

# Minutes of Forest Pines Golf Club AGM 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024

## **Present:**

Steve Topham, John Killeen, Phil Leighton, Denise Leighton, Sue Over, Shaun Husler, Phil Bateman, Mark Clayton, Wyn Davis, Paul Marris, Wayne Brightmore, David Elliot, Chinny Mann, Owen Musgrave, Colin McRobbie, Jill Killeen, Colin Pogson, Robert Hall, Paul Taylor, Ricky Maxfield, Andrew Canwell, June Marshall, Pep Delduca, Jeff Greenwood, Mick Hill, John Carolan, Thersa Dawson, Ian Bird, Tom Whitelby, Tony Lenc, Elaine Lenc, Alan Hobson, Jayne Hobson, John Clark, Kay Clark, Lesley Bradley, Phil Bradley, Clare Spencer, Tony Spencer, Kate Greenwood, Sarah Thomas, Helen Scruton

## **In attendance:**

None

## **Apologies:**

Pete Reeves, Kate Reeves, Keith Briggs, Sue Harvey, Ann Day, Cei Chapman, Stan Carter, Karl Dixon, Roger Danby, Martyn Betts

ST mentioned specifically that Jamie McDonald, the general manager of the hotel, had given his sincere apologies and noted how supportive JM had been in supporting the club and progressing improvements for members since coming a few months ago.

## **Agenda:**

### **Intro:**

The Club Secretary, ST opened the meeting, welcoming the current Captains, past captains and those members present.

ST thanked all those attending.

### **Attendance:**

ST asked that all complete the attendance sheet and noted any apologies which were accepted.

ST advised that this year there was a change to the normal arrangements in that the AGM and presentation evening would be conducted concurrently. This was in an attempt to improve attendance at both events and consolidate attendee's time. To this end the AGM would hopefully be completed within 1 – 1.5 hours with the speeches being kept to a minimum.

ST advised he would be happy to take feedback on behalf of the committee.

### **Mins of Last Meeting:**

ST reminded those present that the papers for the AGM, including last year's minutes, were made available on the web site. A limited number of copies were also available.

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Proposed by: JK

Seconded by: PL

No objections were raised, and the minutes were unanimously accepted.

### **Actions:**

To following actions where addressed:

### ***EG Compliance***

An action to address the outstanding areas identified in the England Golf (EG) Health Check Questionnaire was undertaken by ST, on behalf of the Committee.

The actions to address these were outlined by ST, these were as detailed:

- *Focus Area* - Are all changes, large or small, managed through an established process designed to take methodical steps and ensuring all connected stakeholders are engaged?
- *Action* - Improvement in communications and change processes. Process established where the committee (with delegated authority) will take necessary actions on behalf of members – this includes gathering feedback, emails, social media etc. all actions/decisions recorded on log and posted on the web site. If necessary, agreement at AGM and/or Hotel management. Changes made to constitution/policy if necessary.
- *Focus Area* - Do you feel your organisation has a strong, recognisable identity, which is visible in the relationships and actions of all people associated with the club?
- *Action* - Improvement in communications and branding. Revised web site. Adoption of Hotel logo etc. Approvals process for social media posts.
- *Focus Area* - Are you confident that you can demonstrate sound governance practices in line with the Code for Sports Governance?
- *Action* - Member relationships managed in committee structure, able to demonstrate appropriate challenge and democratic decision making. Accounts scrutinised by an independent (hotel) accountant.
- *Focus Area* - Does your club operate in the most efficient way, understanding the fundamental legal obligations of operating a modern & forward-thinking golf business?
- *Action* - Continuing to improve. Adoption of EG policies and inclusion in the constitution. Appointment of safeguarding and GDPR roles. Constitution inc. responsibilities etc. Developing relationship with EG.

- *Focus Area* - Have you got policies and procedures in place to help you consider the broader aspects of your governance responsibilities ensuring you are able to continually enhance the offer to your members and customers?
- *Action* - Continuing to improve. Adoption of EG policies and inclusion in the constitution. Appointment of safeguarding and GDPR roles. Regular engagement with EG. Committee engage with key individuals in EG. Examples inc. safeguarding process. Development of a risk register.

### ***Change to the Henry Mosey Competitions***

An action for the committee to advise members of where entry into a LGU competition or similar was being played for in addition to the main (club) competition.

ST confirmed this had been done for the relevant competitions through the year. This was confirmed by JG.

### **Report/Matters Arising - Club Secretary (ST)**

ST advised that thankfully last year proved less challenging compared to previous years and we managed to get a full programme of competitions through the summer.

ST thanked the committee, staff at the hotel and Denise & Phil as captains.

ST confirmed that the committee continues to meet monthly and address ongoing issues.

ST reminded those present that the constitution sets out objectives of the club and advised those present on progress under each area as detailed below:

- To encourage the playing of golf at the Forest Pines Golf Course in the true spirit and etiquette of the game;
  - This is the key aspect of discussions at committee covering:
    - Improvements to course
    - Resolving members issues/complaints
    - Creating an inclusive environment
    - Member benefits
    - Improved communications inc. use of social media
    - Improvements to web site (Keith Briggs)
    - More inclusive competition arrangements which have proved successful
- To maintain a handicap for each member:
  - Part of the running of competitions for members – Business as usual
- To provide competitions and fixtures for members:
  - Undoubtedly the main areas of business
  - Full calendar, all board comps run – second year running post COVID
- To provide means of social interaction between members:
  - Ran several events although not as many as last year for variety of reasons
  - Successful divot night and recent quiz night.
  - Aware John Killen has circulated a questionnaire with a view to progressing this area.
- To increase membership of the club, particularly from underrepresented groups:

- Inclusion plan
- Not as much focus/progress as we would have liked.
- Committee still committed
- Look to develop plan over winter
- To safeguard and protect children and vulnerable adults:
  - Adopted EG policy – Requirement of EG/Sport England
  - Updated annually
  - Included in Inclusion plan
  - Appointed Safeguarding Officer (Colin McRobbie)

ST suggested that there was certainly more we can, and want to do.

ST encouraged all to take an active role in the club and reminded all to raise any issues with him or Matt Peacock.

### **Report – Director of Golf (MP)**

ST advised that MP was unable to attend the AGM due to unforeseen circumstances and passed on his apologies.

ST went on to relay the update received from MP.

MP advised that it had been another good year for membership with 685 members at the club.

It was advised that the driving range was to be developed/remodelled. PL informed those present that would include undercover bays which would be moved back into the current line of parking bays, new targets and netting. In addition, 4 new winter tees would be constructed along with the refurbishment of 4 bunkers.

### **Report – Men's Captain (PL)**

PL welcomed Past Captains, committee members and club members to our AGM, and thanked all for attending.

PL advised he had really enjoyed his year as Captain noting it had been an honour to represent the club. PL suggested that he thought that we have a better club than many people give us credit for, many outsiders thinking that we are just a hotel golf course when in fact it is much more than that. PL said that wherever he'd played during the year he'd done his best to let everyone know that we are a great club, and we have a fantastic course.

PL mentioned several areas that have really started to improve during the year. He advised that we plan to have an A team in the league from next year, noting it's been some time since we had this, but he thought that it's only right that a club of our stature is represented in the A team league. He wished the team good luck for next year.

The mixed section has also grown this year, this is good for our club in that the better this section becomes the more we will attract men and lady members.

PL mentioned we have a large number of Gentleman of a certain age in the club and with thanks to PR we have created a distinct senior section.

PL acknowledged that being Captain is, as mentioned an honour and you get your picture put on the wall etc. but PL noted that you cannot undertake the role alone, so PL had a few thankyou's to mention; PL thanked Becky and team in the Pines bar for all the work they do and for handling so many special requests. PL also thanked MP and team in the pro shop for being so supportive and balancing the needs of the members with the requirements of the hotel. PL thanked all the members who offered their support and goodwill messages throughout the year and the committee led by ST.

Special thanks went to JK who had supported PL 100% and whenever the 'heat was on' stepped up to help, PL wished him well for next year. PL thanked PD for spending so much time and effort running the B team, noting we narrowly lost the league this year but hoped we will of course try to reclaim this again next year. PL noted the extensive effort expended by JG and did not truly understand the work and time involved in handling all the competitions. Lastly, PL asked those present to appreciate how much time and effort is put in by the team on the table [committee], advising that the effort is much more than you could ever imagine.

During the year PL had heard, and been involved in, many conversations where the end result seemed to end with a problem for every solution. PL asked that as we go forward, we put our full support behind the club and committee, looking at the bigger picture, coming up with solutions to future problems.

### **Report – Lady Captain (DL)**

DL welcomed members of the committee, club captain Phil and fellow members,

DL expressed thanks to the club captain Phil for all his all work over the last 11 months, noting he had 1 month to go before he can hang his jacket up and step aside for the new club captain to take over in 2025,

DL also thanked ST and all the committee members for their tireless commitment to Forest Pines, for not only giving up their time to make sure the club runs as smoothly as possible but doing so voluntarily.

DL expressed her view that it had been an honour and a pleasure to be able to represent Forest Pines as lady captain over the last year.

DL advised that when both PL and she took over the captaincy they chose a charity for the year, this was the Lincolnshire Air Ambulance. DL was proud to announce that over the year that the members have helped us raise just over £1,200, she went on to thank all the members on behalf of the air ambulance charity.

DL noted that the ladies' section had again had a successful year by welcoming some new lady members to our group, but also by winning division 3 in the LWGA ladies league for which she was very proud as in doing so they had not lost a match. DL thanked all ladies who joined in the team.

DL suggested that she joined Forest Pines 4 years ago; she never thought she would be asked to be the lady captain yet alone to continue to be the captain in 2025 with the new club captain JK who she looked forward to working with.

### **Appointment of 2025 Vice Captains**

DL advised that she had asked a long-standing member who had previously been lady captain to be her vice in 2025 leading up to again being the captain in 2026, to which she gracefully said yes.

On this basis DL proposed Wyn Davis as her vice-captain in 2025.

JK, as the men's incoming captain, thanked PL for everything he has done during the past year, noting he had put in a lot of time and effort.

Aside from promoting the club in a positive manner wherever he could, JK hoped he could help to unify the club members as a whole, noting that currently there are a number of sections who all run independently of each other and as a result he would like to try and encourage a more club like atmosphere amongst us all.

JK also advised those present, following discussions with the General Manager (Jamie McDonald), that JM was clear that he was not in a position to reinstate the 20% discount as this was a group decision that could not to be altered by individual managers. However, he wanted to support members and give them some benefits, if he could. This acknowledged his support for the club and looked to encourage the use of the Pines Bar. Therefore, he would look to put on special offers for members with selected price reductions covering a beer, lager and bottles of particular wines. This would only be available on Competition days i.e.. Sundays (men)/Saturdays (ladies) and Thursdays (Seniors). Members would be required to produce their membership card at the bar when taking advantage of any special offers. Matt Peacock would be able to provide cards for those members that were unable to find their current membership card. The uptake by members of this offer would be monitored to see the impact. Members were encouraged to support this initiative.

JK went on to propose Roger Buss to be Vice Captain and take over the role of club Captain in 2026.

Vote to approve the appointment of RB as Men's Vice Captain and WD as Ladies Vice Captain.

Proposed: JK/DL

Seconded: JC

No other proposals were put forward and the vote was unanimously carried.

### **Report – Treasurer (MC)**

MC detailed the current financial position of the Club and circulated the agreed accounts to those present for information. MC noted that the club's accounts showed a net balance of £2,640.83 as of the 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 2024. It was also noted there was a net change of -£618.59 on the previous year.

ST asked those in attendance to formally accept the accounts as presented.

Proposed: AH

Seconded: DL

No objections were raised, and the accounts were unanimously accepted.

In regard to the operating deficit MC advised that this was, in the main, due to increased costs for a variety of services etc. that could not be avoided. These included the subscription to HDiD/Club V1 and engraving costs etc. This was a matter of concern noting that if the club continued to operate at a deficit, to the tune of £600-£700 per year the clubs' funds would rapidly be depleted within the course of a year. It was noted the club had also run at a deficit last year (2023).

To this end MC proposed, on behalf of the committee, that competition entry fees be increased from £5 for men's and ladies' competitions to £6 and that mixed competition fees be increased from £2.50 to £5 for 18 hole competitions and £3.00 for 9 hole competitions. This would allow the prize monies to remain at the same level, as a percentage of the fee, as they do currently. MC advised this would, based on the historic competition entries, cover the shortfall moving forward and allow for a small contingency to be maintained. It was suggested a balance of circa £2000 would be reasonable to ensure the club had a degree of financial security and resilience.

This prompted some debate from those present, particularly with reference to the increase for mixed events.

PM asked if the reduction in prize money had been considered. ST advised that the committee had considered this when making the proposal however it was the view of the committee this would potentially discourage members entering events as they had been used to the percentage prize monies currently afforded. A further consideration is the sense of loss this would potentially engender. On this basis the committee thought raising the entry fee was preferable, however this option could be considered if those present wanted this approach to be considered.

A general discussion ensued as to why the significant rise in the fee for mixed competitions. ST advised this was again considered by the committee and it was felt this was appropriate given the cost for men's and ladies competitions for the same benefit.

As a result of the difference of opinion between the proposal to raise the men's and ladies' competition fees versus the mixed fees ST suggested that a vote be taken on the men's and ladies fees first so as to afford specific focus on raising the mixed fees to be taken. This was accepted by those present.

Vote to increase competition fees (Men and Ladies) as detailed above.

Proposed: PD

Seconded: JK

The vote was carried with 40 to 1 in favor with 1 abstention.

Following the discussion on raising the mixed fees JC suggested that only those who play in mixed events should be able to vote. This again prompted some debate. ST suggested that it was his opinion that playing in the mixed was open to all members and as such all should be able to vote. Secondly, the effect of this decision would potentially affect the wider club financially so again it would seem reasonable that all would have the option to vote. The point was also made that the reason for the proposal was solely to ensure the financial stability of the club moving forward. It was noted, and reiterated through the discussion, that any members who felt that they were not able to vote on this area, primarily as they didn't play in mixed events, could abstain and were encouraged to do so. On this basis a vote to increase the mixed fees was taken.

Vote to increase competition fees (Mixed) as detailed above.

Proposed: PD

Seconded: JK

The vote was carried with 20 to 13 in favor with 9 abstentions.

### **Points of Issue Addressed to Club Secretary by 7 Days Prior to Date of the Meeting**

#### **Cooks Cup Redesignation (Sue Over)**

On behalf of the committee SO proposed that the Cooks Cup become a mixed team event with a minimum of 1 lady per team. SO confirmed that the Cook's, the donors of the trophy, were happy with the proposal.

Vote to redesignate the Cooks Cup as detailed above.

Proposed: SO

Seconded: PL

The vote was carried with 38 to 3 in favor with 1 abstention.

#### **Nil Return for Counting Competition Cards (SO)**

SO advised those present, on behalf of the committee, that for a card to be considered as a counting card towards the 5 mandatory cards in the preceding 12 months a nil return after



completion of 10 holes (the minimum EG requirement) would not be accepted. On this basis if a player recorded a nil return for a single hole the expectation the remaining holes would be played and a corresponding score recorded. SO reminded this present that the only reason for aborting a competition/qualifying round is for one of the following reasons as stipulated in the rules of golf:

- An emergency
- Closure of the course
- Personal injury as a result of which the player is unable to continue

### **Seniors 55 Plus (JK)**

On behalf of the committee JK proposed that to qualify to play all men's senior competitions entrants should be a minimum age of 55. JK explained this would be in keeping with age restrictions for all Lincolnshire Union of Golf Clubs (LUGC) events. It was noted the current limit is set at 50. ST advised that as this related to male members the vote would be restricted to males.

Vote to raise the age limit of all men's senior competitions from 50 to 55.

Proposed: JK

Seconded: AH

The vote was carried with 24 to 4 in favor with no abstentions.

### **Betterball Scores (SO)**

On behalf of the committee SO outlined the new EG rules around the betterball scores meeting the stipulated criteria, being used to handicap purposes. SO advised that where a team scores more than 42 points and a player scores on more than 9 of the holes then that players handicap will be reduced accordingly. SO went on to point out that players are personally responsible for advising their home club of any relevant cards meeting the criteria identified above. To this end the hosting club and/or organiser's couldn't be relied upon to advise the players home club or submit to EG.

This prompted a significant amount of discussion. TS suggested that it should be the hosting clubs/organisers responsibility alone. TS raised concern, in his opinion, that some clubs/organiser's/individuals do not follow this rule and as a result this would be detrimental to those who did comply. SO and ST acknowledged these concerns and reiterated that this was an EG rule and as such there was no choice in the matter. In addition, it was accepted that most clubs/organiser's, particularly those using systems like HDiD, would automatically have their scores reviewed and handicap adjusted accordingly; however it remained the responsibility of the individual to advise their respective home club.

PM asked if corresponding 9 hole scores (for 9 hole competitions) would be treated the same. SO advised that she wasn't aware if this was the case or not and would, as a result, contact EG to confirm.

***Action: SO to confirm the arrangements applied to betterball scores, as prescribed by EG, would be applied to corresponding 9 hole scores for 9 hole competitions.***

### **Constitution (ST)**

ST advised that there was a requirement to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and as such a policy, based on the EG template, had been included in the draft constitution as an appendix. In compliance with the policy, the role of Data Protection Officer was proposed and again included in the relevant areas of the constitution.

In addition, and on behalf of the committee, in keeping with the creation of a seniors section, it was proposed that the role of Seniors Coordinator be established. Again, this was included in the draft constitution for consideration.

Noting that the draft version of the constitution had been available on the web site ahead of the AGM ST advised a hard copy of the draft constitution was available for review if anyone present wished to review the proposed changes.

Those present were asked to approve the changes as described.

Vote to approve the inclusion of the GDPR policy in the constitution and creation of a GDPR and Seniors Coordinator posts, similarly reflected in the draft constitution.

Proposed: ST

Seconded: AH

No objections were raised, and the vote was unanimously accepted.

### **Live Competition Leaderboard/Mobile Competition Sign in on HDiD (WB)**

WB proposed that the live leaderboard and mobile competition sign in functions of the HDiD system be enabled for competitions.

ST advised this matter had been raised previously with the committee and as such the facilities had been recently enabled. JG confirmed this was indeed the case. WB expressed his thanks.

### **Medical Exemptions (JG)**

JG advised that currently medical exemption provisions relating to the use of buggies in competitions were not reviewed after initial approval, the implication being that a member could continue to take advantage of the provisions indefinitely even if not justifiable. JG noted that in some cases the need for continual use of these provisions would not be necessary or justifiable. To this end JG proposed that an annual review of the exemption arrangements be undertaken. This would mean the member(s) concerned would have to provide the necessary evidence to support the case for the exemption on an annual basis. JG proceeded to set out the current rule for context, this being:

Players must walk at all times during their competitive round of golf.

Exception

If a player produces evidence of a disability (i.e. Medical certificate) that requires them to use transportation this clause shall be waived.

The proposed change being:

Players must walk at all times during their competitive round of golf.

Exception

If a player produces evidence of a disability ( i.e. Medical certificate) that requires them to use transportation this clause shall be waived. Unless the medical certificate relates to a permanent disability the committee requires the evidence to be re-submitted every 12 months on renewal of their golf membership.

N.B. Members who have a Blue Badge only have to submit a copy of their blue badge on its 3 yearly renewal.

Members who use their own transportation MUST accept all risk in connection with its use

Vote to review medical exemptions on an annual basis as set out above.

Proposed: JG

Seconded: PL

The vote was carried with 41 to 1 in favor with no abstentions.

### **Review of competition winners (JG)**

ST advised that in response to concerns raised by male members, following the raising of the handicap limit for competitions, that higher handicap players would be at an advantage and disproportionately win club competitions the committee would present the results over the last year.

JG proceeded to present the results, by handicap range, for the following year, these being:

		Handicap Range				
		0 - 5.9	6 - 9.9	10 - 11.9	12 -14.9	Over 15
<b>C o m p e t i t i o n T y p e</b>	Overall	6	9	4	7	4
	Board Comps (Singles)	4	2	1	3	1
	Board Comps (Team/Pairs)	1	2	1	2	2
	Knockouts	1	4	2	0	1
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>

It was clear from the results that higher handicap players, notably those who would be able to take advantage of the rise in the limit approved in 2022, were not at an advantage and did not disproportionately win club competitions. To this end the committee sought to assure those present on this point.

## Appointment of Committee Members

ST advised that 5 posts were currently available on the Committee, these being the Deputy Secretary, Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer, Ladies Handicap Secretary and Safeguarding officer.

### Election of Deputy Secretary

ST advised the meeting that in the absence of another nomination, the current incumbent KB would be willing to stand for another term.

Proposed: ST

Seconded: PL

No other nominations were put forward and the vote was unanimously carried.

### Election of Treasurer

ST advised the meeting that in the absence of another nomination, the current incumbent MC would be willing to stand for another term.

Proposed: ST

Seconded: JG

No other nominations were put forward and the vote was unanimously carried.

#### **Election of Deputy Treasurer**

ST advised the meeting that the current incumbent Simon Parrot had not been able to confirm he was willing to stand for another term. In the absence of another nomination, there was none, ST advised the committee retained the ability to appoint to the role on a temporary basis until the next AGM and this would be the right course of action in the circumstances.

#### **Election of Ladies Handicap Secretary**

ST advised the meeting that in the absence of another nomination, the current incumbent SO would be willing to stand for another term.

Proposed: DL

Seconded: ST

No other nominations were put forward and the vote was unanimously carried.

#### **Election of Safeguarding Officer**

ST advised the meeting that in the absence of another nomination, the current incumbent CM would be willing to stand for another term.

Proposed: ST

Seconded: PL

No other nominations were put forward and the vote was unanimously carried.

#### **Election of DPO and Seniors Coordinator**

In addition to the roles detailed above and following the approval of the creation of both a DPO and Seniors Coordinator role ST advised the meeting that in the absence of another nomination, Pete Reeves would be willing to undertake both roles.

Proposed: JK

Seconded: ST

No other nominations were put forward and the vote was unanimously carried.

#### **Conclusion (ST)**

ST thanked all for attendance and the meeting closed at 19.55.