

**Notes from the meeting of the North East Regional Forum held in
Royal Montrose Golf Club on Monday 18th November 2019**

<p><u>Present</u></p>		<p>Les Durno (LD), Jane Grubb (JG), Andrew McNicoll (AMcN), Barbara Ann Rumbles (BR), Nigel Spencer (NS), George Young (GY)</p>
<p><u>In attendance</u></p>		<p>David Fleming (DF), David Kernohan (DK), Andrew McKinlay (AM), Karin Sharp (KS)</p>
<p><u>Welcome & Introductions</u></p>	<p>1</p>	<p>DF welcomed everyone and advised he would be acting as Chair for this meeting. A round table introduction followed.</p>
<p><u>Update from Scottish Golf (WHS and VMS)</u></p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Presentation from DK, with round table discussion and questions.</p> <p>SG will be providing support, training, resources around WHS to enable clubs to educate their members on the changes coming in Handicapping in 2020. SG will be ready with the appropriate software and new CDH by April 2020 that will be used to deliver WHS calculations and as previously outlined in club communications we will provide all clubs with hardware that will facilitate the sending of scores for handicap purposes to the SG CDH. More details will be shared during 2020 on that process.</p> <p>An update on where we are with VMS was also provided, with approx. 120 clubs currently engaged at some stage, 1 close to full utilization, another 20 or so parallel testing and remainder at data migration stage. From SG perspective a frustration is the myths and misconceptions that are being portrayed amongst a number of our clubs and alternative providers in this space. Request was made by SG that clubs give us the opportunity to demo the platform to them and then it for them to make up their own minds as to whether it right for them. The clubs that are in the parallel testing stage have been providing feedback on functionality and making suggestions for improvement and the platform has seen some considerable change in the last few months as a result. There remains no compulsory usage of VMS but we hope that clubs will see it as a fantastic system that can deliver more than current providers and will chose to switch, however there is no pressure to do so. It was also clarified that the system will remain free of charge for clubs, no annual fee will be charged and it is considered by SG that this is a service option in return for affiliation payment.</p>
<p><u>Core Discussion Items</u></p>	<p>3</p>	<p>AM provided general additional updates:</p> <p>Focus for next 12-18 months will be around WHS/VMS</p> <p>Delighted to have announced new partnership with Forev, providing opportunity for Golf Clubs to have electric charging points installed at Clubs and would encourage everyone to look a look at this.</p>

<p><u>Communication</u></p>	<p>3.1</p>	<p>Participation is the other key theme. Women & Girls activity using Solheim Cup success as a springboard will see additional regional hubs being promoted. The Club Ambassador scheme which was set up for Solheim will be continued with AIG Women's Open being held at Royal Troon in 2020 it is hoped this can be another professional event that could be used to enthuse and engage female golfers to support.</p> <p>Work continues on the development of a new junior framework with a Spring launch planned – it is likely that this programme will be a feature that we present at the next round of Forum sessions.</p>
<p><u>Club Support</u></p>	<p>3.2</p>	<p>AM reported that SG continue to circulate regular Club, Golfer and Area & County Bulletins to the respective distribution lists but challenge remains in getting these seen by a wider audience. Often misinformation is spread through uncertainty both within the membership, media and by third party views, if in doubt we would encourage all members to speak to us for clarification rather than assume a position.</p> <p>Need to continue to work at communications</p>
<p><u>Volunteers</u></p>	<p>3.3</p>	<p>With VMS & WHS already covered which are clearly significant areas in which SG will support clubs over the next few years, AM advised that other support services are being reviewed. We recognize that as an organisation we have perhaps tried to offer too many services and as a result of the quality of delivery success has been impacted or difficult to evaluate. We are looking to provide more specific support in core areas, with more flexibility of delivery through central routes or online portals to meet modern day requirements, and to this end have invested in an education platform, Hive, as a means of supporting all clubs regardless of location.</p> <p>Feedback on provided services is welcomed.</p> <p>KS advised that a Volunteer Strategy was being worked on, we have been looking at other sports, voluntary sector support and initiatives and will be looking at launching something in 2 phases through 2020. Phase 1 will be for those volunteers that support directly SG (eg Referees, Course Raters, Coaches) and Phase 2 will be aimed towards clubs, to provide guidance around recruitment and retention of volunteers.</p> <p>We are also looking at a Spring 2020 launch of a new learning platform that will be aimed at providing peer to peer communities, for sharing of knowledge, best practice, ideas and support amongst volunteers of different experience across critical roles in golf. A pilot phase is anticipated in early 2020, with an aim to launch more widely when season underway.</p> <p>A discussion on support from Club Managers to those smaller clubs who operate without a Manager. How to access this resource to allow collaboration between clubs and utilise their</p>

<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p>	<p>4</p>	<p>social media experience to better engage and allow clubs to become less of a closed environment. Discussion around how HIVE has the potential to provide some additional support to clubs or individuals in that direction through peer to peer support.</p> <p>LD enquired about progress with new website. KS advised it still a work in progress with launch early 2020 anticipated. BR asked about new logo for SG as referenced by events team at recent planning meeting. KS advised it was a refresh that was being undertaken and launch would be early 2020. LD asked if the current portolfio of club events were remaining? KS confirmed there were no planned changes on club events for 2020. NS advised that Kings Links introduced 9 hole competitions for seniors during 2019 which had proved popular.</p> <p>Further discussion on VMS/WHS and the opportunities that will present in the industry to drive a shift in culture – ability tees not gender Non-member piece is causing fear amongst clubs – reiterated that this will move control back to clubs on fees charged. They will have the choice to allow non-members to compete in open competitions, and will recoup the booking fee along with the full green fee. Discussion around the success that is in evidence in Australia by going down this route Membership – clubs stuck in past, customer service critical to success, product pricing , giving control back to clubs Trust – independent or Scottish Golf? Historic set-up/power still impacts on view of some 1:1 conversation, discussion at forums is really helping with understanding</p> <p>LD asked if anyone was aware of a company called Golf Voucher Shop – website advertising all clubs as accepting vouchers however no authority has been provided to make such a statement. Further investigation to be undertaken to determine if this has potential for being a scam site Feedback on RCDO for North East region was positive with NS reporting good interactions with Martin and the club group at Cruden Bay very grateful for engagement of Scottish Golf team. Undertaking to deliver further demonstrations on VMS to let more clubs see system and progress that has been made if desired.</p>
<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p>	<p>5</p>	<p>Next meeting dates will be looked at for March/April via usual Doodle poll approach in early 2020.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 8.40pm with a vote of thanks to the Chair and all present for their contributions.</p>