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| **UPHALL GOLF CLUB**  **Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2020** | | | | |
| **Minutes written by:** Steven Grady | | Page 1 of 13 | | |
| **Location of Meeting :** Uphall Golf Club | | | | |
| **Date of Meeting :** 11th February 2020 | | | | |
| **Present -**  Interim Captain –  Vice-Captain -  Treasurer -  Secretary -  Match Secretary -  Assist Match Secretary –  Green’s Convenor -  Ass Greens Convenor - | M Brown (chairperson)  B Mackintosh  S Grady  G Stevenson  J Saunders | | Ladies Captain –  Ladies Convenor -  Linlithgowshire Rep -  Sponsor Convenor -  House Convenor –  Asst house convenor -  Junior Convenor -  Membership Convenor-  Club Manager - G Law | D Watson  S McKinnon |
| **Distribution:** All members of UGC Club Administrator Website | | | | |
| **Meeting Agenda**  **Item 1. Introduction and Review of the Past Year.**  **Item 2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 12th February 2019.**  **Item 3. Matters Arising.**  **Item 4. Presentation of the Club Accounts and Balance Sheet.**  **Item 5. Greens Report.**  **Item 6. Council recommendation on Fees and Subscriptions.**  **Item 7. Election of Office Bearers and Council Members.**  **Item 8. Appointment of Club Auditor.**  **Item 9. Any Other Business.**  **Item 10. Date of the next Annual General Meeting**  **(Tuesday 9th February 2021 19.30hrs)** | | | | |
| **Total attendees at the 2020 AGM was 53.** | | | | |

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| **Item 1** | **INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF THE PAST YEAR – M Brown Chairperson**  Good evening everyone and welcome to our 2020 Annual General Meeting. Thank you all for attending this evening. I am Margaret Brown, the Interim Club Captain, and I will be chairing this AGM. The top table were introduced.  Could I ask first of all if there is anyone present who is not a fully paid up member of the club can they please leave the meeting. The AGM is a private and confidential meeting not open to the press and therefore anyone representing the Press should also leave. No information should be provided to the Press without prior authorisation from the Council. Can I ask that all mobile phones are switched off, or at least put on silent. And finally if anyone has any questions could these be put through the Chair in a proper and correct manner. I do not want to have discussions breaking out between different parties in the body of the kirk so please, all questions through the Chair.  Before we start the meeting could I ask everyone to be upstanding to observe a minute’s silence as a mark of respect to the members and former members that have passed away during this past year.  **Apologies: Aidin Dobbie, Jim Findlay, Isabel Findlay, Marian Millar, Dorothy Watson, Susan Watkins, Alan Watkins, Andy Stevenson, Tommy Robb, Rab Frame, Alison Thomson, Alan Thomson, Alan Midwinter and Peter Wilson.**  **Interim Captain`s Review of Season 2019-2020**  My current position of Interim Captain arose following Andy Stevenson’s decision to stand down from the role of Captain last Autumn. Many thanks go to him for his efforts, not only in that Role, but also for his long service on Council, much of which in the position of Match Secretary. We wish Andy and his recently extended family every best wish for the future.  The past year threw up a couple of bumps on the road with firstly the Retiral of our Bar Steward, Dougie Tait, and the loss of our Catering service. With new arrangements now in place, we are hopeful that 2020 will prove to be more positive.  Our Head Greenkeeper (Jim Saunders) and his Team continue to work tirelessly to keep our Golf Course, not only playable, but also in excellent condition throughout the year despite the inclement weather, with record rainfall hampering efforts on occasion.  Improvements, which include enhanced drainage, starting coring/sanding earlier allowing us to play on better greens throughout the winter and good general on-going maintenance, continue to make our Course one of the best (if not the best) in the area with many less days of closure when the weather is poor and quicker recovery.  More recently, a refurbishment of the ditch including additional drainage alongside our 6th Tee, has been started and we look forward to a much improved picture of this area of the course.  Many Uphall GC members continue to offer their help and assistance on a volunteer basis both on and off the course during the year and huge thanks go to each and every one of them for their commitment and enthusiasm. Their help is greatly appreciated.  The Clubhouse recently required major roof repairs and after much research to achieve a viable and long-lasting solution, this went ahead in October & November 2019. Regular repairs and improvements continue to be carried out within the Clubhouse with a view to providing the best facility possible to all Members.  Turning to playing matters: this years’ Club Championship was won by Paul Drake, by a score of 1 up over Graeme Stevenson. This was the 2nd year in a row that Paul has won the Championship.  The 2nd Class final was between John Kerr and Derek Bryce with John eventually winning at the 3rd extra hole in a keenly contested match.  The 3rd Class final was also a close affair with Stuart Lumsden winning by a score of 1 up over Stuart Lyons.  The Junior Club Championship was won by Sean Byron who beat Oliver Stewart to win the trophy.  The Ladies Championship was won for a 7th time by Alison Thomson, defeating Liz Calder by a score of 2 up.  The Ladies Handicap Championship was also a tight contest between Dorothy Watson & Fiona Brazenall with Dorothy retaining the trophy, also by a score of 2 up.  On the County Scene we had a slightly disappointing season with no individual winners in any of the County events. The Summer League team finished 3rd and the Seniors’ team finished 10th in their respective leagues.  Congratulations to all prize-winners in the 2019 season and all the best to all competitors for the 2020 playing season.  Our Junior Development Programme continued throughout the year, mainly during school holiday times, and also with a Winter programme at Houstoun Golf Range. Many thanks go to Craig Frame for taking on the Role of Junior Convenor and ensuring that the youngsters have plenty of guidance and support. Craig was always there for the Junior medals providing all who were playing with advice and assistance before sending them out on the Course.  Many thanks also go to our Pro and Past Captain, Gordon Law, for continuing to give of his time to coach the Development youngsters all through the year. Grateful thanks must go to the helper volunteers who assistant Gordon during all coaching sessions thus ensuring that he is able to give the necessary time to all youngsters individually.  Some of our Junior Development youngsters took part in a ‘Golf 6s’ event this year ably supported by Alison Thomson. The Format for 6 short holes is a Pairs Texas Scramble. Participants are encouraged to take part in skills competitions before start of play. The event is aimed at youngsters who do not yet have a handicap. We only had 4 of our juniors take part in one event each.  Our Junior Presentation of Trophies and Prizes was reinstated in 2019, with a great night held in early November when many youngsters along with their parents attended.  We initiated a Members’ Survey, as requested by those present at the AGM in February 2019, which was sent out to all members to seek their thoughts on a range of topics with 219 surveys returned. As a follow-up, a Members’ Forum took place in September to review and discuss the results of the Survey and, while it was not particularly well attended, those who did come along generated a great discussion and identified some actions to take forward. Not all ideas and initiatives can be adopted, but we do our best to take on board what we can.  Ideas and general constructive comments and/or suggestions are always welcome, no need to wait for another Survey before coming forward with your thoughts. The Council are always very happy to listen to possible new initiatives which will lead to improvements generally for our Club.  Once again huge thanks go to all our Sponsors for their continued support throughout the year. It is appreciated that in many cases the return on ‘investments’ may be uncertain, however, we are absolutely delighted to have you on board.  Finally, I would like to record my personal thanks to everyone who has offered me support thus far. If elected as Captain I look forward to helping ensure our Club prospers in the years ahead.  Margaret Brown  Interim Club Captain |
| **Item 2** | **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF 12th FEBRUARY 2019**  *That the Minutes of the AGM of 12th February 2019 be accepted as a true record of the proceedings:*  **Proposed By** : C Nisbet  **Seconded By** : J Middleton  **Carried** |
| **Item 3** | **MATTERS ARISING**  There was one matter arising from the previous AGM minutes. A comment made by Alan Midwinter in response to the Greens report was incomplete and has been amended accordingly and will show in the final posted version of the minutes. |
| **Item 4** | **PRESENTATION OF THE CLUB ACCOUNTS AND BALANCE SHEET**  **Treasurer's Report 2018/19 Financial Year**  Introduction  You will find included as part of the AGM pack accounts for the 12-month period ended 31 October 2019, which show a deficit of just under £10k for the year. In relative terms, we incurred significant expenditure during the year, some of which is hopefully non-recurring, such as the roofing works and the replacement of the pumps for the sewage tank.  I keep waiting for a year where everything is as expected, but maybe that’s just wishful thinking on my part.  I will cover some of the key aspects briefly later in this note and expand on the position and answer any questions.  Club Finances  We continue to exercise tight controls on expenditure and like last year, the deficit reflects some items of expenditure which had been put off until there was no choice but to take action. The roof being one issue where finding a viable solution after a couple of false dawns took longer than we would have liked. Major uses of funds last year were £7.5k on a replacement greens/tees mower, repayments of £8k on the Tractor (finishing in March), partial roof replacement, £6.5k the Sewage Works of £5.5k and kitchen equipment, £1.5k.  This level of expenditure was coupled with a fall in membership fees and contribution from the Bar, where we continue to operate in a difficult environment on both fronts.  Figures produced by Scottish Golf indicate that playing numbers continue to fall, so broadly the same number of Clubs are chasing fewer players, although several Clubs failed last year. Suggestions are that all but one of Glasgow’s municipal courses are to close with rounds played down by 15% in the last year, which is an indication of current trends.  Cash Position and Bank Overdraft  There has been a £16k reduction in our cash levels, which reflects the factors highlighted above.  The overdraft facility remains in place. You will see an overdraft in the Balance Sheet at the year-end of £11.8k – this was an administrative oversight and was more than covered by credit balances of £55k.  Bar  In terms of the bar, we saw a fall in sales of almost £12K, but with good cost control, profit “only” fell by £2.5k, resulting in a contribution from the bar of £30k. It is difficult to pinpoint where the fall in sales came from, but the general downturn in activity in the restaurant over the summer, resulting in AP Catering’s decision to give up their franchise perhaps lead to this.  As you will now know, after a period with temporary arrangements, which we are acutely aware were sub-optimal, we have been able to secure the services of Kenny Craig to provide catering – you won’t be surprised to hear me ask you to support Kenny as much as possible.  As mooted last year, staff costs rose as a result of increases in the minimum wage and pension costs, plus additional hours related to the increase in function business. More increases to minimum wages (c5%) will come into force this April.  In the absence of a caterer for day-to-day business, the Bar has had a slow start to the financial year, although there is a good level of functions in the books. Hopefully the new caterer will help drive additional revenues.  Investment and Costs  Investment continued in the golf course as outlined in Jim Saunders’ report.  As intimated last year, Jim established a strategy to keep the Greens equipment operating efficiently and has instigated a prudent replacement programme, subject to available funding.  Wages on the Greens Team rose in line with the increased resource, but the overall Greens Team costs were virtually the same as last year.  As before, costs have been kept down through provision of heavy plant and machinery by Gordon Bow Plant Hire and on and off-course help by our band of volunteers. This is greatly appreciated by the Committee.  Scottish Golf costs increased as envisaged – we remain at odds with their strategy and by the time of the AGM, we will have had a meeting with their CEO to discuss a number of matters. We will provide an update at the AGM.  Other than Greens equipment, I am hopeful that major expenditure will be limited – you will see that works are ongoing to the Ladies Toilets to upgrade them following water damage from the roof and also aged plumbing.  Membership Numbers  The following table shows a comparison of the member numbers in the key categories:   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | Full | PAYG | Senior | Youth | Young Person | Intermediate | Junior | | 2017 | 172 | 104 | 130 | 33 | 9 | 14 | 56 | | 2018 | 159 | 108 | 125 | 24 | 3 | 15 | 48 | | 2019 | 142 | 99 | 122 | 15 | 8 | 12 | 47 |   It is fair to say that these figures don’t not make for good reading.  We continue to seek ways to attract and (equally importantly) retain members.  Turnover of members is high, with many only staying for a season or two – for example, we had an influx of sorts in 2017, many of whom have subsequently left the Club. A number of those joining then did so as a form of protest at things going on at previous Clubs, but subsequently matters have improved there, or the lure of friends to play with has led them to return.  Trying to find out why people leave is difficult at times, as the first we know when someone leaves is often when their Direct Debit bounces or is cancelled. Quite often, they don’t respond to emails asking why or if we can help retain them.  When we do get a response, it’s quite often down to simple finances, where golf is seen as a luxury and amongst the first things to go if money is tight or there is uncertainty of employment.  Other common reasons are health/injury, but there’s an increasing trend of people just “fancying a change” or “I couldn’t get into a regular game” and/or “didn’t feel involved in the Club”.  The first one is almost understandable as getting into another Club has never been easier. More concerning is any feeling that newcomers (who often join not knowing anyone, as is the way these days) might not be made welcome and that we are a “closed shop”. That environment isn’t the Uphall Golf Club that I know, nor the one which I’m sure most of you joined.  Integration into the Club is a big part of retaining members and the Committee can only do so much, so wherever possible we would ask that you make new members welcome.  Membership Initiatives  We continue to seek ways to attract members and have looked at a number of the “Flexible Membership Packages” which offer a number of rounds at restricted times and this remains a possibility, although the return to the Club is relatively modest plus could perhaps undermine the value of our other memberships.  By the time the AGM comes around, we will have finalised a new initiative which will see us host an event in August with Golf in Scotland under their Masters Series. With this comes an advertising package with access to in excess of 20,000 followers on Social Media – this Texas Scramble event will be open to members with the ultimate prize being a trip to the 2021 US Masters.  We will be establishing a “Member get Member” incentive scheme in time for the new season – the amounts on offer to the introducing Member, will be dependent on the category of Member introduced.  Subscriptions  The proposed fees table is included elsewhere in the AGM pack. These remain as before, other than the change to the Fee arrangements which follow the Constitutional Changes agreed last year.  I would appreciate your support for the proposed fees as outlined.  Lastly, an observation I would make is that all of us are not only Members, but also part owners of the Club and it is incumbent on us all to do everything we can to make Uphall Golf Club the best it can be, whether that be through introducing a Member, welcoming a new Member or even how we portray the Club when talking about it “down the street”.  Bill Mackintosh  Honorary Treasurer  The Treasurer then said that he would now take questions from the floor.  **B Osborne** asked what had happened to the question raised by T Edwards last year re the SKY subscription – the Treasurer advised this was included in the members survey where the vote was in favour of retaining this subscription  No more questions came from the floor so **The Chairperson** then asked that the accounts be accepted, and asked for a proposer and seconder.  **Proposed By: R Sneddon**  **Seconded By : K Wilson**  **Carried** |
| **Item 5** | **Greens Report**  **Golf Course AGM Report – Season 2019/20.**  The greens team, whilst reflecting over the past year, have concluded it was a positive one both in condition of the golf course, managing budgets and importantly continuing to build positive relationships and friendships with our members.  We greatly appreciate the encouragement and positive feedback we have received throughout the year.  Most golfers generally measure the condition of a course by the condition of their greens in most instances. We feel that the greens were in a consistently good condition throughout the year, both in terms of green speed and smoothness of surface, with very good and healthy grass coverage throughout.  The 4th green recovered very well from an attack of “anthracnose” disease. We continue to monitor this surface as closely as possible and whilst grass coverage on 4th green is now excellent, ongoing works are required throughout the coming year to ensure it continues to recover.  The year was not without its challenges however, with the late summer, early autumn weather conditions creating a perfect storm for grass growth, that on occasions we struggled to cope with as the grass grew faster and stronger than we were able to keep up with. Going forward we have worked on a plan that should deliver better outcomes if we were to be met with similar conditions.  The decision to go early (9th September) with our scarification, coring and sand top dressing has worked to our advantage and whilst causing inconvenience to some members at the time, it has helped us to maintain better playing conditions throughout late autumn and winter months.  The key aspect of these works is to get as much oxygen in our soil profile as possible, which helps with water movement, root growth and smoothness of surfaces, all key components in any good putting surface.  Overall, we consider 2019 to have been a positive year in the management of your course, with a few learning points for us to take forward into the new season.  **Staffing**: We aim to operate with around 144 staffing hours per week. We are currently operating with 104 hours and are looking to recruit into the greens team to make up this shortfall. The shortfall arose when one of our greens team members left the club during late autumn.  The team is currently made up of myself, David Bryans and Neil Ulke. I would personally like to thank them for their efforts throughout the year.  I have confirmed to the Club my intention to leave my position as Head Greenkeeper in September of this year - this was always the plan and we are currently working on a strategy that will ensure there is a highly skilled, qualified team in place for the years ahead.  **Members Forum:** At this meeting held in September, there were positive discussions in relation to the course and it was highlighted that in the members’ survey: -   * **94%** of members considered **the course** to be in **very good or excellent condition**   However, there were also several negative comments from members in relation to condition of bunkers, specifically relating to inconsistency in sand depth. We recognise this has been a common theme over a number of years and are working to make positive inroads into this issue for the season ahead.  It was agreed at the meeting that the greens team will prepare a few bunkers of differing sand types and sand depths for members to comment back on preference. We plan to carry out this trial during early March.  **Machinery Update**: The club continue to invest in equipment for the golf course. As well as the brand-new tractor purchased the previous year, we have also purchased a used greens mower and used tees mower. They are in excellent condition and will benefit the course for several years.  We are also currently looking to purchase a used fairway mower to supplement the existing machine.  All course machinery is regularly serviced and maintained to ensure best possible performance.  **Key projects 2019/2020**   * Gents 1st medal tee reconstructed and subsequent works to improve drainage * Path upgraded from 3rd tee to 15th tee * New bunkering installed at 4th, 6th and 3rd greenside and bunker to right side of 7th green has been infilled, due to ongoing issues with tree roots. * Significant works to improve ditch at 6th to improve drainage and aesthetics * Additional drainage at 4th tee, 8th Fairway, 13th greenside and Practice area * Plans to improve bunkering at 8th and 9th prior to commencement of the 2020 playing season   **Winter Golf**  Our winter golf policy of very limited use of temporary greens, playing off fairways and using summer golf tees all year round continues to be popular amongst members and visitors. As a consequence, our golf course continues to be busy throughout the winter months with Winter Medals and Open competitions continuing to prove very popular.  **Special thanks to our volunteers.**  Our volunteers continue to make a significant contribution to our golf course and greatly assist green staff in ensuring the golf course is maintained in the best possible condition. We are extremely grateful for their excellent contribution throughout the season.  They are:  **Gordon and Graham Bow** for their excellent continued support of the club and we remain hugely indebted to them.  **The Ladies Section**: for assisting with litter clearing works around the whole course before commencement of season.  **Stuart Lumsden**: who has provided endless hours of volunteering this year maintaining pathways to ensure they are edged and free from debris  **David Meldrum** – for manufacturing and maintaining tee markers, manufacturing and painting new hazard markers and for his work in repairing and painting the memorial benches located throughout the course.  **Phil Foster –** for manufacturing bird boxes located on the course and for removal of tree and scrub areas, including the removal of vegetation and scrub to rear of 7th green. This has improved air flow in the vicinity of the green as well as providing a clear line of site towards the historic Houston House Hotel.  **Ian Wemyss:** for his supplying of bedding plant material and maintenance of planters and hanging baskets around the club house.  **Bill Mackintosh**: for preparing divot mix material and carrying out divoting duties on fairways.  **Robert Millar**: for assisting green staff with the planting of annual bedding plants around putting green area.  **Eugene Bradley**: for assisting with coring works during September.  **Richard Sneddon**: for pathway repairs to rear of 3rd green.  **Looking Forward**  The greens team are confident that we will maintain and continuously improve the condition of your golf course for this coming season. We will do our utmost to ensure members and visitors have the best possible golfing experience.  Jim Saunders  Head Greenkeeper  The Chairperson then said that she would now take questions from the floor.  **R Millar** asked if there were plans to tidy up the area in the trees to the left of the 12th and 13th fairways to which J Saunders indicated this will be attended to shortly. |
| **Item 6** | **COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS ON FEES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS**  **The Honorary Treasurer** asked for the following Fees to be adopted.  **The following was put to the members:**  **2020/21 2021/22**  Joining Fee: None None  Member £624 or (12 x £52) £624 or (12 x £52)  Member (Pay as you Go) £624 £624  (£156 then £52/Month) (£156 then £52/month)  Senior member £436.80 or £499.20 or (£41.60 x 12)  Junior member (9-17) £30 £30  Youth Member (18-21) £100 £100  Further Education Member £100 £100  Young person member (22-24) £250 £250  Intermediate Member (25-29) £374.40 (£31.20 x12) £374.40 or (£31.20 x 12)  5 day member £436.80 £499.20 or (£41.60 x 12)  Country Member £416 £416  Locker rental (Adult and Junior) £20 £20  **Green fees - To remain as per last year**  Weekday Round £23  Weekday Day £30  Weekend Round £30  Weekend Day £40  Winter Weekday Round £13  Winter Weekend Round £16  Introduced Guest £10  Introduced Junior Guest £3  Honoraria £750  **Note: all the above Green Fees include the premium for personal Liability Insurance, Linlithgowshire Golf Association contributions and subscription fees to the Scottish Golf and Lothian’s Golf Association.**  **Note: all Junior locker fees go towards the running of the Junior section.**  **The Treasurer asked if there were any other proposals, there being none the Council recommendations were approved en bloc and were carried without question.**  **Proposed by : R Millar**  **Seconded by : B Wardlaw** |
| **Item 7** | **ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS AND COUNCIL MEMBERS**  **The Secretary read out the nominations for the office bearers and Council positions.**  **Captain M Brown Proposer : G Law Seconder : S Grady**  **Vice-Captain Proposed : Seconder :**  **Hon Secretary S Grady Proposer : G Stevenson Seconder : W Mackintosh**  **Hon Treasurer W Mackintosh Proposer : S Grady Seconder : G Stevenson**  **Match Secretary G Stevenson Proposer : W Mackintosh Seconder : S Grady**  **Council Members**  **1 year to re-election**  **Vacancy**  **Vacancy**  **Vacancy**  **2 year to re-election**  **G Law**  **S Mckinnon**  **R Middleton**  **Nominations for Council Members**  **D Watson Proposer : S Grady Seconder W Mackintosh**  **The remaining positions are vacant:- 3 members for 1 year**  **No one came forward to take up these positions.**  **The Secretary** said that the positions will remain open during the year for anyone to come forward; they would then be co-opted on to the Council.  **There being no further nominations the aforementioned were elected unopposed.** |
| **Item 9** | **APPOINTMENT OF CLUB ACCOUNTANTS**  The re-appointment of **Whitelaw Wells** as Accountants of the Club.  Proposer – R Millar  Seconder – B Wardlaw  Carried without objection. |
| **Item 10** | **ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**   1. **R Sneddon** observed that the Key Draw has ceased and now that we operate in a more modern era he volunteered to form a small sub-committee to establish a way forward for this (or similar) fundraising activity. 2. **D Stewart** asked if the committee has a succession plan given the fact that the Head Greenkeeper intends to retire from the position in September. Jim Saunders advised that there is a succession plan in place and his successor will be announced to the membership nearer the time.   As there were no further questions, **The Chairperson** thanked the members for attending and closed the meeting at 8.08pm. |
| **Item 11** | **DATE OF THE NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  **The date of the next AGM is Tuesday 9th February 2021 at 7.30pm.** |