain, Mr G A Dunnett, requested Mr Fred Groves, President of the club take the chair. Mr Groves congratulated Mr Dunnett and his committee for the work done during 2014, and particularly taking the club forward in tricky times. Mr Groves commented that Mr Dunnett could be proud of his achievements over the years of his captaincy.

Mr Groves reiterated the call for volunteers to help with work associated with taking the Club forward.

One nomination had been received for Captain, Mr G Coghill. Mr Groves asked for any other nominations from the floor, there being no other nominations Mr G Coghill was elected to serve as Captain of Reay Golf Club.

The election of Office Bearers continued and there being no other nominations the following were elected to the Council of Management:

Position	Nominee	Proposed	Seconded
Vice-Captain	Mr T Hawes	Mr G Coghill	Mr G Dunnett
Secretary	Mr C Munro	Miss M MacKay	Mr J Eunson
Treasurer	No nomination		
Match Convener	Mr A Bain	Mr L Malcolm	Mr J Eunson
House Manager	Mr J Eunson	Mr G Coghill	Mr E Sutherland
Membership Secretary	Mr F E Groves	G Coghill	Mr L Malcolm
Bar Manager	Miss M MacKay	Mr J Eunson	Mr G Coghill
Green Convener	Mr C Paterson	Mr G Coghill	Mr G A Dunnett
Ladies' Representative	Miss M MacKay	Mr G Coghill	Mr L Malcolm
Junior Convener	Mrs A Ross	Mr E Sutherland	Mr G Coghill
Member	Mr D Mowat	Mr J Eunson	Miss M MacKay
Member	Mr L Malcolm	Mr J Eunson	Miss M MacKay

Subscriptions

PROPOSAL

The following subscription rates were put forward by the Council for the 2015 golf year:

ORDINARY MEMBERS	Male/Female	£360
	Senior (eligible for Nat Retirement Pension)	£290
	Beginner	£150
	Young Adult 1 (18-21 yrs)	£155
	Young Adult 2 (22-25 yrs)	£215
	Young Adult 3 (26-29 yrs)	£285
COUNTRY MEMBERS		£270
JUNIOR MEMBERS	4 years to 10 years	£10
	Under 12	£30
	Under 18 in Full Time Education	£45
	Under 18 not in Full Time Education	£85
ASSOCIATE MEMBERS		£1

The Senior rate is set to increase to achieve equality within a reasonable timeframe.

Any Other Competent Business

1. Mr I Ritchie put forward the following suggestion, in writing, to the meeting:

"First Fairway - This to me has always been an eyesore and possibly to others. and although it works, it is not correct.

I feel it should be graded level from the box tee to the road, about 20 yards wide and this would enhance the appearance of the whole area.

Grant Aid could probably be applied for to the local windfarm committee."

It was considered that a written grant submission would not be possible. The amount of ground work involved is potentially very significant however, the suggestion would be taken at Council with the intention of finding a way forward.

2. It was asked if a drain could be installed at the right hand side of the 1st fairway. It was stated that the right of the 1st fairway enters into a SSSI and any work would not be allowed.

3. It was suggested that if help is required then prior to starting the work a notice is put up asking for volunteers. It was opined that it is hard to get volunteers and the weather is unpredictable. However, this will be carried forward.
4. Self-input electronic handicapping: the hardware costs approximately £3k, there are 3 systems worth looking at but with the impending financial commitment to purchase the course it is considered prudent to delay the handicapping system for now. Also a new system will not resolve the current difficulties of the extant system.
5. The process and timings of ensuring that Reay Golf Club has a representative to the North District were explained.

There being no other business the meeting was closed at 20:55 hrs

Colin Munro
Secretary
Reay Golf Club

February 2015