



All-Party Parliamentary Group for Golf

Ordinary Meeting Minutes

1800, 11 July 2018, Committee Room 16

Meeting commenced 1737

In attendance

Members: Craig Tracey MP (in the Chair); Laurence Robertson MP; Lord Robertson of Port Ellen; Glyn Davies MP; Graham Jones MP

Organisational Associate Members: John Gerrie, Steve Isaac (The R&A); Jim Croxton, Leslie Howkins (BIGGA); Mark Lichtenhein (Ladies European Tour); Bob Taylor (STRI); Jonathan Wright (The PGA); Patrick Cunningham (NAPGC)

Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation): Duncan Kelso; Richard Payne; Tony Hanson

Other: Jonathan Smith, Sam Thomas (GEO Foundation)

Secretariat: Mark Ramsdale

Welcome

The Chair welcomed all in attendance to the meeting, and noted that because of time constraints, the majority of the standard agenda would be cut to allow as much time as possible for the panel discussion.

Apologies

Members: Rt Hon Dame Cheryl Gillan MP; Rt Hon Eleanor Laing MP; Lord Moynihan; Ian Murray MP; Drew Hendry MP; Baroness Nye of Lambeth; Stephen Gethins MP; Lord Wallace of Tankerness

Honorary Members: Jim Gales MBE; Helen Melville; Karl M^cCartney

Organisational Associate Members: Robert Maxfield, Maureen Roberts (The PGA); Stephen Lewis, Brendon Pyle, Martin Crowder (Golf Foundation); Jason Stanton, Scott Bartlett (Mytime Active); Jason Neve (Royal Automobile Club); Lesley Lowrie (GOSTA Training); Vivien Saunders, Fletcher Ransberry, Ron Wyatt, Mark Wyatt (AGCO); Alistair Booth (Frilford Heath Golf Club); Philip Morley (BGIA); Richard Haygarth (UKGCOA); Fiona Lyttle (GTC); Bob Williams (GCMA); Deb Bufton (NGCAA); John Clark (PING); Stephen Toon (Sunningdale Golf Club)

Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation): Eddie Bullock; Katherine Nathan; John Roger Jones; Trevor Martin; Carl Dalby; Peter Gwilliam; Liz Kahn; Iain Carter; Michael Coffey; Andy Hiseman; Gilian Kirkwood; Gareth Hughes; Julie Otto; Lauren Blease; Rudi Guraziu; Jazzy Golfer; Sarah Forrest; Chantel Scherer; Christine Langford; Brad McLean; Jim McLaggan; Emma Ballard; Keith Mannering; Jon Earl; Dan Balme; Linda Segerstam; Stephen Smith; Caron Morton; Caroline Hardy-Evans; Tom Abbott; Colin Harding; Andy Lloyd-Skinner; Gavin Corbett; Andy Pollock; Geoff Russell; Barry McGregor; Nick Lunn; Gary Hove; Mark Timlett; Terry McConnell; John Bushell

Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous Group meeting were considered an accurate account.

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Women in Golf Charter

The Chair welcomed The R&A's Women in Golf Charter, which had been launched since the last Group meeting, and noted that the Group would become a signatory.

Action: Secretariat to circulate to Officers for approval.

AOB

There being no other business, the Chair brought the main business of the meeting to a close.

Main business concluded 1740

Panel Discussion: Golf and the Environment

The Chair welcomed the panel:

Steve Isaac – Director of Sustainability, The R&A

Bob Taylor – Head of Ecology and Environment, STRI

Jim Croxton – Chief Executive, BIGGA

Jonathan Smith – Executive Director, GEO Foundation

Members of the panel presented background on their respective organisations, and their work.

There was a wide-ranging discussion on: the impact of climate change; water and energy; ecological protections and working with nature; chemical use and preventing pollution.

On climate change, the recent Climate Coalition 'Game Changer' report was raised. There was discussion of flooding, coastal erosion and milder, wetter autumns and winters. Challenges to greenkeepers and golfers were highlighted, and the potential impact on the UK economy was emphasised.

Turning to water and energy, it was noted that water was a key element of golf's resource use, and that close attention to detail on irrigation was being seen. There was also discussion around research on turf requiring lower quality water. Projects around flood management were also raised as examples of creative thinking for golf to serve itself and the community.

On energy, there was recognition that club and course managers increasingly identified this as an issue. Examples of good practice were discussed, including clubs using renewable energy.

There was discussion of ecological protection and working with nature, and it was noted that golf could offer significant benefits. It was also recognised that climate change was leading to loss of biodiversity, but that there was connectivity and linkage between golf courses and the wider countryside, providing protection for wildlife. There was discussion of the need of further promotion of golf's positive role in this regard.

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On chemical use and preventing pollution, the role of chemicals was discussed. It was noted that greenkeepers had an excellent education and were good stewards of the environment. A range of measures in place to prevent pollution were raised and discussed.

The panel closed by noting that golf had already done much on issues related to golf and the environment, including raising awareness, improved education and investment, collaboration between the industry and strong leadership. It was noted that the next stage was a collective push to scale up operations, reaching and engaging more club and course managers to provide a clear pathway and support, and promoting the contributions made to fostering nature, conserving resources and supporting communities, whilst also gathering the vital data and evidence that the sector needs.

The Chair closed the meeting by thanking those on the panel for their contributions.

Meeting closed at 1849

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