



Chairman's Blog

October 2018

I would like to start by thanking Steve Healy, my predecessor as Chairman for everything that he has done for the club, and I see first hand the commitment it takes to Chair the Board of this Club.

I have précised below some of the important discussions from the recent Board Meeting. I will continue where Steve left off with regular Blogs to keep Members informed of what is happening in the Club, and about decisions that affect the future.

First up:

The following allocation of duties took place at the first meeting:

Steve Healy	Social Director
Barry Pearce	Membership and Marketing Director
Neal Davies	Financial Director
Larry Coyne	House Director
Bill Rookes	Golf and Greens Director
Nick Phipps	Chairman

Voting Procedures – Steve Murphy gave a summary of our existing voting procedure from Articles of Association and it was obvious from the antagonism at the recent AGM, that we need a more transparent voting procedure.

Suggestions included all re-election Directors to be pooled with other candidates at the end of their term. Introduction to a maximum time in office (two terms) and the introduction of proxy vote as this is now required under Company law.

SM will meet with Barry Pearce to formalise a document for the Board to vet, before introduction at the EGM next April.

Green Fees – SM presented a précis of the Green Fee situation in comparison with local clubs and it was agreed the Guest Fee would rise from £20 to £25 and the concessionary voucher would increase from £15 to £20. Both to be affective from 1st January 2019.

These have not increased since 2007 and still represent tremendous value to showcase the course to friends. Visitor green fees continue to increase gradually in line with competitors on an annual basis.

Presentation Evening – The Board agreed to change the presentation evening to a Saturday in late January, commencing 2020 as the current schedule is resulting in a poor attendance night for the Club members. It is hoped that this new date will receive full support from Members.

Golf Plan: Club Membership Insurance – SM presented a new Golf Plan Club Membership Insurance Premier Cover which is available to our members at a drastically reduced price.

This will be £22.40 including IPT, saving up to £40 on the current full annual price. This is dependent on having at least 50 members to sign up.

Cover includes ‘new for old’ / golf equipment public liability / personal accident / 3rd party accidental damage / club membership fees and the ‘hole in one’ bar bill. All with competitive limits. Recent liability cases against golf clubs and golfers highlight the need for all golfers to have such insurance and the Board agreed for this to be advertised to members and encouraged to take this cover up. Anyone already insured through Golf Plan can have their premium adjusted if they have just paid. A special Forum Article will be published once Steve has finalised details of this extraordinarily good deal, so watch out for that one.

Next up was Neal Davies our new Financial Director:

Treasurer’s Report – ND presented his brief first report and has had a meeting with SM & CMM re budgets, cashflow and monthly management accounts. ND is devising a line by line comparison spreadsheet with the emphasis on top line income. ND gave the viewpoint of Barclays to potential finance for the irrigation system and this highlighted the fact that golf clubs are not ‘flavour of the month’ as far as High Street Banks are concerned. ND’s emphasis will be on increasing income.

Directors’ Reports:

a) **Captain:**

- BP – reported that since the AGM the mood in the Club is much happier and in an attempt to smooth things with Keith Povah, BP & NP have arranged a meeting for Thursday 18th October. Outcome to be reported back to the Directors. BP’s appointment has been very positively received and the main aim this year is to bring back respect to this role. The new Captain’s blog has also been well received.
- East Sussex National Club – is the venue for next year’s Away Day and a rekkie trip has been arranged for Friday 19th October. In view of its proximity a coach won’t be arranged.

b) **Membership:**

Category	Figures as at 15 th October
Full (males -7 Day)	229
Full (ladies)	15
Cat E (26-30)	33
5 Day (males)	98
5 Day (ladies)	13
Cat C & D	6
Social	244
Academy	15

- Pretty static this year from last year. We have had a younger element joining us with nine new members from August. With regard to recruitment campaign we will concentrate on Facebook advertising programme which will be boosted and come into effect from 1st December.

c) **Golf and Greens:** Nick’s final report.

- *Practice Nets update* – This work was originally going to be carried out by a director but due to a busy work schedule had to be delayed. I obtained an estimate from an independent builder who has done work for us before but was far too dear. Larry has agreed to carry out the work at a more realistic figure so please be patient with these types of works. LC & NP to meet and have the practice nets in play as soon as possible. Nets will be out of use for a few days.

- *Bunker Programme Update* – RE updated the membership on Aquadyne Drainage System which has now been installed on eight bunkers. The last one being on the 18th fairway. Six others have been identified as priority. This drainage system simply tackles the standing water problem and we have a meeting this week with a company owned by Tarmac with a new liner at a cost of £20 per square meter. This is an alternate base to the rubberised Blinder.
- *Toro Greens Machine* – with the age of the greens machine it is time to have a replacement – Toro Ride On. Cost would be £30,481 and if we order now we beat the price rise of 5% which comes into effect on 1st November. Suppliers are offering a six month interest free period with finance to commence in May 2019. Repayments over 60 months would be approximately £698, but we do have a lease of £435 pm (including VAT) which has just terminated. Board agreed to purchase now and avoid any price hike.
- *Tree Surgery Priorities* – Tree Surgeons have completed a quote for essential tree work around the course which RE has prioritised and that comes to approx £4,200 (plus VAT). BR to meet with RE re schedule. The immediate tree work at the pro shop has been agreed to reduce the canopy of the veteran oak by some 40%. Cost of this, £980.

d) House:

- LC has agreed to work out alternatives for the buggy garage, including opening up the opening, to avoid constant damage to the runners and doors. A simple ‘up and over’ door with a wider entrance should provide easier parking access.
- **Visitors’ Toilets (& flooring quotes)** – were produced and again LC to meet with SM to assess these and finalise exactly what is needed to upgrade. We have received two quotes so far, ranging from £9k to £42k!
It was agreed that the Club would meet installation costs for the ladies’ vanity unit which has been estimated at £650.
The Players’ Bar was discussed at length and we have an allocation of approximately £9k. LC highlighted that this would provide very little change to the existing appearance and may only scratch the surface. Larry is going to meet with Raju in due course.

e) Social:

- **Events 2019** – A meeting with our agent Dave Langton for the social events of 2019 will be arranged for November time. The group ‘Chains’ have contacted SH and are now available to come back next year. Date to be arranged.

I will try to keep the members up to date with developments following each Board Meeting and rest assured that the Directors only have the good of the Club at heart, and they will continue to work tirelessly to improve our course, Club, House and Facilities.

Nick

Nick Phipps
Chairman