

INTRODUCTION

In June 2020 the Board set up the General Management Group and delegated the day to day running of the club to that sub-committee. The GMG currently comprises the General Manager (Peter Mason), the Finance Director (Duncan Syers) and Paul Waterhouse.

This document (which has been approved by the Board) comprises the outline plan for the running of the club and provides the agenda, limits and targets under which the GMG will work.

This plan sets out frameworks for a series of working groups in the main areas of operation of the golf club ie:

- Greens/course and Estate management
- Golf/competitions/handicaps/teams/roll ups/open days/visiting parties/green fees
- Membership/marketing
- Bar/restaurant/clubhouse/social
- Communication with members

The GMG will be actively recruiting members to help in the above areas and the plan below will give the groups a focus and establish targets and priorities.

Of course some of these groups already exist and will remain particularly greens and social/Captains' Committee.

STRATEGIC PLAN

This document does not attempt to establish a full strategic plan for the club – this would be premature at this stage. However we should at least note that, in a strategic sense the club occupies the “best value” space amongst our local competition. That is our membership fees are near the average of the scale and our course measures up well against those other courses. Our first strategic objective is to continue with this policy.

So our second strategic objective is to achieve financial security for the club and operate with an annual surplus.

The operational sections are set out below.

GREENS AND COURSE MANAGEMENT

Introduction

The golf course must be the jewel in the crown for Wetherby Golf Club, not only for member retention but also generation of new members and increasing visitor numbers. It is the club's primary selling point. Members, potential members and visitors judge golf clubs on many criteria, however amongst the most important is the quality and presentation of the course and greens. Course maintenance must be of the highest possible standards and evolve to reflect the changing competitive landscape within our sector (fewer clubs/more discerning customers/higher expectations) and the environmental impact of government policy with regard to climate change.

To maintain and improve the standards at WGC, we need to continually invest in our greenkeeping team to ensure they have the necessary training, equipment and skills to present the course as we would expect it and comply with relevant Health Safety & Environmental (HS&E) law.

WETHERBY GOLF CLUB

BUSINESS PLAN 2021

Targets

Review and publish a Course Maintenance Policy, develop and publish Course Strategy and development projects.

Develop an annual course maintenance and estate management programme with associated budget, to include training, statutory, educational and task related elements. This should form the basis of the Course Maintenance Policy to measure future activity/achievement against.

Prepare and agree capital replacement and course development programmes, considering HS&E law and other factors as outlined above.

Course and green reviews at a frequency to be agreed (weekly/monthly depending on time of year and course condition/works being undertaken). This should be measured against the Course Maintenance Policy (including the green keeping specification standard).

Develop and agree a medium/long term course strategy plan for CAPEX projects such as replacement of the irrigation system, new machinery, etc.

Working group(s)

There will be two working groups for Greens and they will be made up of individuals, club members or specialist consultants depending upon the task(s) involved that bring together the expertise to enable agreed projects to succeed and to meet budget. The working groups will enhance the operational working of the Course Management team.

The first working group will provide support and advice to the Course Management team (which is led by the General Manager along with the Course Manager).

The second set of working group will have responsibility for the various one off projects on the course including such things as the Winter works programme, the irrigation system, the paths project, flood mitigation projects. These project teams will be established and monitored by the primary working group. By their nature these project groups will disband when the project reaches contract stage at which point it will be managed by the GM and Course Manager.

A further working group is required almost immediately to begin work covering the course layout, hard (physical, permanent) changes that might be considered appropriate to be in place before England Golf come to site end of 2022 to discuss the Seniors and Past Captains and the Brabazon Northern Qualifying tournaments for 2023 and 2024 respectively

COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS

Introduction

It is the Board's responsibility to run the club for the benefit of the members and it is imperative that the Board regularly checks that the members agree with the direction the club is taking. This means that all important strategic documents must be communicated and the Board should have a system for ascertaining members views on those strategies.

WETHERBY GOLF CLUB

BUSINESS PLAN 2021

Targets

The following key documents must be communicated effectively to the members:

- Business Plan.
- Minutes of the Board meetings
- An annual review of the Board's effectiveness
- The course
 - i. The greenkeeping specification standard
 - ii. The course strategy plan
 - iii. A regular review of the course condition
 - iv. The year's course development projects
- The monthly and annual accounts

We will also establish an appropriate presence on social media.

Working group

There is already a culture of email reports from the GM and on occasions from the Chairman and this will continue to form part of the communication system particularly for day to day reporting of arrangements for booking and play, food and drink arrangements, social events etc.

We have also started a series of members' forums which, if successful, could be a regular and key method of communication.

Of course we will also on occasion use letters (eg membership subs). The Annual Report is also an important way to communicate more formal issues.

Social media is an area where we can achieve more. We will need to find specialist expertise from within the membership to help us with this.

Each month the GMG will report on communications to members as part of the GMG Board report.

MEMBERSHIP AND MARKETING

Introduction

The objectives for membership marketing are:

1. To maintain the membership numbers at the optimal level
2. To generate the optimal level of green fee income from visiting parties, golf days, open events and ad hoc visitors; and
3. Marketing the clubhouse facilities for use by outside organisations eg weddings/funerals etc

The optimal levels above will be set by the Board and reviewed on a regular basis.

This a critical area of activity for the club and therefore the detailed activities and targets will be contained in a separate marketing plan which will be approved by the Board

Working group

This is the most important part of the business plan in financial terms and it does not seem appropriate to delegate this to a separate group of people.

WETHERBY GOLF CLUB

BUSINESS PLAN 2021

The GMG will have the key role in drafting the marketing plan but it will need expert help in certain areas. The GMG will seek to consult with members who have that expertise and to form a Panel of Experts structure. It is likely that some members will have special expertise in certain areas eg social media or media advertising and GMG will seek to get the best out of any members in their own specialist areas.

BAR RESTAURANT CLUBHOUSE SOCIAL

Introduction

The clubhouse has a number of separate functions at present:

1. A bar
2. A restaurant
3. A function room
4. Offices for the staff and a meeting room
5. Changing rooms
6. Pro shop

The building and fittings is now fairly old and is not in the best condition. The bar area has been upgraded recently but there is much more to be done in the clubhouse.

The club has historically had a successful social programme and this will continue (Covid apart). The food and beverage offering has been well received and well used but we hope to improve this once the new catering arrangements have bedded in.

Targets

1. To bring forward proposals for refurbishment of the building to enhance its usage
2. To increase the use of the clubhouse catering and to improve the net profit.
3. To maintain and increase the successful social programme organised by the captains' committees.

Working group

As far as the bar and the catering goes we will seek to establish a group with industry experience who can help us.

We will also establish a working group to bring forward and manage the refurbishment process.

GOLF

This section will encompass the following areas:

- Competitions
- Handicaps
- Teams
- Roll up groups
- Open days
- Visiting parties
- Ad hoc visitors

Introduction

At this business plan level we are not seeking to establish details of the above activities. They are dealt with on a daily basis principally by the GM and his staff.

WETHERBY GOLF CLUB

BUSINESS PLAN 2021

Because of the volume of detailed daily issues the GM will establish a group of members who will help in administering competitions and handicaps and there will also be member involvement in teams and open days.

We do not regard these as working groups – they have a very tight and restricted remit and report directly to the GM; effectively they are an addition to his staff resource.

Having said that the GM does need some overall principles to work to and these are:

1. To seek to provide access to play golf to all members on an equitable basis including the operation of roll up groups
2. To ensure that systems are in place to achieve the smooth running of the booking sheet, competitions, provision of golf information principally handicaps
3. To widen the appeal of competitions
4. Open days and visitors administration should be run smoothly with the minimum disruption to members (in accordance with Board decisions from time to time)
5. To ensure proper operation of member groups with limited access to the course ie academy members, juniors, 5/6 day members

FINANCIAL PLAN

Whenever people talk about business plans they think first of a long term financial forecast or budget.

At present our membership numbers are healthy and our finances are sound. We are generating a regular annual cash surplus of over £150k and our debt repayments are around £50k pa and reducing. We therefore have a satisfactory cash surplus to fund capital projects including the plant replacement plan (which is an ongoing commitment).

Our long term financial plan is therefore to maintain this healthy position, to live within our means and to pay down debt as quickly as is practical.

Targets

1. We do need an annual budget to control expenditure of course and we will prepare this annually around 30 June for the subscriptions year (1 July to 30 June). This ensures that the budget will always have accurate subscriptions numbers to allow us to manage our expenditure to achieve a cash surplus.
2. We will maintain appropriate internal control systems
3. We will produce monthly management accounts and annual accounts as required by the Companies Acts including an external review in accordance with the Articles