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RAMSEY CLUB ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021 – MEMBERS REPORT

It is over two years since we held the last Annual General Meeting due to COVID restrictions so the meeting scheduled for September 27th will cover two years, specifically 2019 and 2020, with the main focus being on 2020.

Despite the challenges that have faced the club since early 2020 with covid and then at the end of the year with the severe flooding which caused extensive damage across the course and to our machinery and equipment, the club has fared well in overall terms and we have seen a net growth in membership numbers.

With our growth in membership we are much closer to being able to cover all of the club's expenditures which warrants a huge improvement over recent year – HURRAH Providing we achieve a net growth in membership numbers into 2022 we could become much less reliant on our volunteers but we have to be conscious about the many areas where expenditures are set to increase, however the outlook continues to improve. As a cautionary note, without the efforts of the volunteers, mainly in the clubhouse supporting the bar, restaurant and cleaning activities throughout the building, we would be looking at a deficit in the latest accounts as opposed to the surplus being reported. The volunteer programme has brought about a significant improvement in the club's financial position and we need to maintain the momentum, at least, into next year to ensure that we are maintaining our membership gains post covid.

YOUR MANAGEMENT BOARD DURING 2020

Richard Coles

Peter Topham

Chris Grace

James Else

Mick Arthur – resigned June 1st 2021

Mary Fielding – resigned June 14th 2021

Before covering the results for the two years and the outlook moving forward I would like to take the opportunity to thank all of our people for their efforts in running the club on members' behalf, specifically your board members, Judith in the office, Bex and Sarah in the bar and restaurant, Neil and his team, Stuart, and Mitch in the pro shop and to Ina Hartley for all of her work with the club website.

I would also like to make special mention of those members who have volunteered their time on the

numerous committees, on the bowls green, golf course, bar, cleaning and works within and around the club house which has not only resulted in a lot of improvements for the benefit of the club and its members which would not otherwise have been done but has saved the club the cost of these works. As mentioned above the flooding at Christmas caused extensive damage across the course and a number of our members stepped forward to help with the consequential clean up so they deserve a special mention.

MEMBERSHIP FEES AND BENEFITS

For 2019 the board decided to implement a 3% fee increase across all membership categories and to pass the responsibility for paying the obligatory CAGU fees to members and to hold the fees at the same level for 2020.

With the growth in membership over the last year, we are in a far stronger position compared to previous years and to achieve the level of income that the club needs to generate to meet its operational and capital expenditure purely by way of membership fees it is necessary to continue to increase our numbers. The current strategy of relying on volunteers within the clubhouse, particularly supporting the bar, restaurant and cleaning activities throughout the clubhouse, continues to produce very positive results and the board's position is for this strategy to be maintained for as long as the volunteers are prepared to support the initiative or until our membership numbers are sufficient to be able to operate the club without having to depend on volunteers.

CLUB MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS

Since the last AGM membership numbers have changed as follows :

April 2016 April 2017 April 2018 July 2019 Aug 2021

7 day golf members	202	208 (180)	174	189	211
5 day golf member	68	65 (50)	46	45	50
Other golf members	27	40	50	57	108
Play More Golf					39
Sub-total	297	313 (270)	270	291	408
Bowls members	63	72	72	76	79
Social members	81	68	86	91	63

Please note that the membership numbers from 2018 exclude those members in abeyance, which explains the apparent drop in numbers. The figures under 2017 in brackets reflect the membership excluding those in abeyance.

The latest figures represent a good improvement over past years and has placed the club in a stronger position financially and if we can continue growing the club we will become far less reliant on our volunteers.

To better ensure membership growth I, again, re-iterate the need for all members to embrace the role of ambassador and to take every opportunity to promote the club and its facilities, to be welcoming to visitors and to encourage new members such as family, friends and work colleagues to the club.

SOCIETIES AND VISITORS

Income from societies and visitors continues to represent a very important revenue stream for the club and, therefore, its members. To illustrate the importance of this revenue source our green fees income was £73533 in 2020 compared to £59,782 in 2019, £60,280 in 2018, £ 39247 in 2017 and £39,802 in 2016. Based on current golf membership numbers of 332, expressed as equivalent 7 day members, this

equated to £222 per member or, in another way, the visitor revenue equates to the equivalent of 85, 7 day members.

The club will continue to monitor society and visitor usage and, as always Stuart will continue to manage tee bookings with the objective of minimizing any impact on members' enjoyment of the course but I would ask all members to be flexible and welcoming given the importance of this revenue stream to both the club and its members and to cancel tee bookings as early as possible if they know that they will not need them.

Finally, if there are any occasions where members' enjoyment of the course is impacted by a society or visitor please raise your concerns with Stuart and NOT, either, with the visitor or within earshot of a visitor.

LAND DEVELOPMENT

As reported to members at previous AGMs the Board has been investigating the viability of developing the old practice ground at Meadow Lane but this has now stalled as the planning authority refused planning permission.

RECENT COURSE EQUIPMENT IMPROVEMENTS

Following the flooding late in December 2020 we have now settled the substantial insurance claim and have already replaced some of the equipment while repairing those machines that could be. Further purchases are planned over the coming months.

SWING ROOM

During 2020, partly as a result of COVID, we were invited to apply to Golf England for grant aid for a specific project that could be demonstrated to promote the growth of golf. Our submission carried a number of conditions that would have to be met within certain timeframes, particularly on achieving accreditation for safe golf, developing a Charter for Women in Golf and putting together a submission for a project that met the required criteria. All of these aspects involved a considerable amount of work by a number of people throughout the club and I am very grateful to Judith, Stuart and Lucy Mills-Cripps particularly for their efforts in enabling the club to meet its obligations on the SafeGolf accreditation. Ultimately Golf England were over subscribed with project applications and we missed out on the full grant that was on offer but, subsequently, Golf England approached us again to request a further application for a smaller sum where we were successful. Our application was for the development of a swing room with the club funding the minority of the overall cost, mainly through the Golf England grant, and Stuart funding the remainder. The benefits to the club are having the opportunity to offer a premier golf simulator to both members and prospective members, to enable Stuart and Mitch to provide lessons not weather dependant, youth training and group sessions that will increase the footfall within the club and promote membership.

COVID

March 2020 saw the arrival of the COVID pandemic and the impact of this dreadful virus was extensive resulting in the closure of the course for many months over 2020 and this year. The need to follow government guidelines and to implement special arrangements for the serving of food and beverage placed a significant burden on the clubhouse team which saw the volunteers collectively working some 80 + hours per week delivering food and drink to the outdoor seating area which, itself, needed to be created quickly. Fortunately one of our members stepped forward and in an astonishing demonstration of generosity funded the building of our outdoor deck which together with the new railings has greatly improved the immediate area from visual and security points of view and, as such, has been a huge success for the club even taking into account the loss of some car parking which has, consequently, added pressure at weekends. With the relaxation of restrictions this year the pressure on service has reduced but not been removed and we expect this situation to continue for many months.

The months of closure has equally impacted on our membership being able to use the facilities and questions have been raised on whether the club would be rebating any element of the fees in recognition that facilities were not available for periods. The board is very aware that some clubs have made rebates

and we have considered what could and should be done in this regard. Many clubs have done nothing while some have made concessions in the order of 1 month's fees either by direct rebates or extending a membership year to thirteen months which does not cover the periods of closure but does represent a gesture. In either case this would equate to approximately £70 for a seven day golf member, £9 for a bowls member and £5 for a social member. On an individual basis these sums are not particularly significant but to the club would add up to around £30,000 which could and, in the boards view, would be better used in continuing to improve the course, bowls green and/or clubhouse given the numerous aspects across the whole club where additional investment is needed and be more beneficial to the membership as a whole. Therefore the management board's recommendation is to involve the golf and bowls committees in deciding how to spend some additional money to bring about specific improvements or essential repairs. I feel that visible improvements to the amenities would be better received by the membership than a small individual rebate.

To measure membership views on this matter we will be having a vote at the AGM, with proxies for those unable to attend, on whether the club should be making some form of rebate or to retain all monies for the benefit of the club and improvement of its amenities. A proxy form will be sent out with the final AGM paperwork.

BAR AND RESTAURANT SERVICE

Since the re-opening of the clubhouse following COVID we have generally not opened the bar on a Monday and are restricting the opening of the restaurant to the limit of Sarah's hours and when it is more financially viable to do so. With the bar operation we have had a couple of bank holiday Mondays where this has impacted the membership and attracted criticism for the lack of service but, on both days, none of the bar team were available. For the time being the bar will continue to remain shut on a Monday unless additional volunteers step forward to provide a service but it has to be said that Mondays, typically, are very very quiet.

For the restaurant service it would be ideal to be able to open throughout the week but this is impractical at the current time for two main reasons. Firstly for, COVID, to be able to be open throughout the week we would need a second full time member of staff to work when Sarah is not in the kitchen herself – the size of the kitchen does not easily allow two individuals to work safely in a COVID safe environment for extended periods and the whole area would need to be thoroughly cleansed on handover from one to another particularly if individual days were shared. Secondly for financial reasons – with Sarah focussing on the main events such as weekends, functions, matches and group meals the restaurant barely breaks even and that is with all the waiting undertaken by the bar team. If we bought in a second chef to cover those times the kitchen is not open at present, even with the practical challenges outlined above, it is certain that the additional costs would not be covered thus having to depend on the club, and therefore its members, to further subsidise the kitchen operation.

What we are going to do is to trial the setting up of a point where a limited range of hot food can be prepared on a self-service basis using a microwave.

SUMMARY POSITION – FINANCIAL

ACCOUNTS OVERVIEW

At past AGM's I have presented a modified set of accounts alongside the statutory accounts detailing the cash transactions over the year but I think that this led to some confusion so we are now focussing on the statutory accounts alone.

The summary profit and loss figures for 2016 to 2020 are detailed below but the detailed profit and loss (P&L) figures will be available at the AGM :

2016.
2017.

Sales	403,448	361,012	397,633	384,355	365,653
Cost of sales	(87,374)	(93,228)	(85,416)	(81,013)	(44,623)
Gross Profit	316,074	267,784	312,217	303,342	321,030
Admin expenses	(299,765)	(157,353)	(323,824)	(312,284)	(303,854)
Other income	9,643	12,379	20,956	12,102	33,185
Operating profit/(loss)	25,952	122,810	9,349	3,160	50,361
Interest receivable	13,695	641	691	726	988
Interest payable	(3,117)	(2,163)	(1,580)	(1,068)	(716)
Profit/(Loss) pre tax	36,530	121,288	8,460	2,818	50,633

From the profit and loss (P&L) statement it will be evident that the club is reporting a surplus over the two years of £2818 and £49,251 respectively which is really positive news and needs to be celebrated.

In an effort to provide some context with our accounts over the last few years I should explain that early in 2014 it was evident that the club would run out of money around July/August of that year and with the certain probability that annual deficits would continue over the following years thus advancing the point in the year that the club would need additional funding the options were to increase the club's debt by borrowing, to increase membership fees until such time that membership numbers increased sufficiently or to investigate other options. Following a review of the options the decision was to avoid further debt but to raise urgently needed funds – in the short term this was principally through the introduction of five year and lifetime memberships which were known to be not in the club's interests long term but essential short term, focussing on growing visitor revenues and membership numbers. In the following years we benefited from additional revenue from our brewery contract with Greene King, a substantial and very timely rebate from customs & excise, an agreement with a solar farm company and the sale of the grounds building land.

The base strategy has been to make the club more attractive to new members and while this has been very successful, particularly over the last 18 months, we only just have sufficient members to cover the club's financial needs and we have numerous pressures where we need to increase our spend, namely :

- We still need to increase the size of our grounds team
- We need to continue with the upgrading of our course equipment
- We need to spend money on the clubhouse electrical and heating systems as well as keeping pace with maintenance issues.
- Course bridges – we are aware that some of the bridges need repair and/or replacement which, again, could be very costly.

In 2018 it was clear that despite our successes with growing the club's membership we were not achieving the growth necessary and, as a consequence, we needed to urgently look at other ways to both increase our revenue and reduce our costs. We decided that relying on increasing membership numbers and fees, broadly in line with inflation, could only be part of the overall strategy and we needed to combine these actions with other measures. To the management board it was clear that an obvious solution was to implement a series of cost cutting measures by expanding the already successful volunteer program to carry out work that would otherwise have to be paid for.

The measures that were implemented were :

- Replacing the full time bar steward and numerous part time bar staff with volunteers which reduced the pay bill significantly.

- Not renewing the annual cleaning contract and allocating the work out to the various groups within the club, specifically the bowls club, the lady golfers, the gentlemen golfers, the bar team and the restaurant team.
- Revising the contract with our professional.
- Renting out the flat previously used by the bar steward

These measures saved the club in excess of £50,000 per year and reversed the club's financial issues and resulted in small surpluses in the 2018 and 2019 accounts and a more sizable surplus in 2020. Without these measures in place each of these years would have incurred deficits requiring other measures – a fantastic achievement and one worthy of celebration.

The cancelation of the cleaning contract was not well supported by the membership and many of our members do not agree that they should be asked to carry out cleaning activities and/or be asked to volunteer their time on top of paying their fees but I hope that they recognise the benefits that accrue and until there is a better solution it is the best way to protect the club's future.

With regard to 2021 our forecast for the year per the annual budget was a revenue surplus of £10,400 and I am pleased to report that we are currently forecasting a surplus of around £90,000 in cash terms, partly helped by a substantial return to work grant from government under the COVID protocols.

Approximate benefits for 2021 arising from the cost saving initiatives in 2018 :

Bar – through volunteers	- £30,000 ++
Cleaning	- £12,000
Flat rental	- £ 6,000
Pro agreement	- £ 5,000
Total	- £53,000

If we consider the savings achieved over the last three years through this initiative the aggregate savings would be more than the bank balance at the end of 2020. This should further illustrate the significance of the clubhouse volunteer programme.

As such without these measures in place the club would have ended the year with a financial deficit. Given this situation I remain convinced that continuing with the volunteer culture is the correct strategy for the club until such time that we achieve the development permission on the old practice ground at Meadow Lane and/or we achieve the membership growth necessary to properly meet the club's financial needs. However for this initiative to continue to work we need additional volunteers for the bar particularly.

As mentioned earlier in this report, in addition to meeting our current financial needs, we have to be mindful of other upcoming financial pressures which the club has been very aware of for many years but have not had the finances to address them properly but with the improvements in the club's finances brought about through the efforts of our volunteers we can now better plan for these matters.

AND FINALLY

Our aim continues to ensure that our club remains financially secure, continues to thrive, membership numbers increase and members old and new continue to enjoy our fantastic facilities.

To make the club a success and for the benefit of the club I ask that all members be nice and respectful to each other, our people operating the different departments and take every opportunity to engage with

visitors, promote the club and its facilities and, wherever possible, make visitors feel welcome.

Yours sincerely

Richard Coles
On behalf of the Management Board



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