



## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2023

**Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 19.00**

	<p><b><u>Present:</u></b> 62 Voting members, and 4 members of staff.</p>
	<p><b><u>Chair</u></b> The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked those wishing to speak during the meeting to state their name first. The Chair apologised that the Annual Report, which had been circulated prior to the AGM was incorrect as it had the names of the President and Council members missing. In addition to which the Ladies Section prize winners had also been omitted. The missing information will be added, and the report will be recirculated.</p>
	<p><b><u>Obituaries</u></b> The Chair asked for a minute's silence to remember Jonathan Weir, Barbara Hill, Jackie Thompson, Chris Currie, Steve Awde, Kevin Ostle, Bev Risman, John Airey, Harry Patrick and Marshall Monkhouse.</p>
	<p><b><u>Apologies</u></b> Kelvin Dixon, Julie Graham, Duncan Millar, Rebecca Davidson, Sally Tomlinson, Chris Malpas, Liz Horlacher, Keith Dudson, Stephen Dudson, Jenny Smith, Nigel Smith, Mike Clementson, Andrew Sowerby, Steve Ingram, Carol Ingram, Bridget Carruthers, Derek Carruthers and John Sheffield.</p>
	<p><b><u>Vote Verifiers</u></b> The Chair asked for volunteers to assist Gail Gravett in recording and verifying the results of the electronic election. Isobel Williams and Cormac Healy volunteered.</p>
1.	<p><b><u>Minutes of the 2022 AGM</u></b> The minutes of the 2022 AGM were accepted as a true record of the meeting by a unanimous vote.</p>
2.	<p><b><u>Council's Annual Report and Statement of Accounts.</u></b> The Finance Chair, Stephen Johnson, thanked the previous Management Committee for handing over the books in a good shape. He said he felt proud of the progress made and the investment into facilities and the course. He also thanked his Finance Committee, office staff, greens staff and all the members for their assistance over the year. The Finance Statement of Accounts had been circulated prior to the AGM and members were asked to write in if they had any queries. Some queries were received and duly answered, with the respondents happy with the answers given and they didn't require their questions to be read out at this meeting. No further queries were raised from the floor.</p>
3.	<p><b><u>Approval of Subscriptions for 2024</u></b> The list of proposed subscriptions for 2024 was included in the 2023 Annual Report which was circulated prior to the meeting. No questions were raised. Alan Ellison proposed acceptance of the 2024 Subscriptions, this was seconded by Chris Rebanks, and in a show of hands all were in favour, with none against.</p>
4.	<p><b><u>Election of Officers and Council for 2024</u></b> The Chair asked those present to ratify the names put forward by the Council for the positions on Club President, Club Captain, Club Vice-Captain, Ladies Captain and Club Welfare Officer.</p>

The Chair explained that ratification of the Ladies Captain was included as a matter of courtesy, as she had been elected to her position by the Ladies Section at their recent AGM.

Upon a unanimous show of hands, the following ratifications were confirmed:

Club President – Joan Armstrong

Club Captain – Nigel Scott

Club Vice-Captain – Chris Rebanks

Ladies Captain – Bridget Coy

Club Welfare Officer – Michael Williamson

Having been handed the verified result of the electronic vote for the election of Council Members the Chair confirmed the following:

Club Chair – Les Balmer 167 for, 8 against and 8 abstentions

Finance Chair – Stephen Johnson 163 for, 9 against and 11 abstentions

Course Chair – Gavin Oliver 154 for, 13 against and 16 abstentions

House Chair – Richard Hellon 164 for, 11 against and 8 abstentions

Golf Chair – Daz Whitfield 159 for, 10 against and 14 abstentions

Comms/IT Chair – Gail Gravett 148 for, 19 against and 16 abstentions

Council member 1 – Steve Ingram 148 for, 14 against and 21 abstentions.

The Chair thanked Gail Gravett for the organising the vote and the volunteers for overseeing the count.

5. **Retiring Captain's remarks**

Javid Latif thanked every member for their support throughout his year in office and specifically mentioned the Greens Staff, the Professionals, President Joan Armstrong and Pauline Butler.

Javid announced that the recipient of the Hanson Trophy was Jonathan Weir and remarked that he had been a good ambassador of the club throughout his time as a member.

The winner of the Captain's Prize Matthew Berrisford was unfortunately not present to receive the trophy.

The Mixed Foursomes Competition was won by Jonathan & Rebecca Davidson.

Unfortunately, Rebecca could not attend the meeting due to work commitments, so Jonathan Davidson accepted both trophies in Rebecca's absence.

Javid announced that his fund raising for the year amounted to £2,700 and that it was to go to the Junior Section. On behalf of the Junior Section, Barry Rogers thanked Javid for the donation.

Javid also stated that he would like to organise an annual fund-raising event in aid of the Junior Section.

As a token of his appreciation, Javid presented flowers to Joan Armstrong, Carol Slinger, Gail Gravett, Nichola Lamb, Bridget Coy and Pauline Butler.

Finally, Javid presented the 2024 Captain's Badge and Captain's Tie to Nigel Scott.

6.	<p><b><u>Incoming Captain's Speech</u></b></p> <p>Nigel Scott congratulated Javid on his successful year and for his charitable efforts, which had raised substantial sums of money.</p> <p>Nigel said that it was a great honour and privilege to be elected as the Club Captain and that he is looking forward to representing the Club. His family have been associated with Penrith Golf Club for many years, with his grandfather being Captain in 1936 and his father in 1959, this makes club history with his family being the only one to have had three generations of Captains.</p> <p>He wished Vice Captain, Chris Rebanks and enjoyable year, and warned him that it would go very quickly.</p> <p>He ended his speech telling members to enjoy their golf and asking them to be respectful and courteous. He is hoping that the weather is kind to us and that he is looking forward to playing with as many members as possible and he finally wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy Golfing New Year.</p> <p>Nigel presented Javid with a montage of photographs from his year as Captain and a Past Captain's tie.</p>
7.	<p>AOB</p> <p>David Harding submitted four questions for the attention of the Council prior to the AGM. The questions are copied from his email and the answers were read out by the Chairman.</p> <p>1. <i>Looking at the work being carried out in the clubhouse, why has the membership not been consulted as to what is being done? plus given the considerable amount of money being spent, have we had three quotes for each job?</i></p> <p><b>Answer:</b></p> <p>The works being done in the dining room and the back bar are well below the parameters set out in the rules for membership consultation. The rules only require for alternative quotes to be sought, not 3 quotes, and for any items with a substantial cost, alternative quotes have been obtained, checked and verified by the House Chair, with the order going to the lowest price. The House Committee are project managing the works themselves, the tradesmen being used are independent and are invoicing direct to the Club, and are not VAT registered, so this is an immediate saving of 20% as we can't recover VAT. Excellent value for money is being achieved and the House Committee need congratulating.</p> <p>2. <i>With the idea of selling land and possibility of building a new clubhouse, would it not have made financial sense to hang back on any major refurb of the existing club house until a decision was made on the land and rebuild?</i></p> <p><b>Answer:</b></p> <p>The Council kept in mind the possibility of selling the land, but on balance it was felt that both the Dining Room and Back Bar needed an urgent refurbishment to improve them for members, visitors and external customers. The refurbishment will improve the earnings potential for both the Club and the Caterers. The selling of the land will be a decision eventually taken by the membership, and if it happens it could be years away, and it could be that we can't even talk to prospective developers until February</p>

2025 when the “Exclusivity Agreement” that the previous Management Committee signed with Booth Ventures expires. The Council is taking advice on that agreement, and it will be discussed by the incoming Council. The idea of a Clubhouse rebuild is just a concept idea by one of the interested parties, but who knows when, or even if, that will happen.

3. *Reading in the minutes a possibility of employing a Golf manager in future, can the council explain what they would expect from a Golf manager that is different to what Tim and Andrew supply? Are we going back to the old days of Dennis Wright? Who will look after all things golf at weekends?*

**Answer:**

Many members within the Club have expressed the opinion that we should go back to having a permanent Club Manager who is a direct employee of the Club and who works on pre-defined days and hours each week. No decision has been taken on this, but after having been in place for 12 months the consensus of opinion by those on the Council seems to be that the Club needs to be run like a business with a professional manager in place. The Manager will take over the roles of the Director of Golf, but will have additional duties such as responsibility for Health & Safety, Clubhouse Management, supervision of all staff and additional financial reporting on behalf of the Finance Chair etc. He, or she, will also be expected to put business processes in place and will have the responsibility to run the Club under the direction of the Council. In our periodic reviews Andrew and Tim have been made aware of the possibility of a manager being appointed, it won't really affect Andrew as he'll continue as normal which will include the administration of competitions at weekends.

Tim is onboard with the idea and has expressed an interest in applying for the role, but he fully understands that he can't expect just to walk into the job and that it will be advertised and that the applications of all interested parties will be treated on their merits.

Allan Ellison commented that it looked like the Council had already decided to employ a Club Manager. However, the Chair confirmed that this was not the case and that it would be discussed again by the incoming Council.

David Harding asked if there was an EGM in the future, would there be an opportunity for debate. The Chair responded saying that there would be and that this was covered under the new Rules for the Governance of the Club.

Alan Ellison queried the job specification for a Club Manager and the Chair responded by saying that the job specification details are a work in progress. David Harding then asked about the level of responsibility a Club Manager would have and if he or she would be micro-managed. The Chair responded saying that he or she would work with the Council and would be expected to attend Council meetings.

Cormac Healey asked why the Club had moved away from having a Club Manager, only to now reintroduce the model only a few years later. The Chair explained that at the time when the Club moved away from having a Club Manager the Club had adopted a two-committee management model under which the Club would be run by volunteers. In reality the day-to-day management of the club by volunteers didn't work.

4. *Finally, can the council provide evidence of any legitimate rule changes that allows any council or committee to set aside rules to create new rules? PGC rules clearly state that for a change of rules, an EGM has to be held. The whole of the membership was not informed correctly of how and why the rules have been changed therefore there has been a precedent set to chop and change rules as any governing council feels. Total chaos.*

**Answer:**

In October 2022 the Club found itself in an un-precedented position where the Management Committee had resigned and the membership expressed an opinion at the EGM that the club should revert to a single tier of management, and the membership voted to set aside our club rules in order that a temporary management structure could be put in place for 12 months to take us through to the 2023 AGM, and to also allow for a radical overhaul of our constitution to be undertaken.

Members were consulted about a new set of Rules for the Governance of the Club on 13th October 2023 and given 10 days to respond with any questions. Only 4 members responded. Following that consultation on 30th October the members were asked to take part in an electronic vote to adopt the new rules and following that vote on 5th November 2023 the members voted to accept the new rules. The Council can't envisage a situation where we would ever be in such a position again, but if we were ever left in a situation where there were no Council Members remaining for any reason then the new rules cover that eventuality. The new rules have a robust procedure in place for the future alteration of rules and I would draw everyone's attention to Rule 15 of the new rules.

Jim Young said that his gripe this year is about the slow play, particularly on Saturdays when there are many visiting groups/societies on the course. Although he understood that there would be some loss of income, he asked if the Council could cap the number of tee times available to visitors before 1.30pm so that members would be able to get onto the course and play at a reasonable pace. He also suggested that reducing the size of groups being able to book on Saturdays might help.

The Chair responded saying that on a trial basis tee times from January are going to be changed to 10-minute intervals, and it's hoped that that might help ease the problem and that the considerable increase in visitor green fees might also deter some visitors from booking. The issue has been looked at and it has been suggested that the course marshal might help, but as there is no budget for this, it would need volunteers to step forward. The Chair said that the situation would be monitored and discussed by the Council.

	The Chairman wished everyone a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year and closed the meeting at 19.42
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