

A Governance Guide For Golf Clubs



2016



HOW TO STRUCTURE AND RUN YOUR CLUB EFFECTIVELY: CLUB GOVERNANCE STARTER GUIDE

Forward

Date Last Reviewed: September 2016 **Version:** 1

Our Vision: Golf clubs have strong governance and understand how to structure and govern themselves effectively to deliver their strategic objectives.

Our Mission: Provide golf clubs with the necessary advice and support on governance issues to enable them to realise their potential.

‘How can a golf club improve its governance?’ This is a question frequently put by golf clubs to the various national organisations and membership bodies who support and work with them. As there are so many places to turn to for governance advice and legal support, we

have come together to provide you with a consistent message on ‘what a good golf club looks like’ and a consistent view on how to structure yourselves and develop a plan for the future.

This starter guide identifies some areas to consider in terms of structure and planning, which will then enable you to be more effective and improve how you run your club. It is designed to be a foundation block for you to build from with our assistance. We will work to produce updates and further supporting documentation such as templates, case studies and toolkits.

We Encourage You To:

- > Commit to and work through the principles and advice set out in the guidance.
- > Seek one-to-one support from your membership bodies.
- > Provide feedback on what additional governance elements you would welcome assistance with.

We hope this document will have a significant and lasting impact on how you run your golf club and will provide you with the knowledge, insight and tools to help you improve your governance to become more effective as organisations



ENGLANDGOLF



UNDEB GOLFF CYMRU



SCOTTISH GOLF



GOLF CLUB MANAGERS' ASSOCIATION



The Professional Golfers' Association



NGCAA
NATIONAL GOLF CLUBS' ADVISORY ASSOCIATION

Contents

How should you use this guide?

The aim of this guide is to provide you with a starting point to develop the most appropriate structure and organisation for you to successfully run your golf club.

By benchmarking your club against the good practice contained here, you will be able to prioritise your areas of improvement and take steps methodically to improve your governance. This is unlikely to require legal or accountancy input, however some specific changes you may wish to make could require legal and financial advice, and therefore this guide should be supplemented by one-to-one support and expert advice when necessary.

This Guide Is Not:

- > All you will ever need
- > A replacement for one-to-one support
- > Specific legal or accountancy advice on your particular situation

How is this guide structured?

This guide is divided into the following sections:

Glossary: This provides a definition of some of the key terms used throughout this guide.	6
--	----------

Section One: An introduction to Governance	8
---	----------

This section provides a basic introduction to governance and some core governance principles to be aware of in a general context.

Section Two: Organisational Structure	12
--	-----------

This section provides information on the different legal structures that a golf club can adopt in order to create a club management structure.

Section Three: Management Committee	15
--	-----------

This section provides more detailed information on the role of the Management Committee, including terms of reference, skills-based selection, ways of working, and individual role profiles for members of the Management Committee.

Section Four: Strategic Planning**17**

This section provides an over-view of the strategic planning process and provides information on why it is important to have a strategic plan; what the benefits are of having a strategic plan and how to go about creating a meaningful one.

Section Five: Further Resources and Support**21**

This section provides information on other governance resources that you may be starting to consider and where to find them.

Section Six: Contact Details for Support**23**

This section provides the contact details to obtain further support and find out how to continue improving your governance beyond using this document.

Section Seven: Tools**24**

This section provides some tools to help you further understand and implement some of the recommendations and practices outlined in this guide. The following tools are provided in the guide (although others can also be requested directly from the partner organisations which produced this guide):

- > **TOOL 1:** An information sheet on Incorporated versus Unincorporated
- > **TOOL 2:** An information sheet on the options for the Management of a Golf Club
- > **TOOL 3:** Template Terms of Reference for a Management Committee
- > **TOOL 4:** Sample Role Descriptions:
 - > Chairperson
 - > General Manager
 - > Company Secretary
 - > Captain
 - > Treasurer
 - > President
- > **TOOL 5:** Good Governance Case Study: Deeside Golf Club

Glossary

Board Directors/Management Committee/Trustees/Executive Committee

This can be called a number of different things but when this guide refers to a management committee it means the strategic decision-making non-executive function at the top of the golf club.

Core Values

An organisation's core values are the guiding principles which apply across the organisation and underpin how its work is carried out. An organisation's values are its basic beliefs about what really matters, and they should guide how things are done.

General Manager

De facto CEO who manages the day-to-day operations.

Governance

Putting in place structures, policies, procedures and processes to meet legal requirements and ensure your organisation is run efficiently and effectively for the long term.

Mission Statement

The mission statement should clearly define the purpose of an organisation. It is a short, formal statement about what the organisation aims to do and why it is trying to do it. It is the reason the group or organisation exists and helps to keep everyone involved in the organisation focused.

Operation

This is the detail and the 'doing' part of any plan. Often a strategic plan will be underpinned by an operational/business/act/functional plan that will go into the detail of what is needed and what tasks are being completed to meet the strategic objectives.

Operational Committees

Committees established by the General Manager to assist him/her to run the operational aspects of the club e.g. clubhouse, bar, catering, greens, admin etc.

PESTLE

PESTLE analysis is used as a tool by organisations to track the environment they are operating in. The acronym is as follows: P for Political, E for Economic, S for Social, T for Technological, L for Legal and E for Environmental. It helps an organisation to check and keep track of the wider environmental influences while creating an idea or a plan.

Structure

Structure also relates to how an organisation is legally constituted. This guide outlines the benefits and responsibilities an organisation may have as a result of their legal structure.

Strategy

This is a long-term, master plan for success. It is high level and does not focus on the detail, but instead focuses on the key priorities and themes for achieving those objectives and priorities.

Sub-committees

Committees established by the Management Committee to assist in strategic issues. Committees exist to make strategy and policy decisions to ensure the club can be run effectively and sustainably.

SWOT

SWOT is a useful tool which helps organisations understand their unique offering and may help them assess the potential success of an idea or a project. It can also provide a useful starting point for developing a strategy by forcing an organisation to identify how it is distinct from other similar organisations.

The acronym is as follows: S for Strengths, W for Weaknesses, O for Opportunities and T for Threats. It is designed to help an organisation uncover opportunities that can be exploited, at the same time as understand weaknesses and manage them to eliminate threats. Strengths and weaknesses are often internal to an organisation, while opportunities and threats generally relate to external factors.

Vision

A vision is the long-term change an organisation would like to see if its work is successful. A vision should motivate and enable individuals to see how their effort contributes to an overall inspirational purpose. It is a clear and inspirational hope for the future.

Working Groups

Committees established by the Management Committee to focus on short term projects and deliver against time sensitive one-off initiatives. After the project is complete, the working group will not continue to meet or exist.



Section One:

An introduction to Governance

Governance over the last decade has become a focus point for organisations in both the commercial and not for profit sectors. Sports organisations, whether they are national governing bodies, regional associations or clubs are also being encouraged by funders, stakeholders and members to address their governance, ensure they are fit for purpose and put measures in place to adhere to minimum governance standards.

So what do we mean when we speak about governance?

Governance is how the systems, processes, behaviours and people in an organisation come together to make things work. In reality this means there are two parts of governance.

The first part focuses on putting in place policies, procedures, documents and processes to enable an organisation to run effectively.

The second part focuses on how an organisation uses those policies and procedures, combined with the behaviours and culture of the organisation, as it goes about its daily business.

An organisation trying to put good governance in place is a two-step process

1. Implement policies and procedures
2. Ensuring a positive and dynamic culture is in place for effective decision making and appropriate use of those policies and procedures

Governance can therefore be defined as: Putting in place policies, procedures and processes to meet legal requirements, at the same time as taking responsibility for setting your own standards, driving your own improvement, and constantly developing the culture of your organisation.

Governance is not only about meeting legal requirements, but also about changing behaviours and going above and beyond what is required to ensure your organisation runs well and can be attractive to funders, stakeholders and members.

Why should organisations be trying to improve their governance?

The idea of 'fit for purpose' organisations with strong governance is appealing on two levels:

1. It means that an organisation meets minimum requirements and is compliant with legal obligations
2. It follows that a well governed organisation will be sustainable for the future

Many funders or commercial sponsors will require organisations to meet minimum governance standards and legal requirements to ensure their investment is protected and they are providing money to well-run organisations.

Beyond this, we now live in a world where members are consumers. They have high expectations of how organisations should be run and so ensuring an organisation is run effectively will help keep members engaged.

It is also important that an organisation is sustainable beyond the life-time of its current administrators so that it can continue to be a strong organisation in the future.

Ensuring good governance is in place will help to make organisations work by making the best use of people's skills, but not being so reliant on them that without one person the organisation cannot function.

Good governance can help an organisation achieve:

- > Funding from external organisations
- > Better management of risks and challenges as they arise
- > More members as a result of delivering a better service and being more in tune with member needs
- > Better performance on the fairways as a result of having the right structures in place to attract talented players and allow them to flourish
- > Sustainability for the future as a result of being more attractive to funders and members, and having in place an appropriate structure and proper financial systems to manage investment and money across a club rather than relying entirely on people

Why is governance relevant for golf clubs?

A golf club is run by an elected Management Committee which has the responsibility to make decisions that will benefit the members and ensure a sustainable future for the club.

The elected Management Committee has to work and interact well with different people such as paid staff, volunteers and members.

Having in place good governance in terms of processes, systems and practices will help to ensure accountability of the elected Management Committee and transparency of its actions to the membership. It will also ensure that whilst operating against the backdrop of a struggling economy, processes are in place for maintaining effective relationships and decision making to build sustainability for the golf club going forwards.

In many ways, golf clubs that work on their governance will be ahead of the curve and put themselves in a strong position to face the ever-changing challenges that will emerge in the world we live in. These include shifts in membership, changes to local government policies, statutory obligations and evolving communications platforms.

Principles of good governance

In the future we will be working across golf organisations to develop our own set of principles of good governance for golf.

These will build on the existing work in the sport sector by taking the principles set out for all sports organisations and making them specific and relevant for golf organisations.

It is useful for golf clubs to be aware of the principles of good governance adhered to across the sports sector. These are set out in the Sport & Recreational Alliance Voluntary Code of Good Governance which is available here:

www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/governance/voluntary-code-of-good-governance

The Voluntary Code was designed to enable sport and recreation organisations to aspire to and maintain good governance. It is a tool to help boards perform their role by outlining seven simple principles.

The principles are listed below with a short explanation:

1. Integrity:

Acting as guardians of the sport, recreation, activity or area. Management Committee members to uphold the highest standards of integrity in the board room but also throughout the environment of the sport. This could include developing the following:

- > Safeguarding Policy
- > Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- > Anti-Doping Policy
- > Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- > Conflicts of Interest Policy
- > Discipline and Grievances Policy
- > Whistleblowing Policy

2. Defining and evaluating the role of the board:

Management Committee members need to have clear role descriptions and an understanding of their individual and collective roles. They should also evaluate their collective and individual contributions and performance for the organisation. This could include developing the following:

- > Clear Role Descriptions
- > Codes of Conduct
- > Skills Matrixes
- > Committee Evaluation

3. Delivery of vision, mission and purpose:

The organisation should have a clear high level strategy and vision provided by the Management Committee. The Management Committee should not be involved in operational delivery. This could include developing the following:

- > Strategic Plan
- > Operational Plan
- > Budget and Forecast

4. Objectivity:

Balanced, inclusive and skilled board. The Management Committee should be made up of the right balance of skills and expertise to meet the needs of the organisation. This includes the need for independent expertise and for representation of the diversity of the sport. This could include:

- > Independent Committee Member role descriptions
- > Rules to allow for open recruitment and diversity in roles

5. Standards, systems and controls:

The organisation needs to have standard operating procedures and ensure there are appropriate and effective controls over the organisation. This could include developing the following:

- > Risk Management Policy
- > Schedules of Delegated Authority
- > Financial Policies and Procedures

6. Accountability and transparency:

Being open and accountable to members ensures an organisation can stand up to scrutiny when reasonably questioned. This could include developing the following:

- > Communication Policy
- > Strategy for managing and communicating minutes of meetings appropriately

7. Understanding and engaging with the sporting landscape:

Being aware of the international and domestic sporting world to ensure all decisions are taken in an informed and measured way, having looked externally as well as internally for the best solution.

Section Two: Organisational Structure

The typical structure for any golf club will depend on the size of its membership and the income it generates.

Larger clubs may have a General Manager to manage the day-to-day operations of the club. The General Manager is the de facto CEO and is responsible for the recruitment and management of the employees, under the direction of the Management Committee.

Smaller clubs will rely on their volunteer officers within the Management Committee to manage the day-to-day activities of the club. The types of management and their benefits are set out in Tool 2.

A Management Committee's role is to govern the organisation on behalf of its members. The committee will be the Board of Directors in an incorporated club or act as a Board of Directors in the case of unincorporated clubs.

At a club's AGM, the voting club members appoint the Management Committee. If the club is incorporated these individuals are the Directors of the Company and so will be elected by the membership.

Beyond the appointments of the Management Committee, a club whether it is incorporated or not, will likely want to appoint individuals into either Sub-committees of the Management Committee, working groups or into operational committees.

The three different types of committees/groups are outlined below:

Sub-committees:

May be established by the Management Committee to oversee elements of the strategy and assist in strategic issues. They will have an oversight function and will not be responsible for doing the work of a club.

They are sub-groups of the main Management Committee. Membership of the Sub-committees will include members of the Management Committee but independent members may also be appointed into the Sub-committees by the Management Committee, to assist and offer expertise.

Sub-committees will report and be accountable to the Management Committee.

Working Groups:

May be established for short term projects by the Management Committee. These are similar to Sub-committees to the extent that the Management Committee can determine the membership of the working group and the group is accountable to the Management Committee.

However, unlike a Sub-committee, a working group is established to deliver against a specific project or need for the club, for a specified period of time. After the project is complete, the working group will not continue to meet or exist. Working groups can be helpful because they enable clubs to engage people with relevant skills for specific projects, without having lots of long standing Sub-committees without a defined ongoing role or input.

Operational Committees:

May be established by the General Manager to assist them in running the operational aspects of the club. These committees will do the work of the club and implement the strategy.

Membership of the operational committees can include Management Committee members, but it is likely these committees will be made up of other people who are appointed to specific roles by the General Manager to deliver specific jobs.

If the individuals appointed to the operational committees are Management Committee members then they must be aware that they have a dual function for the club. Their role on an operational committee is to implement and do the work, as opposed to their role on the Management Committee, which is to over-see the work. Operational committees will report to the General Manager.

What is the legal structure of your club?

Here is a list of the different legal structures:

- > Incorporated (companies Ltd by Guarantee)
- > Unincorporated
- > Registered Society
- > Registered Charity
- > Incorporated Charity

Top Tip: Clubs are highly advised to incorporate to get the benefits of limited liability and this is particularly important where they hold land and employ staff.

Legal Liability

Many clubs are choosing to incorporate as a legal corporation e.g. company. Incorporating an organisation as a company limited by guarantee is attractive because it limits the liability faced by directors (officers) in the case of insolvency (not in cases of negligence or recklessness).

If the club is unincorporated, should an event occur where the club is being sued, the Management Committee members tend to be the named defendants as well as potentially trustees, as the club does not exist as a legal entity.

Committee members can apply the assets of the club to discharge any liability arising from those proceedings. If the assets of the club are insufficient to fully discharge the liability then, in the case of unincorporated bodies, the Management Committee could be personally liable for any shortfall.

This risk of having to pay liabilities out of their own assets seems an unfair burden on volunteers.

Whilst the club constitution should provide the Management Committee with an indemnity from the members and appropriate insurance should be put in place, there are likely to be incidents potentially not covered by insurance and clubs should consider incorporation to gain the benefit of limited liability.

The benefits and disadvantages of incorporated and unincorporated bodies are set out in Tool 1.

Optimum Structure

The optimum structure brings together all members of the club working towards a common goal i.e. the success of the club. It is imperative that the long-term plan is communicated and understood by all, with the structures, policies, and procedures in place to ensure the goals within the plan are attained. Such a structure should recognise the various elements of a club and facilitate those responsible for specific areas to focus on specific roles.

The focus of the Management Committee is to set the strategic direction of the club and to delegate day-to-day responsibility for operational delivery to the General Manager.

Fig 1:



Role of Senior Staff in Management Committee meetings

It is also important to involve the senior staff in management committee meetings, albeit in a non-voting capacity, as their expertise can be called upon to inform decision-making. It is also likely to generate a greater sense of partnership and co-operation.

See Tool 5 for a Case Study which shows the benefits of involving senior staff in Management Committee meetings.

Section Three: Management Committee

What is the role of a Management Committee?

A club's success is largely down to the work of its Management Committee and Sub-committees. Sub-committees exist to make strategic and policy decisions to ensure the club can be run effectively and sustainably.

To help achieve this, the Management Committee and all Sub-committees should have:

- > Clear terms of reference to define their purpose
- > Skills-based role descriptors to ensure individuals with relevant expertise can be deployed to key areas of decision-making structures
- > Policies and procedures to support a smooth and transparent operation

Sub-committees may be created by the Management Committee to assist them in carrying out their duties, so they are extensions of the committee and report to it.

Top Tip: Sub-committees should not have authority over management of staff and should be appointed with clear terms of reference and to deliver against clear objectives.

Terms of reference

To create an effective structure, the Management Committee and each Sub-committee must have clear terms of reference which:

- > Clarify the committee's purpose and activities
- > Set out the membership of the committee and how members are appointed
- > Define the limits of authority on spend and activities
- > Outline the roles and responsibilities
- > Include reporting frameworks that ensure there is sound oversight by the Management

Committee and transparent communication between each Sub-committee

The role of the Management Committee is broad, but some key areas of responsibility are set out in the Terms of Reference in Tool 3.

Top Tip: The majority of the terms of reference should come from the club constitution. Where gaps are identified to ensure the effective management of the golf club, amendments to the club constitution may be required.

Role within the Management Committee

Roles descriptors should be used to:

- > Appoint a skills-based Management Committee
- > Provide clarity to members on their functions
- > Outline the expectations of the roles

The Management Committee may contain some or all of these roles:

1. Chairperson
2. Secretary
3. General Manager
4. Treasurer
5. Directors or Trustees
6. President – if Presidents are ambassadors, they may not necessarily be full voting members
7. Additional roles
appointed volunteers, Sub-committee Chairs

Sample role descriptors for Management Committee representatives are set out in Tool 4.

In the past many clubs have had the Club Captain or both the Men's Captain and Ladies' Captain on the Management Committee as well as the Chair of House, Chair of Greens and the Junior Organiser or Captain.

Thinking Point: Clubs should really determine whether the functions of these positions should be involved in the strategic and policy decisions to ensure the club can be run effectively and sustainably.

Their roles may be better performed in Sub-committees of the Management Committee looking at those specific important areas that might not be appropriate for the Board to look at in detail.

Suitable Sub-committees where these roles and positions could sit may include, member liaison; handicap and competitions; or communications. Conversely these roles may sit more appropriately in operational committees reporting to the General Manager where they are delivering and doing the work of the club.

Skills-Based Selection

In order to effectively fulfil the duties and responsibilities of the Management Committee, representatives must be sought out and selected based on their skill set.

Detailed role descriptors and a nominations committee that adequately reflects the existing and potential membership will enable the best opportunity to draw talent from all sections of the club.

In addition, each representative, regardless of role, requires the following key competencies:

- > **Listening skills** - in order to understand each other's perspectives and aid healthy debate
 - > **Communication skills** - oral and written, enabling clear, concise and constructive communication, especially in meetings
 - > **Analytical skills** - the ability to prepare for meetings by understanding the key issues and asking constructive questions
 - > **Demonstration of club values** - lead by example with the values and leadership behaviours visible to staff, members and visitors
- > **Integrity and confidentiality** - keep in confidence the issues, discussions and actions of the Management Committee
 - > Working knowledge of golf and of golf governing bodies, including policies and procedures
 - > Understanding of collective responsibility

Ways of Working

An effective management committee is one that adopts the following good practice:

- > Has an elected Chairperson
- > Implements a robust induction programme and offers educational opportunities
- > Works from a well-documented strategic plan and set of financials
- > Implements a clear set of core policies and procedures
- > Schedules a minimum of five management committee meetings a year
- > Has an audit and risk committee, including at least one external and independent accountant
- > Undertakes an annual committee performance evaluation involving external input
- > Manages a staggered rotation system with a minimum/maximum term of office
- > Embraces a diverse nominations committee to identify and attract representatives based on skill

Section Four: Strategic Planning

Why is it important to have strategic plan?

Elected club leaders who change on a regular basis may result in inconsistency in the leadership of a golf club. This may in turn depending on the election term for individuals result in a transient management committee who are responsible for governing the direction of the club.

Having a strategic plan in place can help to safeguard the priorities of a club by providing a consistent common objective that all elected Management Committee members need to work continuously towards.

This new consistency will help the club focus its resources in the areas identified by the membership as key priorities for the club, and will individuals acting on their own views rather than on agreed common core objectives.

Having a strategic plan will help set out a plan for achieving success. The future success of the club will not be judged by the size of the document produced, but will be judged by the results that the plan generates.

How to create a meaningful strategic plan?

The process of creating a strategic plan is geared up to establish answers to three core questions:

1. Where are we now?
2. Where are we going?
3. How are we going to get there?

A club is surrounded by information to establish where it is now, including the trends within financial statements, membership churn, and customer feedback. Of course the club also has the institutional memory gained by successive management committees and front line staff.

A wider perspective of a club's position in the local marketplace can be taken by evaluating the relative strengths and price comparisons with clubs in a 20-mile radius, and national governing bodies have tools that can assist clubs understand their potential customers in their locality. You should contact your national organisation for access to these tools.

Other business-like tools such as SWOT or PESTLE can be used to help frame discussions with as wide a group of stakeholders as possible. (See glossary for information about SWOT and PESTLE tools).

The start of a strategic planning process is an ideal time to engage the full membership in a survey. Further analysis can be hugely meaningful within a members' forum, to which all members are invited to offer their views on the strengths and weaknesses of the club right now. Gaining such a mandate from the stakeholders/members is crucial in remaining loyal to the established direction of the club.

From each of the steps involved in this analysis will emerge a clear picture of what makes a club special, and this can be referred to in the plan as the core purpose, or even just how the club wants to be known.

Whilst some clubs may fear asking their customers to voice their concerns, this is a crucial part in establishing a wide buy-in to the process of addressing the key challenges, which may help the club achieve its goals.

The task of establishing how the club will reach its goals is one of the easiest parts of the process, as most members will want to volunteer their ideas for improving the club.

What underpins a strategic plan?

A functional plan is a more detailed action plan which focuses on helping the club achieve its overall purpose, as directed by the strategic plan. Each department or function of the club such as the course, clubhouse, pro shop or

competitions should create a section of the functional plan that links back to the strategy, and provides more detail on the activities that need to be done to achieve the strategic objectives.

The staff members in those departments will be crucial to creating this action plan, and delivering a product and service that is in demand from your customers.

By remaining faithful to the overall goals established within the strategic plan, the management committee can focus its attention on those priority areas. For each priority area an action plan and realistic targets can be drawn up in conjunction with the senior staff.

What are the benefits of having a strategic plan?

There are significant benefits for a club when working to a strategic plan, including:

1. Greater unity throughout the club on what makes your club special, and why people would want to join and remain as members
 2. Greater unity and morale amongst staff who will welcome a consistent approach to the established direction of the club and will have clarity in their roles
 3. Identification of a manageable number of key performance indicators for evaluating club performance and individual performance at all levels of the organisation
 4. Meaningful reporting of key performance indicators at monthly committee meetings
 5. Agreement on accountability for each important area of the club's business, and identification of any training gaps to help achieve those goals
 6. Improved selection of committee members identified for their knowledge and commitment to specific areas of the strategic plan
 7. More focused and efficient committee meetings, with an agenda driven by the strategic plan
 8. Continuity of aims when handing from one committee to another after annual election
 9. Less crisis management, with the Management Committee kept busy working on the business, rather than in the business
 10. A more professional approach to the collaborative governance of the club resulting in a more rewarding term of office for volunteers
-

How do you start the strategic planning process?

To start the process, call your national organisation and ask for examples of clubs which have benefited from this process, and lean on your governing body to help you begin this task. A case study of a successful club is set out in Tool 5.

Top Tip: Many committee members may be doubtful about the value of undertaking a strategic review at the club. This can arise from negative personal experience of wordy “business plans” that were created purely with the bank manager in mind, or it can simply be down to the fact that for many generations the club thrived without the need for such a document.

If you are looking for a compelling reason to start this process, a worthwhile exercise may be to spend ten minutes at a Management Committee meeting identifying the negative aspects of your experience of committee meetings, and ask whether any or indeed all of those challenges would be more easily overcome if the club staff and volunteers were working to one plan.

INFO POINT: What is a strategic plan?

A strategic plan is really a master plan which maps out where you are now, what goals or objectives you want to achieve, and what you will do to achieve your goals.

It is a plan for success. Many organisations will already have in their minds an approach they are taking, but it is important that this is enshrined in a document and created as a forward looking plan.

Strategic planning is essentially a disciplined process for getting to the important decisions, and the plan is simply the document that contains these decisions.

A strategic plan allows you to put effective collaborative governance into action at your club, and set about achieving the high levels of customer satisfaction that will dictate your future success.

Who develops the strategic plan?

Ultimately in a membership organisation the members should decide the future direction and strategy for the organisation.

The Management Committee may construct a proposed strategic plan for approval by the membership. By approving the strategic plan, the membership essentially agrees and sets the strategy for the organisation.

The role of the Management Committee (as mandated through election by the membership) is to then drive forward the strategy, as agreed and set by the membership, and to ensure that all activities can be linked back to the strategic plan.

The strategic plan should involve the Management Committee:

- Envisaging the future of their club
- Developing the structures and procedures required to achieve that future
- Acting as custodians of the strategy on behalf of the membership

KEY ACTIVITIES: Starting to create a strategic plan

Before creating a strategic plan, it can be useful to think about identifying the following for your club:

1. Core Values
2. Vision
3. Mission

Activity 1: Core Values

Core values are the guiding principles which apply across the club and underpin how its work is carried out. The values of a club are basic beliefs about what really matters to the individuals at the club and what binds them together. They should guide how things are done across the whole club. The values of a club can form a key building block to creating a strategic plan.

Top Tip: It can be useful to brain-storm a list of words that describe the guiding principles of:

1. How your club operates
2. How you would like it to be perceived externally
3. How staff and volunteers carry out the club's services and activities

You can then work together to agree a shared values base which will help you to operate more effectively and define the way the club will work going forwards.

Activity 2: Vision

Before you start to think about creating a strategic plan it is important that you have a single shared vision for the club that everyone is aware of and working towards. This enables everyone to see the common goal for the club.

A vision is the long-term change the club would like to see if its work is successful. It should motivate and enable individuals to see how their effort contributes to an overall inspirational purpose. It is a clear and inspirational hope for the future and is often about the effect your club will have on the external world and environment if it is successful.

Top Tip: Complete the tasks below to help you create an inspirational vision for your club:

Step 1: Challenge each member of the Management Committee to describe the long-term change they would like to see brought about in an ideal world, as a result of your club's work.

Step 2: In pairs, map out on a large piece of paper what your club would look like if it was doing everything you think it should be doing and had all the resources it needed.

Step 3: Compare and contrast the results with the full Management Committee. Are the groups of one mind? What are the differences? Is there a collective picture of the club's vision? If not, can one be agreed?

Activity 3: Mission

Once you have agreed a vision for the club you can then look at defining the mission of your club.

The mission statement should clearly define the purpose of the club. It is a short, formal statement about what the club aims to do and why it is trying to do it. It is the reason the club exists and helps to keep everyone focused. It is essentially what the club will do to make its vision a reality, or to move closer towards achieving its vision.

Top Tip: Complete the tasks below to help you create a mission statement for your club:

Step 1: In one or two sentences, describe the overall purpose of the club in a way that looks to your vision and says what you're trying to do and for whom.

Step 2: Review the objects statement of the club (this will be found in your constitution or articles), and ask if your objects relate to the overall purpose and mission of the organisation over the next 3-5 years?

Step 3: Use your responses as a basis for reviewing/writing a mission statement.



Section Five:

Further Resources & Support

This guide covers the foundation blocks of organisational structure, management committee and strategic planning, with tools to help you improve in these areas.

But it is likely that as you look to improve your governance there will be a number of other areas where you will need to develop policies and procedures.

The national organisations will provide you with example policies and template policies to help you develop your club and make sure you don't have to re-invent the wheel when developing a policy which already exists somewhere else in the sport.

The list below highlights some policies that you may want to think about developing and you are encouraged to contact the national organisations for support and templates to help you with each of these as you feel appropriate.

Club Support

It is important that you have a policy in place which outlines any financial support or assistance that is available to members in a clear and transparent way. In addition, your club may offer other types of support to members and this should be clearly documented and available to all.

Codes of Conduct

These can be developed for Captains, Coaches, Players, Volunteers, Spectators and Parents. They are a way of holding your membership to account and to ensuring standards of behaviour are maintained.

You should also look to develop a Code of Conduct for your Management Committee which is in line with the values of your organisation and the principles needed to be good committee members.

Code of Ethics and Commitment to Service Statement

This is a Code which you use to hold people to account in terms of their behaviours and to ensure they are acting in a way which supports the values of your club. It should outline what is in the best interests of your club and what is required of your club members to show they are committed to the common objectives and values of the club.

Conflicts of Interest Policy

Conflict of Interest Policy sets out the process for managing the potentially conflicting interests of committee members to ensure that decision making is not unduly influenced by an inappropriate conflict of interest.

It is natural that conflicts of interest will occur and it is therefore important to have a policy in place which ensures fair decision making can happen and that any conflict is managed and registered appropriately.

Data Protection Policy

Golf clubs will manage personal data of all their members. This makes them a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act and they are responsible for complying with the legal requirements of the Act. A data protection policy sets out the procedures for handling data and ensure a club is meeting its legal obligations.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Golf clubs are required legally to ensure everyone is treated equally and fairly. An Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy outlines the approach a golf club takes to equality, diversity and inclusion and it will set out how the golf club is legally compliant with legislation, such as the Equality Act 2010.

This policy will also show the general approach to inclusivity taken by the golf club. Equality is about managing differences so that everyone has equality of opportunity through a fair and consistent approach to the application of rules, policies, and procedures.

Diversity is about understanding, recognising, respecting and valuing differences. Inclusion is about attracting and developing talent wherever it exists and allowing everyone in the organisation to reach their full potential.

All three aspects should be referenced in this policy to help ensure a golf club is legally compliant and acting in an equitable and fair way.

Risk Management Policy

A Risk Management Policy forms part of the internal controls and governance arrangements for an organisation. Ensuring there is a policy in place and a risk register allows a committee to monitor risks and plan to mitigate and overcome potential risks to the future of the organisation.

Safeguarding Policy

Creating a safe environment for everyone to participate in your club is important. It is vital to implement a safeguarding policy which ensures proper processes and systems are in place to allow children and adults to participate and any risk to their safety is managed.

There are legal requirements a club needs to meet in terms of safeguarding and so having this policy in place helps ensure that a club is legally compliant.

Please contact your national association for assistance with these areas.

Section Six: Contact Details for Support

Hopefully this document has initiated thoughts about how your club should be best run to equip it to meet the competitive challenges it faces.

If your club is contemplating changes then you will need to consider how these will be implemented.

Some might require a change in legal structure and/or amendments to existing Rules and Articles or Constitution. Legal and accountancy advice may be needed to effect that. Some other changes

might be possible to be adopted simply by the Management Committee itself.

Please contact your national organisations or membership bodies for specific support and guidance.

Contact details are:

 ENGLANDGOLF	England Golf, The National Golf Centre, The Broadway, Woodhall Spa, Lincolnshire, LN10 6PU	Rod Findlay Director of Strategy and Governance Tel: 01526 354500 Website: www.englandgolf.org Email: r.findlay@englandgolf.org
 GOLF UNION OF WALES UNDEB GOLFF CYMRU	Golf Union Wales, Catsash, Newport, NP18 1JQ	Hannah McAllister Development Director Tel: 01633 436040 Website: www.golfunionwales.org Email: office@golfunionwales.org
 SCOTTISH GOLF	Scottish Golf, The Dukes, St Andrews, KY16 8NX	Kevin Fish Club Services Manager Tel: 01334 466477 Website: www.scottishgolf.org Email: k.fish@scottishgolf.org
 GCMA	Golf Club Managers' Association, Bristol & Clifton Golf Club, Beggar Bush Lane, Bristol, BS8 3TH	Bob Williams CEO Tel: 01275 391153 Website: www.gcma.org.uk Email: hq@gcma.org.uk
 NGCAA NATIONAL GOLF CLUBS' ADVISORY ASSOCIATION	National Golf Clubs' Advisory Association, The Threshing Barn, Homme Castle Barns, Shelsley Walsh, Worcestershire, WR6 6RR	Jackie Howe CEO Tel: 01886 812943 Website: www.ngcaa.co.uk Email: jackie@ngcaa.co.uk
 PGA The Professional Golfers' Association	PGA, Centenary House, The Belfry, Sutton Coldfield, B76 9PT	Andy Wright Lead Compliance and Safeguarding Officer Tel: 01675 470 333 Website: www.pga.info Email: andy.wright@pga.org.uk

Section Seven:

Tools

TOOL 1: Unincorporated Versus Incorporated

Unincorporated organisations

The advantages of an unincorporated association include:

- > **Simple administration.** Unincorporated associations (unless also a charity) do not have the same legal and administrative requirements that companies have (e.g. the requirement to file accounts or an annual return).
- > **Flexible.** The rules of an unincorporated association can be whatever they choose, provided they are lawful and can be easily updated. Remember that the rules of your governing body, or the requirements for grant funding may need your constitution to contain certain clauses.

Some disadvantages include:

- > **No separate legal identity.** An unincorporated association is not separated from its members in the eyes of the law. This means that committee members or trustees will have to enter into contracts, or hold assets, on behalf of the club rather than the club itself. In the event of a claim against the club or breach of contract, members of the committee or trustees, or wider club could be personally liable.
- > **Transfer of assets.** As assets are held by individuals on behalf of the club, rather than the club itself, they must be transferred if that person leaves the club.

Incorporated organisations

More and more clubs are choosing to separate the legal identity of the club from its members by becoming incorporated. Like an unincorporated association, a club set up as **a company limited by guarantee** will be owned by its members.

The main difference is that the club will have a separate legal identity allowing it to enter into contracts in its own right and it therefore offers protection for club members.

This structure is well suited to clubs operating on a non-profit making basis where membership changes regularly. Members agree to pay a minimal amount if the club becomes insolvent, limiting their liability.

The advantages of a company limited by guarantee include:

- > **Separate Legal Entity.** This allows the club to enter into contracts and hold assets or investments in its own name.
- > **Limited Liability.** Members are protected and only required to pay an agreed sum (typically £1) if the club becomes insolvent. Having limited liability will protect the directors (of the company) and members against a claim, provided the directors have been compliant with company law requirements.

Some disadvantages include:

- > The main disadvantage of a company limited by guarantee is the additional administrative work needed to comply with legal requirements. These include filing annual accounts, annual returns and providing directors' information to Companies House.
- > There are fines for missing deadlines. Companies House (These including filing annual accounts, annual returns and providing directors' information to Companies House (public authority responsible for managing a register of all companies across the UK). has more information on starting a company and the on-going requirements. Directors must also ensure they and the club adhere to the governance obligations set out in the Companies Act (2006).

TOOL 2: Options for the Management of a Golf Club

The duties of a golf club General Manager, regardless of the title of the post, have changed out of all recognition over the last twenty years, mainly due to increasing legislation, a greater use of technology and mounting financial pressures.

Today a General Manager can be expected to:

- > Run an estate

The duties of a golf club General Manager, regardless of the title of the post, have changed out of all recognition over the last twenty years, mainly due to increasing legislation, a greater use of technology and mounting financial pressures.

Today a General Manager can be expected to:

- > Run an estate
- > Maintain buildings and infrastructure
- > Have a working knowledge of agronomy
- > Provide golf and competitions for members and visitors
- > Employ a team of employees and contractors
- > Exercise marketing skills to promote the club locally, regionally, nationally and even internationally
- > Run a successful bar and catering service
- > Manage the club's finances prudently and proficiently
- > Be abreast of all current legislation

In addition, the club is expected to be open for business up to 16 hours a day, 7 days a week and 364 days a year.

In short, the General Manager is an indispensable facet of a golf club and it is in every club's interest to ensure they have the post comprehensively covered.

The role can differ from club to club depending on their circumstances and this poses a dilemma to the governing bodies as there is no one single job specification for the role of General Manager or Golf Club Manager, which is also reflected in the various titles for the position.

It is therefore of paramount importance for the Management Committee to understand the priority areas of the business they expect the General Manager to lead; the skills, knowledge and experience they are seeking; and educational expectations they have for the person.

Honorary Secretary/Part-Time Manager and/or Volunteers

With finances a critical factor in many club's choice of management it is understandable that this option is chosen. The club will operate, in general, without any visible shortcomings and, provided there is adequate cover during busy periods and emergencies, the members may be content with this management option.

Full-Time Manager

Clubs, regardless of how they are governed, are demanding more of their manager in the current increasingly competitive and challenging business environment. A full time appointment is seen as essential to the efficient management of the modern golf club as only this option will ensure the necessary time is devoted to the overall objectives, delivering an appropriate customer experience along the way.

Qualified Full Time Manager

Most occupations of the magnitude of a Golf Club General Manager, essentially a Managing Director or Chief Executive, have qualifications that reflect the job role and context in which the role is undertaken. It is true that many managers enter golf club management with relevant qualifications but these are likely to only cover some of the disciplines required. However, to be a professional manager, a thorough understanding of all the disciplines involved is necessary and one of the only ways of ensuring this is evidence of a recognised qualification.

The qualified manager will be fully committed to Continuous Personal Development and, through membership of a managers' association, will keep abreast of industry developments through seminars, conferences and networking.

A qualified manager will also allow the Management Committee or owners to concentrate fully on governing the organisation and delivering the strategic goals by delegating, with confidence, the day-to-day responsibility to the General Manager.

TOOL 3: Management Committee Terms of Reference

When developing terms of reference for the Management Committee it is important to check your club constitution to ensure the documents are not conflicting. You should consider every element of the document and whether or not they suit your purposes, but the sections highlighted in yellow require specific focus.

PURPOSE OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. The Management Committee is the guardian of the assets and resources of the club. It provides leadership and strategic direction focussing on the vision, core values and goals of the club in addition to ensuring that the objects set out in the [Constitution/Articles] are met.

GOALS OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

2. **The goals of the Management Committee are:**
 - a. To run the club in accordance with the Constitution/Articles of Association and in accordance with the Objects, Values and Strategy of the club
 - b. [Set out what the club wants the Committee to do: e.g. be commercial, run for members, develop juniors, host championships etc.]

3. **The deliverables of the Management Committee are:**

- a. A 3-5 year strategy
- b. Annual plans
- c. Annual budgets
- d. Annual reports and accounts
- e. [other specific outputs required/requested]

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

4. **The responsibilities of the Management Committee are:**

[What authority does the management committee have/not have and from whom do they get that authority? Much of this should be taken from the club constitution and will include its powers in respect of financial management, spend limits, property and people. What are the bounds of responsibility and authority of the management committee? What do they need to address and what is outside their area of concern? What can they decide on and what needs others input?]

Here are some examples:

- a. Establish the vision, values and long-term strategy for the club for a 3-5 year period
- b. Draft a business/operational plan for the next 12 months, including the diversification of operational activities and the adoption or elimination of major programmes
- c. Delegate the day-to-day running of the club to the General Manager
- d. Monitor progress annually (at least) against agreed goals and objectives
- e. Review the vision and core values at least every four years
- f. Create the club governance structure
- g. Set out and consider appropriate amendments to the Management Committee manual/handbook and club bye-laws
- h. Monitor performance, financial expenditure, risk and resource allocation against the business/operational plan at least quarterly

-
- i. Ensure financial solvency and integrity through robust controls and policies and personal integrity and ensuring the borrowings do not exceed a certain percentage of the assets of the club
 - j. Appoint and support the senior members of staff
 - k. Oversee management of the golf course
 - l. Manage risk and help identify new opportunities for the club
 - m. Develop and oversee high level policies
 - n. To have a duty of care to children and young people at the club by ensuring the club has robust safeguarding policies and procedures in place
 - o. Ensure that the club has disciplinary procedures in place that are in line with that of its national governing body
 - p. Review and enter into major contracts
 - q. Decide on the purchase, lease or sale of any property
 - r. Appoint Sub-committees, (including a nominations committee) to maintain effective committee performance and propose general meeting resolutions
 - s. Build effective relationships with external partners as required by the club
 - t. Undertake training as appropriate and participate in an annual evaluation process and individual evaluation
 - u. Attend events and meetings as appropriate and act as hosts to partners, sponsors and other stakeholders as required

TIMELINES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

5. The following are key dates for the Management Committee:

- a. Hold an Annual General Meeting in [XXXX]
- b. Prepare and circulate annual accounts and an annual report [Xweeks] in advance of the AGM
- c. [Other Dates and Deadlines]

TIMELINES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Membership of the Management Committee should be taken from the Club Constitution/Articles and reflect the strategic goals and allow people with the necessary skills to serve. This might include the Chairs of Sub-committees as well as skills-focused appointments in core business areas, e.g. marketing, business development. Chairs from Sub-committees could be ex-officio positions (i.e. a Management Committee place as of right due to their Sub-committee Chair status), whilst other members could be elected or appointed against a role description that seeks to fill professional skills gaps.

-
- ##### **6. It is best practice that the Management Committee will be composed of a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 9 and include the following appointments:**
- a. The Chair
 - b. The General Manager and where applicable Senior Staff (should attend but without a vote)
 - c. [XXXX]

7. Appointment to the Management Committee should be skills based. However, it is also important to consider gender and other diversity on the committee to fully represent the current and future membership. Evidence suggests that diverse boards make more effective decisions.

8. Club staff should be invited to attend and support the Management Committee. The Management Committee may establish Sub-committees, which shall report to the Board and shall adopt procedures consistent with these Terms of Reference.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

9. The Management Committee shall meet as often as required to deliver its purpose by the deadline and in order to meet the key dates. The dates of meetings will be set by the Chair, or in their absence, by the General Manager.

10. A quorum for the meeting shall be 50% of voting members of the Management Committee.

11. Every endeavour will be made to reach decisions on the basis of consensus, but where a matter needs to be put to the vote it shall be by show of hands and a decision shall be on the basis of a simple majority. All members of the Management Committee shall have one vote and the Chair shall be entitled to cast both a deliberative and, if necessary, a casting vote.

12. A summary of the minutes of each meeting shall be available to club members and the Management Committee shall prepare an annual report to the club members, which shall be presented at the same time as the annual accounts.

13. It is important for the Management Committee to reflect on its own performance. This can be a simple self-assessment against the terms of reference, a review of the competencies and skills on the committee.

14. Otherwise, subject to any contrary direction or intention provided by the Articles or these Terms of Reference, the Management Committee shall be free to determine its own procedures.

15. The Club shall meet all reasonable expenses of the Management Committee in line with its expenses and other policies.

**Approved by the Club
General Meeting**

00/00/00

TOOL 4: Sample Role Descriptions

A. The Chairperson

Time Commitment: Approximately [X] days per month. There are [X] board meetings per year and the Chair will also be expected to lead the Annual General Meeting as well as any additional General Meetings as required.

Period of Office: The Chair will serve for a term of [X] years with the option to serve a further term of [X] years.

The Chair should be able to demonstrate skills in facilitation, strategic planning and team development. This leadership role is critical to the long-term success of the Club as the Chair leads the Management Committee, lives by the club values and encourages the membership to engage in the club's future. The Chair is also the line manager for the General Manager who has day-to-day responsibility for the club.

Role summary

- > To provide leadership and direction to the Management Committee enabling it to fulfil its responsibilities in providing sound governance and strategic direction for the club
- > Ensure the club pursues its core purpose as set out in the constitution as well as meeting the club's Bye Laws and relevant legislation/regulations
- > Work in partnership with the General Manager to support employees; helping them achieve the aims of the organisation; and to optimise the relationship between the Management Committee and staff
- > Facilitate Management Committee meetings with well-rounded and carefully considered decision-making

Responsibilities

- > Lead the formulation of club strategic plans and put in place regular reviews of the long-term strategic goals
- > Ensure the Management Committee fully understands and implements good practice in respect of governance and leadership

- > Chair and facilitate meetings ensuring:
 - > These are properly convened with due notice and are quorate
 - > There is open discussion and all members have an opportunity to contribute
 - > The majority vote of members is taken and declared
 - > That, when there is voting deadlock, the rules allow for a casting vote where appropriate (Note: It is good practice not to rely on a casting vote in management committee meetings and to attempt to reach a consensus rather than put the onus for the decision on one person. A casting vote is only possible for management committee meetings and not for general meetings where the company was incorporated after 1 October 2007)
- > Monitor decisions taken at meetings and ensure they are implemented
- > Liaise regularly with the General Manager and Committee Member with responsibility for finance to maintain a clear grasp of the club's financial position
- > Build a high performing team of Committee Members, drawing on each person's skills and knowledge as they contribute to club goals
- > Lead the development of club values and ensure they are embedded in the organisation
- > Provide constructive support to the General Manager, guiding and supporting his/her work
- > Maintain careful oversight of any risk to reputation and/or financial standing of the club
- > Represent and be an ambassador for the club and its members at appropriate events, meetings or functions
- > Build positive relationships with club members, understanding their diverse needs and uniting their voices
- > Lead the process of evaluation for the Management Committee and its members

B. General Manager

The General Manager is the key link between the Management Committee and the day-to-day operations of the club, being the de facto CEO of the club. He/she must ensure all decisions; activities and investment meet the vision and deliver the strategic goals. In addition, this role is critical in maintaining a welcoming, member-focused experience through the core business areas including the course, bar and events.

Here is a summary of the roles and responsibilities. However, a more detailed job description may be required. It is recognised that not all clubs have a budget to pay a General Manager, however Tool 2 sets out the options for the management of a Golf Club.

Role summary

- > Be responsible for the day-to-day management of the club and all operational activity.
- > Lead the implementation of the club vision and strategic plan.
- > Lead and manage all club staff, who report to the General Manager, and all operational volunteers.
- > Ensure the club facilities are maintained to the highest standards.
- > Set and manage budgets in respect of club facilities and services.

Responsibilities

The role of General Manager should be clearly defined with agreed division of responsibility and delegated authority in the areas of decision-making, expenditure, purchasing, staff/volunteer management etc. He/she should report directly to the Chair and, together, they should agree the General Manager's annual objectives, as well as the ways in which the Chair will support him/her. This includes review meetings to discuss the General Manager's progress.

- > Ensure efficient and effective implementation of the club strategy through the development of annual operational plans
- > Set annual budgets for core areas of club operations including the pro shop, bar and restaurant which include targets for revenue generation
- > Lead and manage staff/volunteers, providing clear direction and support for them and their areas of work
- > The General Manager should hold a meeting with each department head on a monthly basis whereby a BVA ("Budget Variance Analysis") is carried out. Once the BVA analysis has established the major sources of variance, the General Manager and department heads can take measures to ensure that it is on track to achieving its budget for the year and overall strategic plan
- > Provide timely and accurate reports to the Management Committee against the club strategic plan
- > Work with the Finance Manager/Treasurer to ensure accurate finance information is available to the Management Committee and Sub-committees as required

C. The Company Secretary

Time Commitment: Approximately [X] days per month. There are [X] Management Committee meetings per year and the Annual General Meeting as well as any additional General Meetings as required.

Period of Office: The Secretary will serve for a term of [X] years with the option to serve a further term of [X] years.

In many clubs this role is combined with the General Manager's role and is critical to the maintenance of effective governance. The Secretary should be able to demonstrate exceptional organisational skills as well as an understanding of the club's regulatory environment.

He/she should have excellent written skills and be able to communicate orally and in writing with a variety of stakeholders including members and partners. As a Management Committee member, he/she should consistently demonstrate the values of the club.

Role summary

- > Ensure meetings are managed according to the requirements set out in the club rules
- > Keep a record of meetings and disseminate relevant information
- > Ensure the club adheres to relevant regulations and laws and complies with Companies House and/or Charity Commission requirements where the club is incorporated
- > Deal with club correspondence
- > Monitor and record the result of club elections and votes

Responsibilities

- > Ensure meeting information, both Management Committee and general meetings, is issued in a timely manner and according to the requirements set out in the club rules
- > Keep records of meetings and disseminate notes or minutes to members and stakeholders according to club policy
Be the named contact for all license applications and related external bodies
- > Ensure the club adheres to relevant regulation including the submission of annual accounts as required under the Companies Act (2006) and Charities Act (2011) (where appropriate)
- > Maintain regular communication with members, keeping them up to date on decisions, events and activities
- > Maintain timely communication with external bodies and partners
- > Monitor and record the result of club elections and votes

D. Captain(s)

Time Commitment: Approximately [X] days per month.

Period of Office: The Captain will serve for a term of [X] years.

The Captains have a critical role in creating a positive and dynamic environment for members. They should consistently demonstrate the values of the club and also encourage members and visitors to adhere to these. Captains provide a point of contact for the playing membership and, through the membership Sub-committee, a place where playing matters can be addressed.

There should either be 1 or one Club Captain representing men and women who will be appointed from male and female members; or (2) a Men's Captain and Ladies' Captain with equal status.

It is not good practice to have a Male Club Captain and a Ladies' Captain with a hierarchical imbalance.

Role summary

- > Provide leadership on all golfing aspects of the club
- > Build and maintain positive relationships with all club members
- > Act as an ambassador for the club, to host and attend relevant events

Responsibilities

- > Maintain the integrity, standards and ethics of the club and of the game of golf
- > Build positive relationships with club members, understanding their diverse needs and uniting their voices
- > Chair Members' Sub-committee to enable playing and membership matters to be raised and addressed
- > Assist the Management Committee in understanding the needs of all sections of the membership through representation on the captain's committee
- > Be an ambassador for the club and its members at appropriate events and functions e.g. Captain's Dinner
- > In conjunction with the Club Chairman and/or the General Manager, when appropriate, resolve confidential or sensitive club and membership issues
- > Handle correspondence and disputes as appropriate

E. Treasurer

Time Commitment: Approximately [X] days per month. There are [X] board meetings per year and the Annual General Meeting as well as any additional General Meetings as required.

Period of Office: The Treasurer will serve for a term of [X] years with the option to serve a further term of [X] years.

The Treasurer fulfils a unique and essential role in managing the club's financial resources.

Expertise and qualifications in the fields of finance and accounting are essential as is the ability to communicate financial concepts and systems to non-financial members.

Role summary

- > Be responsible for the financial supervision of the club
- > Operate as the chief financial management officer
- > Set annual budgets for the club with the General Manager and relevant Sub-committees for approval by the Management Committee
- > Set and oversee financial systems and controls
- > Whilst each committee may be in charge of their own finances it is important that there is a standardised process and/or guide in place on spend and honorariums

Responsibilities

- > Prepare annual budgets for the relevant committees to deliver the club strategic plan. This to be approved by the Management Committee and will include:
 - > Course
 - > House
 - > Marketing
- > Set finance controls and systems to ensure efficient and transparent management of club resources. Review the financial controls and systems on a regular basis to ensure they are robust and to encourage continuous improvement
- > Assess the financial implications of significant spend including capital expenditure and new employment positions within the club
- > Prepare 5-year cash flows to incorporate into the strategic plan
- > Support audit processes
- > Monthly financial reports – present at monthly Management Committee meetings
- > Act as signatory on the club account
- > Provide advice to the Management Committee in their management of the club finances
- > Administer all financial affairs of the club. This would include regular meetings with the General Manager and the finance committee in relation to on-going financial matters including:
 - > Review of outstanding subscriptions on a monthly basis. Ensure policies in relation to collection of outstanding subscriptions are followed.
 - > Review of income and expenditure in comparison to budget and prior year on a monthly basis.
- > Liaison with the club's bankers with regard to the club's debt/overdraft position (if applicable)

F. President

Time Commitment: Approximately [X] days per month. There are [X] board meetings per year and the Annual General Meeting as well as any additional General Meetings as required. The President is expected to attend [X] meetings and to attend the AGM to formally open the meeting.

Period of Office: The President will serve for a term of [X] years with the option to serve a further term of [X] years.

The Club President is the figure-head for the club and their role largely focuses on external representation and profile building for the club. It is a ceremonial role and they are not required to attend Board meetings. He/she can attend Board meetings but they do not have a right to vote. Often they will have responsibility for fostering good relationships with internal and external stakeholders.

The Club President should be able to demonstrate skills in public speaking, networking and relationship management. They are accountable to the Chair and the Board and so must be capable of representing the best interests of the club to external stakeholders.

It is vital they are a good communicator with strong interpersonal skills, and committed to the club's objectives, aims and values. The President is an elected position.

Role summary

- > Act as an ambassador for the club and represent the club at invited events.
- > Support, encourage and champion the club.
- > Maintain and protect the club's reputation.
- > Commit to and devote time to carrying out responsibilities in line with the club's objectives, aims and values.

Responsibilities

- > Attend the AGM and formally open the meeting, attend Board meetings, competitions, coaching, social and fundraising events as required.
- > Attendance at award meetings or dinners whilst optional should also be seen as a key element of the role.
- > Take interviews and create a good impression of the club.
- > Build and maintain a network of personal relationships with individuals in key stakeholder organisations to the club.
- > Keep up to date on issues relevant to the club.
- > Promote the club in the local community and ensure it is well networked with the County Union and Association.
- > Develop a good knowledge of the structure of national, county and club level activity.
- > Make links across the county with other golf clubs and ensure where appropriate the club has wider involvement with the voluntary sector and other networks.

TOOL 5: Good Governance Case Study: Deeside Golf Club

What is Deeside Golf Club?

- > Deeside Golf Club is a long established Scottish parkland course in Aberdeen.
- > It welcomes visitors but has a reputation for putting members first.

What is this Case Study about?

- > Deeside Golf Club modernised their decision making structures and committee composition.
- > This change resulted in improved governance and more effective decision making for the club overall.

What was the issue they had?

- > Only the Club Manager attended committee meetings and she was responsible for representing the views of other senior staff at the club.
- > Sometimes it was felt decisions were taken by the committee without them having access to as much information as possible.
- > The committee was not as effective as it could be because it didn't get the level of information it needed to make effective decisions and not everyone on the committee had a specific remit.

What changes were made to overcome this issue?

- > The Committee asked two senior members of staff to join the Club Manager at monthly committee meetings to provide insight and experience in their given area.
- > The staff members were not provided with a vote but were there to provide insight and information to allow elected committee members to make informed decisions.
- > Elected committee members now have the chance to hear directly from senior staff regarding challenges and opportunities that will affect the whole club.
- > All committee members now have a specific remit at the club.

What was the impact of the changes?

- > Staff members felt empowered to provide their experience and expertise directly to the Committee members.
- > Staff members also felt they were better able to understand the multitude of challenges facing a modern golf club committee and not just for the one area they are responsible for at the club.
- > Staff members were far more aware of the rationale behind decisions and were therefore able to implement them better.
- > Committee members felt better informed and able to hear issues directly from the people delivering on the ground.
- > Committee members felt able to make better decisions.
- > Committee members felt empowered and supported to carry out their duties at the club.
- > Due to the approach of relying on those best informed to help with decision making, the club was able to reduce their committee size from 10 people to 7 people, with each committee member having a specific remit at the club.

Conclusion Deeside Golf Club took the membership together with the Committee on a mission to modernise their decision making structure, and ensure those being paid to advise the club were allowed and encouraged to do so where it mattered most: in the board room. The result is a successful and well governed club.



THANKS TO

