

Forrester Park - Approved Minutes of Meeting held on 29th August 2020

Attending: Tim Forrester-Muir (Proprietor), Kevin Royan (Handicap Secretary), Phil Yearling (2020 – 2021 Men's Captain) and Steve Barraclough (2020 – 2021 Vet's Captain).

Apologies received from Barbara Luxford (Ladies Captain) on vacation.

The purpose of the meeting is to gain clarity on the future plans for the club and to communicate these plans to the wider membership, thereby removing the many "whispers" that are making their way around the club members.

Prior to starting the meeting Tim would like to thank Kevin for his long service to the club, as Captain, as a member of the Men's Committee and as the long serving (and suffering) Handicap Secretary.

Item 1: Committees are responsible for running competitions

There are two types of competitions: Open and Closed. Closed competitions are for members only – across all Sections. Kevin explained that the recent event preceding the Club Championship had caused considerable unrest in the Men's Section, in that an "Away" member had been given the right to play by Tim, thereby over ruling the Men's Committee.

Marley's ineligibility to win the trophy was subsequently accepted by Tim following discussions directly with Kevin.

Tim apologised, but has reservations, in that an England player should be allowed to play in such competitions.

Tim stated that, at the time the "rules" governing competition entry had "disappeared" – as such – they were not available to be read and understood by those involved in the decision making. Tim was sorry that the whole incident occurred.

The action is with Tim to put forward a proposal to the various Committees for a rule change allowing an "away" player to play in a closed competition.

In closing this item, Tim is determined to keep the business going, there has not been any interference from any of the committees, only support. We need open lines of communication to stop the "Chinese whispers"

Item 2: Clarifying Tim's plans for the Club in 2020 - 2021

The main objective is to reduce the running costs of the Club House (Heating, Electricity, etc), as all weddings booked for 2020 have now been cancelled, bar a couple of smaller functions. The cancellations will result in a £500k short fall in revenue.

The majority of Club House staff are on the Government furlough scheme, with the exception of Paul and Matt who are running the kitchen and bar. Our Head Green Keeper

(Jeff) is working 100%, with the other Green Keeping staff on 50% paid work and 50% furlough.

The furlough scheme ends in October and the green keeping team will come back to work full-time.

The big financial challenge is to get the club through the winter and being successful in 2021. Approx. 50 weddings have been booked for 2021, mainly for Friday and Saturday. Though the plans for weddings are constantly changing due to the changing guidelines and restrictions on social gatherings as a result of Covid-19.

The action is on Tim to advise the Committees on “confirmed wedding dates” to allow good communication to the members.

On a positive note, Leo had been very active on a “new” membership drive, with some 120 new members joining over the last few months.

The Bank will be taking a close look at the Clubs financial accounts at the end of January 2021

Item 3: Facilities

Tim walked us through the work that had been carried out in the Men’s Changing Room, to be known as the “Members Bar”, and in the two meeting rooms on the ground level which will be known as the “Members Lounge” – this is in line with reducing the overall running costs of the Club in the Winter. Both areas will be cleaned up and made comfortable.

Separate Men’s and Ladies Toilets are now in operation

Item 4: Winter Conditions

If bad weather prevails, the club house will be open for members. . A significant amount of dirt is carried into the club house from golf shoes. Members must help in keeping the rooms clean, by changing shoes prior to entry.

Item 5: Showers

Showers are not to be used due to the restrictions imposed by Covid19

Item 6: Vets Friendly Matches

Friendly matches are allowed, providing we follow the guidelines around Covid19

Item 7: Condition of the Course

Jeff has done a fantastic job, near enough working every day, supported by Tim’s daughter (Maddy) doing 15 hours a week, Mervin doing 18 hours a week FoC,, with Ian and David working part time. Tom Sidden also contributed by trialling new course machinery at Forrester Park, along with Adam, a long-time supporter of the club.

The course has been looked after – spiking, top dressing, etc. A new “flail” machine was purchased and been put to use in cutting the hedges back around the course, saving considerable man hours.

It was noted that the crows have done considerable damage to a number of greens – digging for “leather jackets” – the greens will be repaired in due course. The leather jackets are there, as we are not allowed to use chemicals to remove them.

It’s too early to start the winter preparations – it’s only August – and when the furlough scheme finishes, the green staff will be back to full time, working on tees, greens and bunkers.

Item 8: Waste Bins on the course

Waste Bins were removed following guidance from the R&A. It has been very disappointing to see the amount of litter being left on the course by golfers – all golfers! Our green keeping staff are employed to take care of the course – not to collect litter left on the course by golfers.

To all golfers – take your rubbish home with you!!

Item 9: Club House opening times

Once the furlough scheme ends, the opening hours of the club house will be reviewed, including the early morning opening of the Members Lounge where free tea and coffee will be available. Tim would like members to pre-order their food and drinks as much as possible, to reduce the “pinch points” in the club house.

Item 10: Club House Function Rooms

It’s not the plan or intention to “block off” the large rooms in the club house. They will be used when available and appropriate.

Tim is delighted with the continued use and support of the club house.

Steve stated that the Vets will continue to want the social side of golf at the beginning and end of the Wednesday competitions – Tim fully agrees.

Item 11: Functions

Functions (weddings, wakes, parties, etc) are a source of income for the club, and so is the membership – we need to work together.

Item 12: Tim’s “Cabin” idea

Creation of a cabin, from containers in the hedge by the putting green and 10th tee. Great viewing point of the course when the weather is fine. There would be a bar there and would be an alternate to the Members Lounge – great idea if the main club house is being used for a wedding function.

Item 13: Event Management Company running the club house

Tim has been looking at options for the future, both for the course, club house and catering. Tim will retire at some stage, so he is just thinking about options, including Golf and Catering functions being run separately.

Item 14: Course House Keeping

Any assistance in: Litter picking, Bunker raking, Course marshalling would be greatly appreciated.

“Artisan” membership is also under consideration.