

**SOUTH OF SCOTLAND GOLFERS' ASSOCIATION  
MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE MEETING 10 JANUARY 2017**

Held at the Selkirk Arms Hotel, Kirkcudbright at 7.15 pm

**Present:**

Stephen Kingston, President, in the Chair; A Millar; T Clark; G Sharp; P Watson; W Tyrrell; R McKnight; J Forrest; D. Moore; B Duguid and I Robin, Secretary.

**Apologies:**

There were no apologies

**In Attendance:**

L. Stirrett (Crichton); M Halliday (Kirkcudbright); Jon Gibb-Smith (Kirkcudbright)

**President's Welcome:**

The President welcomed the members and wished everyone a Happy New Year. A special welcome was expressed to Tony Clark and Jean Forrest who were attending their first Executive Meeting and to Lee Stirrett, Maurice Halliday and Jon Gibb-Smith who were representing Crichton GC and Kirkcudbright GC

**Executive Meeting 1 November 2016**

The Minutes were approved by Alastair Millar, seconded by Graeme Sharp.

**Matters Arising:**

There were no matters arising.

**Draft Minutes of AGM on 22 November 2016**

The draft Minutes were agreed

**Secretary's Report:**

The Secretary reported that Gavin Forrester, the Child Protection Officer of Scottish Golf, wrote to all Areas/Counties on 2 December following the allegations of child abuse in football to remind Areas/Counties to make sure they had procedures in place for corresponding to concerns about the welfare of children in golf and we had a CPO in place. He had checked with Jim Burns, who was the CPO for South Area, and he advised that not all aspects were up to date.

Lee Sterritt advised that all who had dealings with children had to obtain a PVG Certificate and attend a Safeguarding course. Those who required clearance were Pam Watson, Neville Wright, Duncan Moore, Graeme Sharp and the Secretary. Duncan Moore volunteered to be the CPO and the Secretary offered to pass on all correspondence and information. Lee Sterritt was thanked for offering to give advice if required.

On Wednesday 30 November, Jackie Davidson, Development Officer of SGL called a meeting with representatives of the Kirkcudbrightshire Clubs. A meeting with the Dumfriesshire Clubs scheduled for the following evening was cancelled due to a lack of interest and a meeting with the Wigtownshire Clubs is to be held at a later date. The Forum concentrated on Club development and participation, membership (recruitment and retention), education and training and facilities. Notes of the meeting were forwarded to all Executive members.

The General consensus was that the meeting was positive and informative and that information was given on the strategy of SGL. The Development Officers also confirmed they were there to respond to the needs of the Clubs. The Secretary was asked to contact Jackie Davidson to find out the date of the follow-up forum and the date of the forum with the Wigtownshire Clubs.

Scottish Golf is looking to fill 3 non-Executive Director Roles at the AGM. All interested to apply to SGL.

The AGM of Scottish Golf will be held on Saturday 11 March 2017 at Fairmount, St Andrews from 1.00 - 4.00 pm. The agenda will focus on consulting with issues, opportunities and strategies with the objective of growing the game.

A Who's Who of the officers in South Area had been distributed and several errors were pointed out. A corrected version would be sent out to the Executive Members and all Clubs.

On 9 December the R&A granted Euan Little reinstatement of his amateur status.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

The Treasurer reported that the Summary of Accounts up to 23 December 2016 was as follows:

Income		Expenditure	
In bank 1/9/16	9,632.09	Sundries	131.48
Comps	390.00	Coaching	515.00
IMT	180.00	ATC	1,652.37
Sponsor	300.00	NCF	565.92
		Vouchers	1,755.00
		In bank 23/12/16	<u>5,882.32</u>
	<u>10,502.09</u>		10,502.09

The Coaching grant for 2016/17 has been applied for.

SGL had decided this year to contact all affiliated Golf Clubs by telephone to find out their membership numbers for 2016 and thereafter invoice each Club for the monies to be paid by 31 March. In the past they sent out a form which was completed by the Clubs and the necessary fee paid. They also provided a form for the Areas to send out for their Affiliation Fee and the Areas checked the numbers with SGL. It would appear that this year the Areas have to organize and collect their fees independently. It was agreed that the Treasurer produce a form for the Clubs in South Area.

Concern was expressed that monies from the sale of IMT booklets was much less than usual at this time of year and with so many schemes available for reduced green fees there was doubt if this scheme should be continued. The Treasurer explained that most monies were submitted when Clubs paid the Affiliation fee and as a request for these had not yet been made there should be more forthcoming. He also added that printing of the booklets for this year had been ordered. It was agreed to continue this year and review the situation later.

### **Amalgamation:**

On 23 November an e-mail was received from Blane Dodds inviting the Area to send two representatives to a meeting with him and Eleanor Cannon, Chairman. The purpose of the meeting was for the Area to be given an update on where SGL was as an organization and the issues and priorities the CEO had been dealing with since appointed and the future challenges, direction and opportunities. They also wanted to obtain the thoughts and feedback on these priorities and to hear about current plans which we believe require attention. Two representatives from Dumfriesshire Ladies and Galloway Ladies were also invited to attend.

On 13 December a meeting was held at Castle Douglas Golf Club to which all Clubs were invited to send two representatives, the Ladies Counties three representatives, the Men's Counties two representatives and all members of South Executive. The purpose of the meeting was to find out the views of all concerned. Despite a very poor turnout it was a positive meeting and a number of issues were raised which will be brought to the attention of the Chair and CEO. A note of the issues raised is attached to this Agenda for information.

The meeting with the Chair and CEO was held on Monday 9 January 2017 at 1.00 pm in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Glasgow. Notes on the Meeting prepared by the Secretary were distributed and discussed. The main issues raised were:-

No Development Centre in South Area; This were being addressed. It was acknowledged that the distances South golfers had to travel were too great.

Regional Forums: Areas and Counties would be encouraged to amalgamate but there would be NO Regional Forums. The main contact with SGL for Clubs would be through the Development Officers

Sports Hubs, Multi Functional Centres: There is no cost in setting up. There are 3 in Kirkcudbrightshire at Dalbeattie, Castle Douglas and Kirkcudbright. The Regional Council has masses of equipment and 2 officers dedicated to help. It is a way of cutting costs to hire facilities.

The Meeting was informative although lacking in detail and Blane gave the impression he had a grasp of the situation and was trying to form a positive way forward. Assurances were given that all topics and concerns would be addressed. However it all could depend on how he responds to the promises he inferred to. A note of the Meeting is attached to this Minute as an Appendix.

### **Convenor's Reports**

#### **CHAMPIONSHIPS 2017**

Graeme Sharp reported that posters for the competitions would be made up soon. These would be sent by e-mail and surface mail to ensure they reached the right people in the Clubs.

#### **COACHING CONVENOR**

Pam Watson reported that two successful coaching days had been held at Brighthouse with Chris Robinson and David Broadfoot. The boys were assessed on course over 12 holes, each interviewed individually to discuss their strengths and weaknesses and targets for the coming season. There has also been a focus on shots inside 100 yards and chipping and pitching. Reports of both days are on the website.

The next session is on Saturday 18th February. The programme will be sent out soon, along with a survey monkey to gain the boys and girls thoughts/ideas and opinions on the coaching so far.

#### **SENIOR TEAM MANAGER**

Graeme Sharp reported that the match against Cumbria had been arranged for Sunday 9 April at Powfoot. There had been no correspondence with Borders to date.

#### **JUNIOR TEAM MANAGER**

Iain Robin reported that he still had had no notification of the date or venue for this year's Boys ATC.

He was presently arranging dates and venues for the NCF league matches and hoped to have these finalized soon.

#### **COURSE RATING**

Robert McKnight reported that the assessment of Thornhill produced no change to the SSS.

Brian Duguid reported that Castle Douglas had applied for a 9 hole SSS in October and had been advised it would be available before the start of the season.

#### **D&G GOLF PARTNERSHIP**

Jean Forrest reported that prior to Christmas Wave Tyrrell, Donald Macdonald and herself had an initial meeting to discuss how the three of them could make a start on moving the Partnership forward in 2017.

They agreed to try and take forward several of Neville's thoughts and ideas as follows –

- Wave will engage with accommodation providers
- Donald, who was the main force behind the first two years of the partnership, will continue to maintain links with the groups with which Neville had engaged last year. Donald had an initial conversation with Keith Campbell of Visitscotland before Christmas and agreed

that the agency should “concentrate on driving people to our website/golf pages”. Keith is abroad till the end of January and Donald expects to develop this further on his return.

- She will attempt to get all clubs to enhance their websites with links to regional and national sites. To this end she had initially contacted clubs asking them to provide her with direct contact details for their individual webmasters. To date she had had responses from 8 clubs. Future communications about links, she hoped to make directly with the person in each club responsible for the website and, if appropriate, arrange meetings with these people – probably in 3 separate county groups. This may happen in conjunction with the next round of SGL forums, as she will maintain links with Craig Chalmers and Jackie Davidson.
- All of us will try and identify 3 people who may be willing, and able, to become ambassadors for the Partnership. Any suggestions are welcome. Duncan Moore offered his services.

Last year the Partnership spent £1460 on advertising. There was no means used to monitor how effective this was, but it was agreed that the Executive would wish to continue to advertise outwith our own region including £500 in the accommodation providers’ marketing literature and in the Scottish Club Golfer.

Since the Golf Pass finished Clubs had been losing valuable revenue. It was agreed the Partnership would investigate re-instating it.

It was pointed out that Kevin Potts had succeeded Michael Dickie as the contact at the Cairndale.

*Maurice Halliday left the meeting*

#### WEBMASTER AND FIXTURE SECRETARY

Wave Tyrrell reported that the fixture list was up to date as far as the club opens were concerned. He awaited the junior match fixtures. The Secretary pointed out that the McRobert and Sutherland Classic (both in the OOM) had been arranged for the same day. He agreed to contact the two Clubs involved.

Wave had added links to accommodation on the Visitor site and drawn up a list of accommodation. The next stage was to approach accommodation providers and clubs to verify information and find out how golf friendly they are.

Looming on the horizon is the packages section. On this topic he felt it would be better to contact/meet clubs direct rather than send out an email that would end up in a pending tray. It was agreed that we request to attend club committee meetings and make an agreed pitch.

#### DUMFRIESSHIRE

Tony Clark reported that the Dumfriesshire girls were attending coaching sessions at Tower Wood on Tuesday evenings.

#### KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE

Brian Duguid reported that Peter Haslam had been elected President at the poorly attended AGM but there was no Championship Secretary or Vice President. He was concerned that the Association might fold next year as interest in volunteering for officer posts was decreasing. Pam Watson and Brian Haining had met to discuss coaching in the County.

#### WIGTOWNSHIRE

Stephen Kingston reported that Peter Strain was Vice President. There had been some junior coaching before Christmas and more was organized for after mid-February with Chris Robinson.

#### LEE STERRITT

Lee, to continue the communication between the Clubs and the Area, gave an open invitation to any Executive Member to attend Crichton Committee Meetings.

#### JON GIBB-SMITH

Jon thanked the President for the invitation. He had found the meeting very informative.

**A.O.C.B.**

Robert McKnight was informed that Clubs got their VAT monies back in September. The Secretary was instructed to arrange another meeting with the Ladies. It was advised that an Agenda be set.

Brian Duguid proposed a vote of thanks to the Chair

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 8.50 pm

The next Executive Meeting was arranged for 7.15pm on Tuesday 7 March 2017 at the Selkirk Arms Hotel, Kirkcudbright.

## APPENDIX

### NOTES OF MEETING RE AMALGAMATION

Meeting with Area Executive, Ladies Counties and Representatives from the Clubs at Castle Douglas Golf Club on 13 December 2016 at 7.30 pm.

Present:

Douglas Hunter	Southernness	Eileen Scott	Dumfriesshire Ladies
Robert Kennedy	Southernness	Fiona McGregor	Dumfriesshire Ladies
Ian Brotherston	D & C	Gladys McClymont	Dumfriesshire Ladies
Ian Brown	New Galloway	Diane Macdonald	Dumfriesshire Ladies
Peter Haslam	Gatehouse	Pat Magill	Galloway Ladies
Brian Duguid	Castle Douglas & Kirkcudbrightshire		
Stephen Kingston	South	Pam Watson	South
Tony Clark	South	Alastair Millar	South
Iain Robin	South		

Apologies:

Apologies were received from:-

Jean Forest	South	Jackie Duguid	Castle Douglas
Robert McKnight	South	Jean Bryson	Galloway Ladies
Graeme Sharp	South	Stranraer Golf Club	

Welcome:

Stephen Kingston, South President, welcomed the representatives and explained that the meeting had been called to assist the two representatives from the Area, and two from each of the Ladies' Counties, who had been invited to a meeting with the Chair and CEO of SGL to discuss the way forward. He stressed he wanted them to air their views, issues and concerns so that those who go to the meeting can fully represent the Clubs in South Area.

The meeting was divided into two sections so that everyone's voice could be heard.

Discussion:

The following are the points raised:-

#### 1 GOVERNANCE

Is there a Business Plan for SGL? Any Plan appears to be changing daily.

Has there been any progress on setting up Regional Forums? Rumours are heard periodically that South Area and the Ladies Counties are to join with our counterparts in Ayrshire and Argyll. Is it to be one Development Officer to each Region? How is the composition of each Region to be determined? Any decision to combine South Area and the two Ladies Counties without our explicit consent would meet with resistance given that we would be joining a larger Area with more Clubs and our smaller number of affiliated Clubs would be at a disadvantage resulting in the larger Area taking control. In addition South Area has a large geographical size and travelling times and costs from some parts to Forums and meetings will be excessive.

What role do you see Areas and Counties having?

Has the Audit Committee been formed? Who is on it?

Regarding Proxy Votes at General Meetings. Do you expect the Areas/Counties to collect them from the Clubs. How long will we have and is there a standard form to be completed?

The Board controls the vision of the business but staff the detail. How will you ensure staff is providing what Clubs want and not what staff decide to provide?

As a small Area and small Counties and in a rural geographical area does one size fit for all? If we have an issue will it be addressed? How will you ensure that rural areas are not marginalised by Clubs in Central Belt?

There has been positive constructive change in this Area. The Area Executive has met with the two Ladies Counties and agreement on combining certain activities has been agreed in principle.

## 2 COMMUNICATION

This was a recurring theme throughout the evening particularly as very little information had emanated from SGL in the last 15 months. There is no transparency which reflects a dynamic and progressive organisation.

Notwithstanding some communication has improved recently. Bulletins and e-mail updates have re-started but a lot more is required. The Development Officer has been seen in the Area speaking to Club Committees.

More use of modern technology could be used to reduce travelling to meetings by the use of "Skype" or similar. The Facebook page also needs to be developed in association with the website.

The SGL used to produce a Who's Who of staff by Department with their telephone number and e-mail address. As there have been numerous staff changes during the last year could this vital information be reproduced?

### WEBSITE

The only thing that has changed from the old SGU website had been the logo. It is still very much male dominated and does not address Ladies' issues. A new website requires to be constructed as soon as possible.

### COMPETITIONS

The Fixture List 2017 was very late in being published and there is still no date for the ATC's and Ladies County Finals. The Boys ATC had been agreed to be played at Stranraer Golf Club in June but this date has been taken over by the Boys Stephen Gallacher OOM competition and Stranraer were not informed. Southernness has also been informed it will host the Seniors Home Internationals in 2018 and despite attempts to obtain confirmation from SGL none has been forthcoming. Clubs have set aside these dates, are preparing the courses and are losing much needed income from visitors as they await a decision. As an organisation that claims to put the Clubs first this is not a good start.

The Ladies are concerned that no vouchers were presented in winning a Scottish competition, only medals. It is not cheap to enter, where does the money go? In addition several Ladies National competitions were not competed for last year. Will they be re-instated in 2017? At Club level there were no SGL brooches for Club competitions.

## 3 FINANCE

How do Club Members, who pay the affiliation fee, get value out of membership?

The per capita fee has been a bone of contention in all levels in Scottish golf for years. What plans do you have to sort this out? An interesting development in Clubs in this Area is that both Men and Ladies are charged the SGL per capita fee plus the per capita fee to the Men's Area in their annual subscription. The Club then pays out the per capita fee for the men and ladies to SGL and the per capita fee for the men to the Area. The "Area" per capita fee paid by the Ladies is deposited in Club funds as membership of the Ladies Counties is voluntary. Thus the Ladies pay to the Club a higher subscription than the men. So much for equality!

If a golfer is a member of more than one Club he/she pays the per capita fee for each.

To ensure accountability to all the Members could a full set of accounts be presented at the AGM as happens in all Golf Clubs?

## 4 COACHING

There is no Development Academy in South Area. The nearest one for those living in Wigtownshire and parts of Kirkcudbrightshire is Turnberry and for those in Dumfries area is Glasgow. This entails a 150 mile return trip with associated travel and accommodation costs.

5 DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS

They are invisible in our area. Craig Chalmers is only interested in the bigger Clubs and never visits smaller Clubs. He conducted a Club Forum on 30 November and promised a note on the discussions and a follow-up but nothing has materialised.

6 AWARDS

How are the recipients of awards at the Annual Dinner selected eg Volunteer of the Year? It would appear that it is awarded to a Club which is being advised by the Development Officers. Would it not be better to recognise the work the volunteers do for SGL to have an award for the Volunteer of each Area or County to whom local golfers could relate?

7 GENERAL

All meetings with SGL appear to be held in outlying areas, eg SGL AGM in St Andrews which is not the easiest place to get to. Last year's in Stirling was much more accessible as it is served by a reasonable motorway network. Do you intend to take future AGM's and meetings round other areas to share travelling costs for those attending?

Scottish Golf appears in disarray. There is no strategy for going forward.

Can we have a transcript of this meeting so we can discuss the issues with our respective Committees?

Will we hear what concerns the other Areas and Counties raise or will we require to rely on the grapevine?

The South President, Stephen Kingston, thanked everyone for attending and wished them a safe journey home.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

## APPENDIX

### NOTES OF MEETING OF 9 JANUARY 2017 WITH CHAIR & CEO OF SGL

The Meeting was held in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Glasgow at 1.00 pm on Monday 9 January 2017. Unfortunately Eleanor Cannon, Chair, was unable to attend due to a family bereavement and her place was taken by Karin Sharp, Corporate Services Director.

**Present:** Blane Dodds, CEO of SGL, Karin Sharp, CSD of SGL, Eileen Scott, Secretary Dumfriesshire Ladies, Gladys McClymont, President Dumfriesshire Ladies, Pat Magill, President Galloway Ladies, Stephen Kingston, President South Aea and the Secretary.

**Background:** Blane Dodds outlined the work he had been doing since being appointed in August 2016 and set the scene for the Meeting. These included:-

#### *Priorities for Growth*

Growing the Game: dwindling membership and challenging times

Budget makes Scottish Golf more efficient – invest in Coaching Grant

Golf Data UK & Scotland with R&A; Golf is most popular partner sport

Total economic activity £4.46;

Scotland contributes 20% of economic benefit with 8% of population

7500 staff in UK, 1500 in Scotland

14% of consumer spending on UK sport

#### *New Budget / Business Plan*

Strategy of prioritising growth areas and services by reducing operating costs

One HQ at St Andrews – Not disbanding Areas and Counties and forming regional forums

SportsScotland: One year investment strategy leading to 4 year agreement

Submission including financials

KPI's

Tactical / operational plans

#### *Priority Affiliation of new process*

Membership affiliation (categorise the simplified)

CPM database

Invoice System

Greater accuracy – greater income

#### *Priority Clubs*

Create new model based on research

Multi Sport – create sports hubs (multi-functional facilities) for whole families as women tend to be family decision makers

One stop service for all Club; clear needs

Enhanced model golf programme

Partner with Development Company for proactive land developments

Explore other partners eg health and wellbeing

Quality facilities, value for money, main sporting amenity for community

Pilot Clubs to prove case then roll out programme.

Use case study Clubs that increase community sports assets through private finance by selling land for house building

#### *Priority Scottish Golf Added Value*

Governance in Child Protection

Business Planning

Marketing

Finance

Operational delivery  
*Other Priority Areas*  
Events / Corporate  
Merchandise  
Buying Groups  
Commercial / Sponsorship  
Pro Ambassador Programme

The potential value is £1M

The discussion was opened up to include the representatives of the Ladies Counties and the Area.

**Discussion:** The following topics were discussed:-

Coaching: indoor coaching centres

Development Centres

Developing players

Start in the schools

Charge £1 or £2 per session

Start with absolute beginners and progress to accomplished golfers.

Family Days

Areas & Counties: NO new Regions. Some will be able to amalgamate quickly but not into bigger area. SGL to give support. Ladies Counties to be funded same as men

Area Team Championships and Ladies Counties Championship. These will continue this year but will be reviewed for next year. Commonwealth Spoons to continue

Website: Work on-going. Looking at communication and revamping website to make user friendly

Extra Ladies Trophies at Championship. Mistakes were made last year and will be rectified this year

Affiliation fees; Problems were pointed out and assurances given that these would be investigated.

Health and wellbeing benefits of golf

Who's Who of Staff: Will be considered

Blane Dodds closed the meeting at 2.40 pm by stating that the visuals of his background presentation would be sent to all Areas and Counties as would a synopsis of all the comments made at the various meetings.

**Conclusion:** The Meeting was informative and Blane gave the impression he had a grasp of the situation and was trying to form a positive way forward. Assurances were given that all topics and concerns would be addressed. However it all could depend on how he responds to the promises he inferred to.