

Minutes of the Club Council Meeting



Monday 28th April 2025 at 18.00 in the Blencathra Room

	<u>Present:</u> Les Balmer (Chair) (LB), Joan Armstrong (President) (JA), Club Captain Chris Rebanks (CR), Ladies Captain June Doyle (JD), Club Vice Captain Mike Davidson (MD), Club Manager Tim Dykes (TD), Gavin Oliver (GO), Stephen Johnson (SJ), Richard Hellon (RH), Steve Ingram (SI) Derek Furness (DF), Kelvin Dixon (KD), Chris West (CW). Carol Slinger (Minutes secretary)	ACTION
1.	<u>Apologies</u> Darren Whitfield (DW)	
	<u>Minutes of Previous Meeting</u> The minutes were circulated to all attendees of the Council meeting held on 31 st March and were agreed as a true record of the meeting and sent for publication on 14 th April 2025.	
2.	<u>Matters Arising</u> <p>2.2.8.1 Lowther Estates to be contacted regarding the rutted state of the access road to the Beacon. Discussion with I Jack. TD confirmed that this matter had now been referred to the Trustees of Lowther Estates, and in principle they accepted that they had the responsibility to resolve the issue with the road.</p> <p>2.2.9.1 Costing for a welfare unit for the greenkeepers. LB confirmed that he was still waiting for a price for a suitable welfare unit to be confirmed.</p> <p>DF asked if any thought had been given to the conversion of the hoggust to Dormy Flats to provide a source of regular income and LB confirmed that this had been considered and that it would be taken into account when a final decision regarding the future of the hoggust is made.</p> <p>2.3.6 Meeting with C Birtle (CB) to go through his concerns in relation to visitor bookings etc. LB confirmed that an offer had been made to meet CB but that he had declined the offer. He had however asked for clarification of the situation in relation to the green fees taken via the Golf Now platform, and LB & TD had provided that clarification earlier today in the form of an email. LB will send a copy of that response to all Council Members - Closed</p> <p>2.5.2 Review of training needs for Fire Safety and First Aid. RH said that he was still trying to agree a mutually convenient date for when the training could be held.</p> <p>2.5.4 Community Engagement First Aid session organised for members. RH said that he hadn't yet been able to organise this event and LB agreed to speak to a contact that he had within the Cumbria Fire Service who provided such training.</p> <p>2.6.3 Follow-up on sponsorship by Howdens. TD said that he was trying to arrange a meeting with Howdens but that the relevant person had been away on annual leave and that he would be contacting her again on her return to work later this week.</p> <p>2.6.4 Compilation of a "master list" of all Par 3 and hole-in-one sponsors. SJ reported on the position with all current hole sponsorship and he confirmed that any relevant renewal requests had been sent to the businesses concerned. SJ said that once he'd received all the responses then he'll collate a detailed list of the sponsorship arrangement for each hole and sponsors would be sought for any vacant holes.</p>	<p>TD</p> <p>LB</p> <p>RH</p> <p>RH/LB</p> <p>TD</p> <p>SJ</p>

	<p>2.7.1 Incorporation of a TV in the lounge refurbishment. TD confirmed that the TV had now been installed but that the necessary cabling still needed to be completed – Closed</p> <p>2.8.3 Advice from Lowther Forestry to seek further advice on the Tree and Woodland report. The minutes have been updated to reflect that the report was from I Jack. TD said that with the help of Mr Jack he has started the process of applying for the relevant “Felling Licences” but that this could take several months. The Council are committed to keep the membership informed about any future proposal for the felling of any trees, and that such felling will only happen if the Club receives professional advice that the felling is recommended, or in the case of the existence of potentially diseased larch trees, is essential. Members should be aware that if any larch trees are found to be diseased then all tree species within a 200-metre radius of any diseased tree will be subject to compulsory felling, so it is essential that we seek comprehensive specialist advice. Any agreed tree felling programme will be carried out by external professionals and it’s envisaged that the work would show a profit, or at the very least be cost neutral. The Council are also committed to plant at least one new sapling for every tree felled.</p> <p>2.11.1 Update on meetings held with the parties who are interested in developing the land. LB reported that the dates for each prospective developer to present their proposals and concepts to the Club Trustees and Club Council were almost finalised, with only one date yet to be set.</p> <p>2.14.6 United Utilities’ review our request for them to adopt our sewer. LB said that we are still awaiting a further response from United Utilities</p> <p>3.2 Response sent to Eden Valley & Penrith Astronomy Group. TD reported that he had responded and offered PGC as a meeting place - Closed</p> <p>6.2 Report on numbers and income generated by visitors. SJ said that the analysis of numbers and income generated by visitors was quite complex and that he and TD would continue working on providing some meaningful data.</p> <p>6.3 New style rakes purchased and trialled. GO confirmed that a number of new rakes had been placed out on the course, and members are reminded that bunkers should be raked carefully and evenly- Closed</p> <p>6.4 Update on the review of the Clubhouse security. RH confirmed that a new intruder alarm system for the greenkeepers sheds had been ordered. Additionally, the intruder alarm system in the clubhouse is to undergo a major update as the current control panel and wiring infrastructure has been problematic of late and isn’t fit for purpose. We have also been reviewing the control of access to the clubhouse, and it was agreed to install an electronic keypad access system to the locker room doors. The installation will take place in two stages; Phase 1 will see the system installed in the gent’s locker rooms and Phase 2 at a later date will be the installation of the same system in the lady’s locker rooms.</p> <p>6.5 Update on the financing of the planned drainage. SJ reported that he is still obtaining quotes for the external funding of the £80k required for the drainage works.</p> <p>7.6 Bins placed in the lounge and 1890. RH said that he’d been unable to find the old bins, so new bins would be purchased.</p> <p>9.2 The fixture list added to the website. TD said that this had been done - Closed</p>	<p>TD</p> <p>LB/SI</p> <p>LB</p> <p>SJ/TD</p> <p>RH</p> <p>SJ</p> <p>RH</p>
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	<p>9.3 Tablet purchased for competition entry and score input. TD said that a tablet had been purchased and that it had been installed in the lady's locker room and that it would be used on a trial basis. If the trial is successful then a second tablet will be purchased for the gent's locker room.</p> <p>11.1 A summary of the results from the recent survey made available to the membership. Each Chair to summarise and SI to compile. LB said that a summary of the results of the survey had been sent to the membership and that each Committee were working on providing responses to the comments/questions raised by the membership during the survey. SI asked for the Committee Chairs to come back to him with responses to the main themes raised by the membership.</p> <p>12.1 Meeting with representatives from the Junior Section to discuss their funding request. SJ reported that he and LB had met with representatives of the Junior Section, and after a discussion SJ proposed that the Club agree to pay for "team meals" as it does for the other sections of the club, and following a vote all those present agreed to this proposal. It was also agreed that the Club via our pro-shop would arrange to purchase a number of "team shirts" for the juniors. The subject of the future funding of the Junior Section was also discussed and it was agreed that one good source of funding may be for us to schedule an extra open competition in 2026 (possibly a mixed seniors open), with any profits made being donated to the Junior Section - Closed</p> <p>14.1 Course Ranger inspections organised to monitor usage of the course. TD reported that following the recent request to members for people to volunteer as Course Rangers only one reply had been received to-date. It was agreed to continue to seek people to act as volunteer rangers and some Council Members present offered to help. It was also agreed that all visitors would be given tags to show that they'd paid the appropriate green fee and that Course Rangers would ask to see the tags as proof of them having had paid a green fee. It was further agreed to extend the tee times on the BRS booking system until later in the evening - Closed</p> <p>14.2 Costing of a replacement flag(s). TD confirmed that new "club flags" had been ordered and that Alastair Mayne had kindly agreed to pay for the flags - Closed</p> <p>14.3 Costing to replace the net by the 1st tee and interim a temporary repair. TD confirmed that the new net was in place - Closed</p> <p>14.5 Correspondence sent to Bill Marklew regarding the lifting of his ban. TD said that he had contacted the member who had been involved in the on-course altercation with Mr Marklew a few years ago, and the member had confirmed to him that he didn't have a problem with the ban being lifted. TD has confirmed to Mr Marklew that he is now welcome back to the club - Closed</p> <p>14.7 Email to members reminding them about 'practice' on the course. TD confirmed that an appropriate email had been sent to the membership - Closed</p>	<p>TD</p> <p>SI</p>
3.	<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p>1. A member who wished to have his name withheld from these minutes wrote to the Council about numerous issues including the use of the 1890 lounge, the current clubhouse opening/closing hours, the clubs bar and catering arrangements and the level of a recent rise in bar prices. The Council duly responded in detail, confirming that despite what the member thought the clubhouse refurbishment completed in 2023/2024 was designed to not only overhaul the dining room and back bar, but to increase the flexibility of how we use the excellent spaces that we have available to</p>	

	<p>us, and at no time was it either said or implied that the newly named “1890 Lounge and Bar” was to be for the sole use of members.</p> <p>The letter of response also confirmed that the arrangement with John Watt Catering Ltd (JWCL) is governed by a comprehensive written agreement, a fundamental part of which relies on the arrangement being mutually commercially viable for both parties, and the sums received from JWCL by virtue of the agreement contribute a considerable amount to our club finances. The Council also pointed out that the agreement includes a clause covering bar and catering opening hours, and that in the recent Member Survey when asked to “rate the catering”, the overwhelming majority of respondents thought that JWCL were either good or excellent in all areas of their service, specifically, quality of food, menu variety, price level and value for money, and that whilst the Council accepted that bar and menu pricing is always a sensitive subject it confirmed that any price increases proposed by JWCL are required to receive advance approval of the Club’s House Committee, but following the recent changes made by the government relating to alcohol duty, national insurance contributions and the minimum wage then nobody should be surprised to see prices rising.</p> <p>However, the member again replied with various other comments relating to the club in general. On receipt of this communication the Chairman asked the member to meet with Council members to discuss the issues on a face-to-face basis as it was not prepared to enter into a series of emails. The offer to meet was declined. More recently the same member has made a post on Facebook which is in breach of the Club’s social media policy. The Club Manager is to speak with the member as soon as is reasonably practical and report back to the Chairman.</p> <p>2. Ruth Coleby has written to the Club and asked if anything can be done to deter the public from walking along the forestry track to the Beacon. It was agreed that probably all that could be done was to erect some new and additional signage and that the existing sign adjacent to the track near the 5th tee & 12th green should be removed and replaced.</p> <p>3. Prior to this meeting a letter was received from Darren Whitfield in which he confirmed his wish to resign from the Council due to the level of the future commitment that he’d be able to offer because of a change to personal family circumstances. The Council accepted his resignation and wish to place on record, their thanks to him for his work and commitment during the time that he has served on the Council. The Council agreed that Darren will remain on the Course Committee as a co-opted member, and he will also continue to run the gents scratch league teams in 2025.</p> <p>4. LB said that a letter of complaint had been received late this afternoon from JWCL in relation to comments made by a member earlier today to some of the bar and catering staff, and LB read the letter of complaint to the meeting. Everyone agreed that it was unacceptable for any member to make such comments to any member of staff (including outsourced staff), and all members had recently been reminded that complaints of any nature should be addressed to the Club Manager or Club Council and not directly to staff members. It was agreed that the Club Manager would advise the member that their actions were unacceptable and that any reoccurrence may be dealt with as a disciplinary matter. TD will also assure the staff that they have the Council’s full support</p>	<p>TD</p> <p>TD</p> <p>TD</p>
4.	<u>Suggestions Box</u> – None this month	
5.	<p><u>Health and Safety</u></p> <p>1. First Aid courses for staff are being arranged and a First Aid Awareness course has been applied for with St John, however they had said that there is a long waiting list. – Also see the Matter Arising section above.</p>	

6.	<p><u>Finance</u></p> <p>1.</p> <table><tr><th>Bank balances as of: 28th April 2025*</th><th>Compared to previous year:</th></tr><tr><td>PGC: £14,385.87</td><td>PGC: £1,577.92</td></tr><tr><td>Reserve Accounts</td><td>Reserve Accounts</td></tr><tr><td>35 Day A/C £52,203.76</td><td>35 Day A/C £50,625.56</td></tr><tr><td>95 Day A/C £ 52,695.94</td><td>95 Day A/C £50,723.77</td></tr><tr><td>Instant access deposit A/C £88,342.65</td><td>Instant access deposit A/C £65,371.30</td></tr><tr><td>PGC Ltd: £55,351.54</td><td>PGC Ltd: £23,255.40</td></tr><tr><td>Cumberland BS £125,384.74</td><td>Cumberland BS £121,709.71</td></tr><tr><td>Total: £388,364.50</td><td>Total: £313,263.66</td></tr></table> <p>*SJ updated the Council with the bank balances after the meeting as the April Finance Committee meeting was held very early in the month.</p> <p>2. SJ reported that the current number of members is 549 and that at the April meeting last year there were 530 members.</p>	Bank balances as of: 28 th April 2025*	Compared to previous year:	PGC: £14,385.87	PGC: £1,577.92	Reserve Accounts	Reserve Accounts	35 Day A/C £52,203.76	35 Day A/C £50,625.56	95 Day A/C £ 52,695.94	95 Day A/C £50,723.77	Instant access deposit A/C £88,342.65	Instant access deposit A/C £65,371.30	PGC Ltd: £55,351.54	PGC Ltd: £23,255.40	Cumberland BS £125,384.74	Cumberland BS £121,709.71	Total: £388,364.50	Total: £313,263.66	
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7.	<p><u>House</u></p> <p>1. CW has secured the loan of some artwork for the Function Room. Our insurance providers will not insure the pictures as they are not owned by PGC, so it was agreed that in the unlikely event of the pictures being damaged or stolen then the Club would pay up to the cost of £400 to cover their replacement.</p> <p>2. RH has arranged a meeting with a representative from Penrith Cricket Club to discuss avenues of funding which they have been able to secure, and which may also be available to us. SJ and LB have agreed to join RH for that meeting on 9th May.</p> <p>3. New chairs for the main lounge are scheduled to arrive at the end of May. It was agreed that members can buy the current chairs for £20 each, and if interested members should email RH at house@penrithgolfclub.co.uk</p>	RH/SJ/LB																		
8.	<p><u>Course</u></p> <p>1. The Course Committee are pleased to announce that all the work scheduled for the winter is now complete.</p> <p>2. The next volunteers’ day is on Monday 19th May and the Greens staff are going to work with the volunteers to clear the area around the pond between the 13th and 14th.</p> <p>3. SI complimented the improvement in the communications going out to members about the work being done on the course.</p> <p>4. DF asked what the intention was with “Preferred Lies” and GO recommended that due to the recent dry weather which has slowed down grass growth, then preferred lies should remain in place until the end of May. All agreed.</p> <p>5. The area between the 10th green and the 11th tee box has been marked as a ‘No Play Zone’. Players must lift their ball if it comes to rest in that area and play from the mandatory Drop Zone which is to the left of the 10th green.</p> <p>6. The No Play Zone and Drop Zone at the approach to the 2nd green is to be reviewed.</p> <p>7. It was agreed to purchase a further three bins to go out on the course.</p>	GO/TD GO/TD RH																		
9.	<p><u>Golf</u></p>																			

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Following the resignation of Darren Whitfield from the Council Derek Furness kindly agreed to take on the role as Chairman of Golf, and on behalf of the Council LB welcomed him to his new role Prior to his resignation DW compiled a detailed and comprehensive list of the men's competitions. TD to add this to the website and attach to the notice board. The men's and mixed knockout draws have been done and are displayed on the relevant notice boards. DF questioned the whereabouts of the Vice President's Trophy. JA confirmed that it was in the main trophy cabinet. DF is to re-introduce the competition into the competition calendar in 2026. 	<p>TD</p> <p>DF</p>
10.	<p><u>Communications/IT</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Council are pleased to see a greater and much improved Social Media presence and would ask any member who has any good photographs of the course/clubhouse to kindly forward them to the Club Manager for possible use in future communications. LB said that John Williams had recently taken some excellent photographs out on the course, and the Council would like to place their thanks to John on record. 	
11.	<p><u>Strategy</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> LB reminded the Committee Chairs to prepare a summary of the responses for the survey – Also see the Matters Arising section above. 	All Chairs
12.	<p><u>Juniors</u> - Junior Update forwarded by Phil Park prior to the Council meeting</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A fundraising event for the junior section will take place on Friday 9th and Saturday 10th May 2025. There are some selected tee times available on both dates but members can play outside these times if more suitable. Entry is £20 per team, and best 2 scores from 4 in stableford format, via BRS or in Pro shop. Individual holes can also be sponsored up to £20 and the sign -up sheet is in the Pro shop. These events have been well supported by members in the past and the junior committee is very grateful for this level of support. The junior team will be competing in the north Cumbria junior league and matches will take place against Carlisle, Brampton, Workington, Maryport and Silloth home and away. The first match takes place against Carlisle at home on Monday 12th May 2025. Following an application to the Club Council seeking funding support for the junior section a meeting has taken place with the Council Chair/Financial lead with representatives from the junior committee. The junior committee now await final ratification from the Council on what level of support will be provided. 	
13.	<p><u>New Membership Review and Welcome</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Kenneth Ball – 5 Off Peak Laurence Knight – 5 Day Off Peak Ben Dalton – Full Member Blake Creighton-Wood – Junior Ronan Humphrey – Intermediate in Education Elliot Lowrie – Intermediate in Employment Emily Darvill – Full Member Graham Black – Full Member 	

	<p>9. Daniel Duguid – Junior</p> <p>10. Robert Simpson – Intermediate in Employment</p> <p>11. Edward Smith – Intermediate in Education</p> <p>12. Neil Sutherland – Full Member</p> <p>13. Jack Mandle – Intermediate in Education</p> <p>14. Joshua Humphrey - Cadet</p>	
14.	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> LB asked the Chairs of Committee's to circulate committee meeting minutes as soon as possible after their meetings, rather than leaving them to be distributed with the final agenda for Council Meetings. This will then allow Council Members more time to review the minutes and to prepare any questions that they may have. DF praised the work that Wil Marklew is doing both in the Proshop and with the administration of club competitions. Work on the redesign of the Proshop is due to be completed in May. JA wished to thank the sponsor, Different Strokes, who have made an excellent job of painting our on-course benches. RH asked if a small plaque could be added to the benches to identify the sponsor. All agreed and TD said that this was already in hand. RH asked if the manhole on the practice ground, which is currently covered by a pallet could be fitted with a more suitable cover. 	<p>All Chairs</p> <p>TD</p> <p>TD</p>
	<p><u>The meeting concluded at 20.45pm</u></p> <p><u>Date of next meeting: Monday 19th May at 6.00pm in the Blencathra Room</u></p>	