

**Notes from the meeting of the South Regional Forum held in  
Annandale Hotel, Moffat on Tuesday 19 March 2019**

<p><u>Present</u></p>		<p>Jean Forrest (JF), Fiona Hunter (FH), Jack Keeney (JK), Robert Kennedy (RK), Peter McGarrie (PM), Eileen Scott (ES), Jeff Sutcliffe (JS)</p>
<p><u>In attendance</u></p>		<p>Lorna Brown (LB), Ann Lang (AL), Karin Sharp (KS),</p>
<p><u>Welcome &amp; Introductions</u></p>	<p>1</p>	<p>LB welcomed everyone and advised she would be acting as Chair for this meeting. A round table introduction followed, with everyone identifying the biggest challenge they are facing this year within their respective golf role or club.</p>
<p><u>Outputs from previous meeting</u></p>	<p>2</p>	<p>The follow up key themes document was noted and previous notes taken as read. JF enquired as to where the Regional Forum output was hosted on the website, as it wasn't easy to locate. KS advised it currently situated under Who We Are, however noted that for revamped website a more prominent location might be appropriate.</p>
<p><u>Core Discussion Items</u></p>		
<p><u>Communication</u></p>	<p>3.1</p>	<p>KS provided a brief summary from SG perspective: New website is underway, will be mobile friendly, slicker and easier to navigate. Is a real opportunity to cleanse and ensure information is easy to find. New club platform – interest has been significantly higher than anticipated. Team – we now have 2 new staff members appointed into roles of Marketing Manager and Communications Manager respectively. An internal comms plan has been drafted and currently going through a review process but key to the plan is regular dialogue with our members. LB encouraged anyone who wasn't at the AGM to look at our Annual Review document that we published as there lots of good club case study content included (KS will send link). In summary we have made progress with our approach to communication but still a way to go.</p> <p>JF commented on the feeling that communication between clubs and forum participants is almost non-existent. Internal focus within own clubs appears to be the principal reason given but does remain concerning in terms of both giving and receiving feedback from these meetings. JS also suggested that a number of the clubs in the South have a poor perception of Scottish Golf around the affiliation fee increase which in many cases has caused significant concern for both clubs and individual golfers in terms of value.</p>

<p><u>Club Support</u></p>	<p>3.2</p>	<p>RK enquired as to the voting structure of Scottish Golf and whether there were any plans to review that, as feeling from club perspective was that the Area &amp; County weight was what carried that vote and generally clubs were not supportive. KS advised that this had been one of the topics raised for discussion at a January Forum of Area &amp; County representatives but it was a very early stage discussion that will require further thought, consultation/feedback to determine if any changes should be proposed.</p> <p>Multiple membership fee was raised, with mixed views most importantly that if it the club that is the member then the fee on a per capita basis should include all golfers not just those for whom it is the home course.</p> <p>A slightly wider conversation ensued regarding the honesty box membership return, CDH inaccuracies and the general challenge over robust data in this space preventing any confidence from a Scottish Golf perspective regarding membership numbers and trends. This is being reviewed by Scottish Golf and a slightly changed approach, including a more audit like approach to back-up for membership numbers is likely from time of next return.</p> <p>Summary from SG perspective:</p> <p>As advised at conference, we have realigned the Development Team with 6 central roles and 7 regional roles now supporting our service delivery. Key priorities for the SG team are increased visibility and more focused support for clubs through improved/refreshed resource material.</p> <p>We in final stages of appointing a replacement for Willie McKay who will retire in May 2019 and an announcement will be made in due course.</p> <p>AL updated on the key activities that she supports clubs with Business Reviews, Member Forums and Participation activity (both adult and junior).</p> <p>Solheim Ambassador programme which now has c100 individuals signed up, with 5 from South.</p> <p>The Women In Golf Charter has seen slower uptake with around 10 clubs committed thus far – we looking at pulling together a case study to demonstrate to clubs some of the commitments the early adopters have made. The club requires to make a minimum of 3 commitments within the charter and many are using this to link to existing Get into Golf initiatives to relaunch or refresh activity.</p> <p>Golf Sixes – there are 4 clubs from the South that will take part in the pilot league this year.</p> <p>Junior Forum events are currently taking place across the country and have been well subscribed with lots of club volunteers and PGA professionals coming together to share their experiences to input into the review of a new junior framework. In the South the forum takes place at Castle Douglas on 2 April and there are currently 15 clubs signed up to attend.</p>
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<p><u>Events</u></p>	<p>3.3</p>	<p>KS provided a brief update: Area &amp; County meeting held at end of January has now been summarized and circulated for feedback, particularly around team events. Boys Open Championship &amp; Girls Open Championship closed earlier in month, with both events oversubscribed for entries. Both have entries from 14 countries, with the boys ballot falling provisionally at 3.6 and girls at 5.5 which is the lowest ever for the girls field. Events poster recently sent out to clubs and we would hope this will raise awareness of the different Club and National events that we offer. Particularly for clubs we keen to see engagement with the new Mens Regional Final event, the continuation of the 9 hole Championship and the PING mixed event.</p> <p>FH &amp; ES raised concerns about accommodation options at Peebles for Women’s County Finals. It unfortunate that a cycling event is being held in the vicinity the same weekend which has pushed pricing up but this is something that not in our control or that of the club. Whilst it recognized that location of venue with suitable accommodation nearly is important for such events, there is also a need to weigh up the geographic mix of our events and sometimes clashes with other events are unavoidable. JK raised accommodation as a continuing challenge for Boys and Mens Area team events.</p>
<p><u>Volunteers</u></p>	<p>3.4</p>	<p>KS provided a brief update: SG have recruited a new post which will provide support for Safeguarding, Volunteer Management and Equality work. A key piece that will be looked at is the introduction of a Volunteer Strategy that provides a consistent framework for the volunteers that support SG across categories such as rules, course rating, coaching, team captains and more.</p>

<p><u>Scottish Golf Update Reporting Format</u></p>	<p>4</p>	<p>A more general conversation then ensued about committee volunteers, which is challenging particularly attracting younger volunteers. Committee sizes in some instances are still too large and potentially not as productive as could be.</p> <p>The update circulated was an extract from recent report to Board. A new reporting system is being set-up and moving forward it would be our intention to provide a more dashboard style reporting format to add strategic context and measurement against targets to be displayed.</p> <p>PM enquired about hardware required to run digital system but as this cloud based it shouldn't cause too many challenges for clubs.</p>
<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p>	<p>5</p>	<p>Membership numbers in the age category of 18-30 is a challenge for most clubs in the South. Many youngsters go away to University at 18 and don't return to the area.</p> <p>RK enquired about rollout of digital platform and whether 100 clubs utilizing the system by end of 2019 was achievable? KS advised this remains the intent. Regular and direct communication to individual clubs will be the next step in our process.</p> <p>JS enquired about hardware compatibility for the platform, this shouldn't be an issue as it Cloud based but concern for some would be the wifi strength or older demographic that doesn't use a smart phone.</p> <p>ES asked about Junior Tour events and whether these were continuing. KS advised that they certainly being delivered in 2019 and on basis that entry numbers remain at an appropriate level can see no reason why the organisers wouldn't chose to keep them going, however they are run externally and not by Scottish Golf so this couldn't be confirmed.</p> <p>KS suggested that as we now have a year of these Forums completed that we take the opportunity to review the format and structure via a short feedback survey. KS will pull something together on completion of all of the regional events and circulate to participants to help shape the next set of meetings. It was also agreed that the geographic "boundaries" be reviewed at this time as potentially distance to travel is impacting in terms of participation and effectiveness.</p>
<p><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Next dates for Regional Forums will be around June 2019 and a doodle poll will follow for potential dates.</p>