**St Athan Golf Club Ltd**

**Board Meeting – Tuesday 27th April 2021 – 6pm**

Attendees – Brian Asbury (BA), Luke Sloan (LS), Andy McIntyre (A Mc), Stuart Jennings (SJ), Paul Lindsay (PL), Gerry Turnbull (GT), Bob Hewitt (RH), Roger Davidge (RD), Tom Tait (TT), Steve Kenyon (SK)

Apologies – None

Minutes

**Previous Minutes** – These were circulated after the March meeting and were approved.

**Matters Arising** – These were covered in the following reports.

Course update:

3rd Hole Hedge - **3rd Hole**

I sent you a lengthy summary on progress and the remaining issues with the project on 06 April 21.

Since then, Brian Asbury got a man to give us a quote for the chipping of the piles of trees, branches, and undergrowth, unfortunately the job was beyond his capability. Quote has since been received to remove by chipping the wood piles with industrial machinery at a cost of £1200 per day plus VAT, the job is anticipated to take 3 days therefore the overall cost to the Club if approved would be £3,600 plus VAT. The board did not decide to proceed rather balked at the potential cost and would examine any other plans to repair the devasted area.

On 20 April, a volunteer working party gathered exposed stones and rocks from the cleared area and piled them around the concrete structure to give it a profile that is more suitable to cover with soil. The President is making enquiries with local building contractors to ascertain the possibility of obtaining soil to cover the concrete structure.

Watering of the new laurels has been carried out almost every day since planting, sincere thanks to the volunteers that have carried out this onerous task.

**Additional Laurel Planting**

Surplus laurel bushes have been planted to the right-hand side of the men's 2nd tee and as an extension of the hedge between the 6th tee and 9th green to try and deter golfers from taking short cuts instead of following safe pathways. Further laurels have been planted along the car park fence between the arch and the buggy sheds, which will improve the look of the entrance to the club when established.

**Rotten Trees**

Two rotten trees on the right-hand side of the men's 2nd tee that were in danger of falling towards the 4th green have been felled (with permission from the landowners 19 Mar 21).

**Irrigation System**

Due to a significant delay in the delivery of the new pump and the forecasted prolonged period of dry weather 'Driptech' re-instated the system using one pump on 05 April 21 to enable Craig to adjust the sprinkler heads and hand water the greens.

The new pump arrived and was installed by 'Driptech' on 15 April 21, so the system is fully operational.

**3400 Greens Mower**

The replacement of bottom blades and regrind of the 3400 Greens Mower units (Director's approval on 24 March 21) was carried out 12/13 April 21.

**Course Layout & Cut Plan**

Rough, fairway, approaches and surrounds have now been established, measured, and recorded in conjunction with the Head Greenkeeper.

Plan diagrams of each hole will be produced and attached as Annexes to the ST ATHAN GOLF COURSE MAINTENANCE PLAN as a reference for current and future greenkeepers to ensure that the course is cut as agreed and that any deviations to the cut plan must be approved by the Club Management Committee.

These plans will be appended to a board in the foyer along with an explanatory letter from me for members to view (when Covid-19 restrictions allow) and comment on.

The President informed the Board that he has managed to secure a supply of soil from Randall’s that could be placed on the area beside the 3rd tee and would raise the land level by approximately a metre. A site visit will be carried out to check the feasibility of this.

The Club is also aware that the land formally known as the football stadium adjacent to the left of the 3rd hole is currently being advertised by Savills for the development of housing. This will potentially impact the Club depending on what the actual plans end up as. In anticipation of this PL was asked by the Board to contact the WG to discuss the possibility of a land swap. The area to the left of the 3rd hole in exchange for the area of the football stadium land closest to the 3rd hole around 150 yards from the hole and more commonly known by members as the corner where golf balls can and do go out of bounds.

**Inventory/Asset Check**

I have not carried out this check yet but will get it done in May.

**Tree Roots**

There are several areas around the course where tree roots have become very prominent above ground and there is a risk of damage to our grass cutting machinery.

The solution is to hire a petrol tree stump grinder (which we have done before) to nibble away at the big, exposed tree roots, remove the smaller roots and then cover with soil and seed over the disturbed areas.

Craig and I will assess the scale of the task and I will produce a costed plan to present to you for discussion next month.

**Buggy Sheds**

Mr Alan Bowsher has authorized and built a buggy shed down at the greenkeepers yard.

He has not asked for approval from the landowners as it is built on the same site as a previous shed owned by Terry Daiper.

We just need to make sure that other sheds do not just pop up without approval from us and more importantly the landowners.

The 2 members that have built buggy sheds in GK area will be asked to formally request this action, the Club will then formally request permission from WG, the Club will then consider granting the request, if approved the owners will be asked to sign a no club liability form and pay a rent for the respective floor areas of £50 and £100 per annum for the larger structure.

**Mr Jamie Miller**

Jamie has reached the end of his three-month probationary period since joining us. His performance has been of a more than satisfactory standard and therefore his appointment as Assistant Greenkeeper has been made permanent and his pay grade revised. I have interviewed him, and he is very happy to continue in employment with us.

I have also reviewed and revised our Head Greenkeepers pay grade.

**Sales & Marketing**

Luke presented the meeting with a proposal to erect Tee signage on every hole, these would include information on the hole about to be played including distance hole number and a general layout plan of the hole. They were proposed to be positioned in a location where both Ladies and Men would see them as they left the previous hole. They would also be sited on a plinth to allow easy grass maintenance. The signs will also be sponsored and therefore paid for by the sponsors, although the Club will initially pay for their purchase at a total cost of £3860 or £390 each, this will be recouped from sponsors and returned to club funds. Luke, indicate he had already secured several interested businesses likely to sponsor. The sponsorship will be for a calendar year thereafter new sponsors will be sought or a renewal fee from existing contributors.

**Membership Category Reshape**

A proposal to formally withdraw the 365 offer was discussed and a new offer for new members of £430 for the first year of full membership thereafter in year 2 the full members fee will be due was unanimously agreed by the board.

Operations

1. Utilities. Since the meeting was held BA has contacted British Gas to try and establish what the Club will be liable for if a switch to a new provider did not take place. After a lengthy discussion with British Gas an e-mail was received from the customer relations department stating that the Club will not be liable for any cancellation penalties from any other Utility supplier as there had been no supply of energy provided for the Club by other parties.
2. Catering. The Club is looking at how franchising the bar and catering could help improve overall operational costs. Several interested parties have expressed an interest in becoming a franchisee for Club Bar and Catering. These are now being pursued by BA with a view to start interviewing prospective candidates in the next few weeks.
3. Profit & Loss Report. A monthly P&L report has been submitted for this meeting, there have been additional requirements requested of the report and work continues with the president to establish a final version.
4. Outside seating. Some of our existing outside seating furniture is rotting and becoming a potential safety hazard. A post meeting note to inform the Club that a very generous sponsorship donation of £500 has been received from Mr Terry Punters son’s company. We go on the record to say a very big thank you for the generous donation which will be used to upgrade the outside seating area.
5. It was noted that the substantial bench donated by the family of Llyn John the former officer IC and long-standing member of the Club was now unsafe to sit on as the wood had rotted. BH will contact the family to make them aware.
6. **Barratts rental request**. The work to prepare the office space in the NE part of the building was almost complete. The plan now is to relocate the Club Managers office to this new space post Barratt Homes 6 monthly rental period. The room has had 2 new windows and external fire door installed along with internal finishing. The cost of the alterations have been paid for by Barratts in lay of a rental payment. We understand that this cost is approximately £7k but represents good value for the Club as we gain a much better working space in the future.BH is going to produce a document for filing on the Barratt Homes project.

Bar Opening Times. The bar has now reopened in line with the latest government guidelines. The bar opening times are 13.30 hrs to 19.30 hrs. Representation and feedback from the members has suggested that alternative opening times should be considered to provide a service to members when the Club is likely to be attended in greater numbers, for example on a Wednesday to coincide with Vets finishing their competition and for those members that work 9 to 5 and play 9 holes in the early evening. The board discussed these suggestions and will ready a plan to roster for the suggested times to coincide with the expected easing of restrictions by the WG on 17th May. Until then the current opening hours will remain in place.

Club Administration

* SJ was asked to provide a high-level written plan for the digital Configuration Management of the Club filing system.

**Landlord Relationship**

* HRDF Lease – We have received a draft Heads of Terms from the MoD Solicitor and am happy to share this should anyone wish to see it. Andy Mc and I have reviewed the document and we are happy, in principle to accept it. Meanwhile, at the 11th hour, WH has sent us a Sublet document that they wish the Club and Mod to sign. Once again Andy Mc and I have been through this, found some errors which WG has amended, and the document has been sent to Mod for their approval and signature. Hopefully, we will have a contract and 2 months payment but 1st June 2021.

* Kickstart Scheme
  + I have checked with the Vale of Glamorgan Council Kickstart representative again and I regret that progress is very slow. This week I asked Gaynor Williams who works in a nearby office to see if she could get a better update. Gaynor wrote to me on Friday and confirms the processing is particularly slow and that we may get a better update in June 21. We really need the GK job filling at this time and can happily wait for the office job to progress later.

* Grass cutting in the OOB on the 8tph fairway.
  + Awaiting a reply from Mr Thomas, Gileston Farm, later this month, so see if he wishes to harvest the “grass crops” in our field to the right of the 8th fairway. He has harvested this for the last 2 years, however, yet there is very little crop to harvest due to the very dry weather in April this year. Last year he harvested 2 crops, paying the club £500.

* Buggy Sheds on the Golf Course land – Some months ago I suggested that the club started to charge the members who had buggy storage sheds on the golf course to pay a rental per annum, like what is charged for a locker - £50 per annum per shed. I would like agreement on this so that Anita/Bob can get the message out to our buggy shed owners that the rental will commence 1st August 2021, a one-off payment per annum and that they will each be given a liability form to sign stating that the club has no responsibility to loss or damage to/from these facilities. **This proposal was unanimously agreed** – BH and Club manager to contact buggy shed owners to let them know. GT is also going to ensure that a Buggy Shed site plan is produced and filed.
  + I have recently been made aware of a new buggy shed been constructed near the GK building. I have been to look at the new building and it is capable of parking 2 two seat golf buggies. The Golf Club lease with WG clearly states that the Club must gain permission from WG for any construction on the golf club land. I have checked all the available minutes of this and last year’s meetings and consulted with the Club Manager. There appears to be no documentation seeking permission from the Club to construct a buggy shed and hence no correspondence with the WG on this matter – Needs a discussion at the meeting, as it seems another member wishes to construct a buggy shed in a similar place by the GK building.

* 3rd Tee devastation
  + Following Gerry’s lengthy and informative note regarding the considerable damage that has been done in the area left of the 3rd Tee, many members have asked WHY was that work carried out and what are the plans to repair the devastation. It seems a letter was written by the Club to WG requesting some work to be undertaken in the area following a complaint from one of the households bordering the course and the response was clear that no trees were to be cut down as part of the work. It is clear to everyone who has observed the situation that many trees were removed in the process and the local wildlife severely disturbed. I believe this matter needs a discussion at the meeting and if necessary, the people responsible are interviewed as to why the work was undertaken, the WG guidance ignore and the plans to make good.
    - BA was asked to provide the board with a statement that provides a more complete picture of the events leading up to the work being carried out to the left of the 3rd tee.

 Kickstart Scheme

* + PL checked with the Vale of Glamorgan Council Kickstart representative last week and requested an update on progress. They had lots of applications that are being processed. Both of our requests were accepted but have gone forward to the next phase in the Second Batch. I was advised they are very bust, but they would contact me as soon as there was any update.

**Strategy**

* BA will hold the Strategy group meeting in the Golf Club on Tuesday 4th May at 18:00 hrs. Attendees BA, PL, GT, and RD with an open invitation to the rest of the board if they wanted to be involved.
* The Board agreed to the proposal to load membership cards of members that have been affected by the inability to play golf during lockdown. The finances of the Club could support a gesture of goodwill and a plan to implement this will be put in place by RH and the Club Manager.

**President**

* RD asked for a Specific H&S agenda item for every board Meeting – all agreed.
* An additional line to be added to PL report to reflect the VAT payments.
* RD requested to sit in on ay meeting with the member that provided the plant machinery that carried out the work to the left of the 3rd tee.

**H&S Director**

* Tom informed the Board that he had carried out a fire inspection on the Clubhouse and found that 2 fire doors were required. One to replace the inadequate door into the main bar area and another to be sighted between the kitchen and the bar. The cost of the supply of the doors is approximately £500, this was agreed by the board.
* There was a conversation about a possible hazard sighted at the Buggy Sheds at the GK shed. TT will investigate this and assess the hazard, removing it if necessary.
* TT said that there was a need for staff to have fire drill training and that this should take place as soon as possible.

**Director**

* AMac informed the group that he believed there was a possibility that the Wayfarer section may restart next year and that he still had £330 of funds belonging to the section that should be paid into Club funds and segregated for use by Wayfarers section should they restart their competitions.
* It was also noted that there was still outstanding money not accounted for the Junior section. This may have been paid into Club funds BA to check with Club Manager.

**AOB**

* The Club received an e-mail from Liz Thomas about the detrimental effect that the changes to BRS had on her tee booking at the time. PL suggested that we write to her with a letter of explanation and apology for the inconvenience caused.
* GT asked that the Club Rules are updated to reflect 2nd Club members and their rights or status. He suggested that his was part of a wider general problem of not updating or amending Club documents as changes occurred. `
* GT informed the board that he was asked by Mr Mike Hurry that he be allocated his own parking bay in the Club car park considering his long service and years of continual membership. This was briefly discussed but it was felt that it was a matter for the golf management committee to decide. It was noted that Mr Hurry was already an Honorary Member, the highest accolade the Club can bestow. The Captain (SK) agreed to take this forward.

Date of Next Meeting – May 2021