

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**18 MARCH 2021**

**GOLF MEMBER/OFFICER GROUP – INTERIM PROGRESS REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
FOR CHANGE FROM MONIFIETH GOLF LINKS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**REPORT BY VIVIEN SMITH, DIRECTOR STRATEGIC POLICY, TRANSFORMATION AND PUBLIC  
SECTOR REFORM**

**ABSTRACT**

The remit of the Angus Council Golf Member/Officer Working Group (MOG) which was established in 2019 has been expanded and timescales extended to take into account the effect of COVID-19 on resources, and the impact the pandemic has had on the five golf course businesses involved in the review. A sub-group of MOG representatives is working with external consultants and colleagues across the council to work with the boards to develop a strategy and action plan. Meantime, a request for change to the Memorandum and Articles of Association of Monifieth Golf Links (MGL) has been received and considered by the MOG sub-group and is now presented for consideration.

**1. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) Approve the proposed changes to the Memorandum and Articles of Association as requested by Monifieth Golf Links Ltd. This will support their continued progress towards a more streamlined governance structure, assist their speed of response for recovery post COVID-19 and build for a more sustainable future.
- (iii) agree the ongoing representation of two Angus Council elected members on the Board.

**2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/COUNCIL PLAN**

This report contributes to the following outcomes contained within the Community Plan:

- An inclusive and sustainable economy
- A skilled and adaptable workforce
- Attractive employment opportunities
- Improved physical, mental and emotional health and well-being
- Safe, secure, vibrant and sustainable communities

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Reference is made to Item 16(b) of the minute of meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee of 26 November 2019 which approved the establishment of a Member/Officer Group to undertake a review of all the courses in which Angus Council has an interest.
- 3.2 Reference is made to Item 10 of the minute of the meeting of the Angus Council Committee on 12 August 2020 to approve the proposed interim changes to the Memorandum and Articles of Association as requested by Montrose Golf Links Ltd

**4. CURRENT POSITION**

- 4.1 The Policy and Resources Committee of 26 November 2019 (Report No 404/19) agreed to establish a Member/Officer Group (MOG) to undertake a review of all the golf courses in which Angus Council had an interest; and appointed Councillor Boyd as Chair of the Member/Officer Group. The remit agreed at the first meeting on 6 February 2020 would be:

“To review the current governance and management models of the courses and determine any proposals for change that could strengthen the sustainability of these assets and enhance the cultural, social and economic value that they provide to Angus and its communities; and that any proposals would be consulted upon with the courses concerned”.

The scope of the review involves:

- a) Arbroath Golf Links
- b) Monifieth Golf Links
- c) Montrose Golf Links Ltd
- d) Brechin Golf Club
- e) Carnoustie Links Management

The Angus Council Committee Meeting of 12 August 2020 (Report 192/20) agreed to extend both the timescales and the remit of the MOG to take into account the impact of COVID and the impact this has had on Angus Council resources and the 5 golf courses involved in the review. The Committee also supported the proposal from the same report from Montrose Golf Links Ltd, allowing them to make interim changes to the board structure until such time as the MOG would have time to complete their review, and until 2024 when the lease agreement would be due for renewal.

At the meeting of the MOG on 14 September 2020 it was agreed to accept an offer of Expert Advice from Business Gateway and a sub-group of Members and Officers was set up to work with the Boards to fully scope out the problem and to develop a strategy and action plan. This planning stage of the project is nearing completion and we will shortly be going out to the Boards with an update.

## **5. PROPOSALS**

- 5.1 At the time of the first MOG meeting Angus Council were aware that both Montrose Golf Links Ltd (MGLL) and Monifieth Golf Links (MGL) were actively looking to change their governance structure at their AGMs in June 2020 and would be making official requests to Angus Council to do so.

Due to COVID-19 pandemic Monifieth Golf Links did not pursue changes at that time. However, they have since approached Angus Council requesting changes to their governance structure which would improve on current governance arrangements and support the sustainable growth of the business post COVID-19.

This arrangement forms part of their continuing progress towards a more dynamic and streamlined structure and is considered to be appropriate in light of the findings of the MOG to date, recognising that such changes will support more effective governance.

- 5.2 Currently they have 14 Directors listed on Companies House, including 2 Angus Council elected members and two officers.

Their proposal is to streamline to a Board of 10 Directors, comprising: -

The two elected members from Angus Council

Five Representatives from Grange and Broughty Golf Club

Two representatives from Monifieth Golf Club

One representative from Ladies Panmure Golf Club

The Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association will have to be changed to reflect the change in Board structure.

The Member/Officer group recommend approval of this proposal.

5.2 It should be noted that one of the two Angus Council officer representatives has already resigned and should this recommendation be agreed, the other officer will be asked to resign leaving the two elected member representatives on the Board.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

7.1 The Corporate Leadership Team have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

**NOTE:** No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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