



Argyll and Bute  
Golf Union

## Scottish Golf Union

Patron Her Majesty the Queen  
Argyll & Bute Golf Union

# MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE MEETING

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2017 at 11.00am  
In the Inveraray Inn Inveraray

The meeting convened at 11.00am at the Inveraray Inn, Inveraray, Secretary G.Bolton in the chair.

**Present:-**, S Ellis G. Morrison, M. Sim, G. Bolton, C. McKirdy, W.McAdam, J MacMillan, , & T. Mundie

**Apologies: -** President I. Shaw & G. Chalmers

**Minutes: -**

The minutes of the last executive meeting were read and approved:  
Proposed by C.McKirdy and Seconded by M.Sim

**Matters arising:-**

The Area had taken up the free offer from Club Systems for their handicapping software. However it is a purely web based system which would not be appropriate for some of our events where internet access is not always available. It was agreed to continue with handicap master for the coming season.

**Correspondence: -**

The proposed visit from Blane Dodds CEO Scottish Golf at today's meeting did not take place. Mr Dodds is on vacation with his family. However Graham Bolton had met with him and Karin Sharp ( Finance) by conference call on the 10<sup>th</sup> January. The CEO was scheduling meetings with all areas/counties during this period.

The secretary felt that the meeting was positive with guarantees that funding for Area Team events and the coaching grant were not under threat at this time. The Secretary felt that the new board were more approachable and easier to converse with. The discussion highlighted the merging of areas and counties. However we feel that Argyll & Bute is unique and it was emphasised that we wished to preserve our identity and not disappear as part of another area. We are also aware of how the ladies in A&B are aligned with Dunbartonshire.

Area Reps from other counties had been in correspondence with Scottish Golf and their deliberations appear also to have been positive. A working paper from their meetings is below.



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### **Scottish Golf Forum Meeting**

#### **1. Background to Meeting**

1.1 2016 Area Team Championships – It was explained that representatives from Areas met to discuss matters pertaining to SGL at the Area Team Championships and it was agreed that a small working group should be formed to investigate any potential interventions that could be proposed by the Areas to meet the obvious challenges being faced by the SGL Board and staff.

1.2 Scottish Golf Forum – The proposal to mandate the Scottish Golf Forum to meet twice per year was made in an effort to be supportive and constructive.

1.3 SGL Board Response – Following the appointment of the new CEO, it was clear that there was a great many challenges to meet and he expects that the aims of the proposal (now withdrawn) would be met through the establishment of a new strategy. By example, through meetings with representatives from all Areas and Counties, it was clear there is no appetite to form 'Regions' and this proposal would not now be actively pursued. The Board wished to examine and consult on potential amalgamation with Areas and Counties using existing infrastructure, experience and knowledge on the ground. In addition, given the challenges in progressing any amalgamations with Areas and Counties, it is hoped this will happen through the pursuit of shared interests and benefits of closer co-operation, rather than by any 'top-down' direction from the SGL Board.

#### **2. Communications**

2.1 Lack of Communication – It was accepted that the void in effective communications has caused many difficulties and that although the meetings with the Areas and Counties has helped, much more work is still required to restore trust. The CEO replacement process, coupled with the need to balance the budget deficit was the main cause of the lack of communication. However, with most of these problems now largely resolved, a much more effective level of interaction with all SGL members is expected from now on.

2.2 Consultation – The Board are determined to review the current strategy demanded a thorough consultation process with all stakeholders. The recent Area and Counties meetings were simply the first step in this programme and significantly more work is to be undertaken in this regard:

- The Areas and Counties 'one-to-one' meetings will continue annually
- Clubs will be invited to regional meetings
- The Scottish Golf Forum will be convened annually and will be expanded to include all relevant organisations and stakeholders such as the PGA, the R&A and so on.



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It was suggested that the process of consultation could be progressed through the convening of small meetings of interested parties as part of the AGM.

### 3. Board Composition

3.1 Areas and Counties Representative - The composition of the Board and committees is to be reviewed and any outcome would have a potential knock on requirement to review the Articles & Regulations of the company. The Board have agreed that a starting point for discussion on potential change will take place at the AGM in March 2017 and it could be that a representative from the Areas and Counties will be included as a post on the Board if that was felt to be a positive suggestion. It would be the duty of this representative to provide effective feedback on the progress of the Board to the Areas and Counties. The President role was highlighted in this regard also. Any changes to the existing structure will be subject to consultation with the members and will potentially require to be approved through convening an EGM.

3.2 AGM – It was reported that there will be a formal presentation to the AGM on the proposed restructure and depending on the outcome of those initial discussions that there could be a significant amount of work to be done to get to implementation stage.

3.3 Committee Structure – It was requested for the website to accurately display the current staff and committee structure and composition.

This will be resolved following the AGM as it was felt that the current system of 12 committees is far too cumbersome to manage effectively. It is therefore expected that the number of committees will be reduced

### 4. Evidence for Change

4.1 Supporting Evidence – A request was made for any analysis taken place so far to support the need for the apparent dramatic change in direction taken by the Board.

It was pointed out that the baseline statistics of a continuing decline in club memberships was ample evidence that the previous strategy was ineffective.

In response, it was stated that although far from perfect, there was much merit in the previous strategy, with many members experiencing a very positive interaction with their local Development Officer. Consequently, for any change in strategy to generate the required support from the SGL membership, quantifiable evidence is required, backed by a detailed breakdown of what has worked and what hasn't.

The CEO and Board/Committee feel that this is entirely their responsibility who agreed that the SGL has talented and professional staff who have much to contribute and their input to the new strategy will be vital.

4.2 Staff Turnover – There is concern amongst member clubs over the high level of staff turnover in the last year and many have questioned if this had been handled with appropriate sensitivity.



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In response, it was clarified that a number of the departures had been instigated by the staff members themselves and the redundancies have been driven in the main by economics and governance. There was also a voluntary redundancy process that was open to all staff.

### 5. Volunteer Strategy

It was stated that there is a perceived lack of investment of resources into supporting the many volunteers that support the SGL.

This is being addressed and by way of example, the Championship committee has been separated from Performance and is a stand-alone committee with a new Head of Events due to be engaged to drive this element of the strategy.

### 6. Clubgolf

It is felt that the Clubgolf scheme has been hugely successful in providing access to golf for very young children but this has not translated into a growing junior membership.

In response, it was stated that the review of the Clubgolf scheme will form an important element of the new strategy along with how opportunities are presented for clubs to become more appealing to the target market.

### 7. Accountability

The current Memorandum and Articles prevents any realistic potential for members to hold their Board and Office Bearers to account and that this is clearly iniquitous.

This will be addressed in the review of the M&A referred to earlier

### 8. Recruitment of Board Members

If the Scottish Golf Forum was not deemed to be an appropriate mechanism for recruiting potential Board and Committee members, what was the proposed alternative?

**Area Subs:** - Club Subscriptions were filtering in with total number of players declared by clubs this year so far on a par with 2015/16.

**Finance:** - A set of management accounts were tabled. With guarantees from Scottish Golf over grants available we should be able to show a small surplus for the coming year. GB has also reduced the level of vouchers offered at events by some £400. This will reviewed for 2017/18 at the end of this year.

The Area had received a donation of £750 from Philip Johnston of which £500 was earmarked for Bob McIntyre's playing expenses throughout the season.



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### Argyll and Bute Golf Union Income / Expend and Balance Sheet at 8/2/17

Profit & Loss Account 2016/17		08/02/2017	
		2016/17	
		£	£
<b>Income</b>			
Subscriptions			5,988.00
SGU Boys ATC Expenses Refund			-
Championship Entry Fees			-
SGU Grants	Area Team Championships		-
	Coaching Grants		-
Sponsorship & donations			750.00
Other fund raising ball raffle)			-
Clothing Sales			
Bank Interest ( net)			0.56
			<b>6,738.56</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Championship costs		25.00	
Team Championships		-	
Area Player Support		217.10	
Team Clothing		-	
Meeting Expenses		376.20	
Audit fee		8.00	
Secretarial Expenses	Post, Stationery, Telephone	10.00	
	Honorarium	440.00	
Coaching		1,465.00	
SGU AGM Attendance		-	
Software purchase/ web space rental		-	
Insurance		230.76	
Sundries			
Bank Charges		-	
			<b>2,756.06</b>
Surplus/Loss for Period			<b>3,982.50</b>



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Balance Sheet		08/02/2017	2016/17	
			£	£
Fixed Assets			-	-
Share Capital			1.00	
Bank			16,557.45	
Clothing & Ball stocks			450.00	
Debtor - G bolton			-	
				17,008.45
				17,008.45
Less Liabilities				
Creditor				-
Accruals - Vouchers still to be honoured			-	90.00
Accruals			-	440.00
Accruals - audit fee & secretarial				
				16,478.45
<b>General Fund as at</b>	30th September 2016			12,495.95
Surplus/Loss for the year				3,982.50
<b>General Fund as at</b>		08/02/2017		16,478.45

### Coaching: -

After negotiation between President Shaw and Colin Fisher of Great Western Golf, the Area has secured a package within our financial constraints. Our coaching commitment this year will be no greater than £1600 offset by our coaching grant of £1250. A discussion took place regarding the Area's coaching plans for 2016/17.

### Events Rota: -

After discussion the Area will not proceed with an Open Senior's event, as it was agreed that the senior's calendar has reached saturation point and a window could not be found at this late stage for the coming season. However it was agreed that a prize for a senior would be put up at the three stroke play events. Our finalised fixture list for the season is below.



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Date	Competition	Venue	Executive attending
April 8 <sup>th</sup> /9 <sup>th</sup> Sat / Sun	Match play Championship	Machrihanish GC	TM, CMc, GB
June 10th Saturday	Boys Champs (U16's)	Bute	GB
June 17th Saturday	Boys Area Team	Stranraer	IS & ANOTHER
June 24th Saturday	Handicap Championship	Glencruitten	MS, JMCM, W McA
July 29 <sup>th</sup> Saturday	Spring /Summer Meeting	Rothesay	GB ,CMcKi
August 19th Saturday	Area Stroke play Championship / Youths Championship( A&B Team Trophy)	Millport GC	IS,SE
September 8 <sup>th</sup> /9 <sup>th</sup> /10th	Area Team Championships	Newmachar	TBC

### A.O.C.B.:-

Steve Ellis intimated that he would be resigning from Cowal and seeking membership elsewhere. He asked what his status would be in regards to his place on the executive. It was confirmed that he could remain on the executive and that although he was representing Cowal on the executive, he was elected as an individual, and it was not the club who were voted on.

The executive instructed the Area Secretary to write to Scottish Golf seeking clarification of the events that took place in Australia when Bob McIntyre was forced to pull out of his final event during his trip down under. Willie McAdam would speak to the McIntyre family for their interpretation of what transpired, in order to furnish the Area Secretary with the facts before opening dialogue with Scottish golf.

The meeting was closed at 12.30.

G Bolton (Area Secretary/ Treasurer)