



Golf Ireland



Golf Ireland – Club Meetings

Slide 1 – Introduction

- Welcome to all clubs members
- A Discussions Group was set up in November 2015 with 4 members from the GUI and 4 members from the ILGU, an independent facilitator and a project manager.
- The ILGU and GUI have been working on this project for 3 years and set out to create something new rather than undertake what was done abroad such as a merger or an amalgamation. Working through all the detail has taken 3 years and the Boards are now very proud to present the Proposal to club members, which they feel is the future for golf in Ireland.

Slide 2 – Why?

- The creation of one governing body for golf will make it easier to promote the game. It will project a clear and consistent message that golf in Ireland is inclusive, contemporary in its approach and in keeping with modern societal views, while continuing to be healthy, challenging and fun. Ireland is the only country in the world that still has two separate governing bodies for golf, divided along gender lines. Membership numbers in clubs are challenging and the appeal of golf in Ireland, indeed as in the rest of the world, continues to decline. We need to do everything in our power to encourage participation by both men and women, boys and girls. Golf in Ireland was thriving in the 1990's and early 2000's, with approximately 220,000 people holding membership of affiliated clubs and playing the game. Over the last decade that number has fallen by nearly 40,000, as current membership numbers show 183,000 golfers as members of GUI and ILGU clubs.
- Ireland is the only country left in the world to have two separate governing bodies for men's and women's golf. South Africa were the last to join and they did this in 2016. England, Scotland and Wales have all either merged or amalgamated between 2004 and 2015.
- Golfers will still continue to play their golf. Change will not adversely impact on golfers' enjoyment of the game. Clubs can continue to run their own competitions for members and visitors, as they currently do, with both men's and ladies' competitions. Golf Ireland will provide guidance and support to clubs and best practice guidelines, as our sport moves to embrace a more modern culture.

Slide 3 – Club Benefits

- Golf Ireland will have one vision and one strategy, for both men and women, to lead golf into the future. There will be increased emphasis on support and services for the member clubs of Golf Ireland. Family-friendly initiatives and promoting an inclusive environment will be at the forefront of Golf Ireland's objectives. The aim of these initiatives will be to help attract more people to the game, to support ongoing harmonious relations in our clubs the length and breadth of the country, and to have families say as a group that "this is a sport for us." This will inevitably heighten interest among commercial sponsors and Government bodies, as golf will be a more attractive proposition. Golf Ireland will work tirelessly to ensure the future is bright for the game of golf in Ireland.
- Golf Ireland expects to save approx.. €250,000 annually by moving to one organisation rather than the current structure of three. These cost savings will be reinvested into club support and development of the game. On top of this, there is a possibility that the ILGU will sell their head office in Sandyford which has an estimate book value of approx.. €1.5 million. This is a low estimate and overtime it is probable that the property will be sold as all Golf Ireland national staff will be based at Carton House, Maynooth.
- Affiliate clubs will have the opportunity to have delegates attend the National and Regional AGMs of Golf Ireland. Clubs can bring notices of motion to question issues and make appropriate suggestions. Clubs will have more influence on the strategy and priorities of



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Golf Ireland. The National Board is appointed by and answerable to the members in terms of defining and implementing strategy. Clubs are the members and all voting in the new organisation rests with clubs.

- There will be no requirement for separate ladies' and men's clubs. Each club will be free to decide whether to move to a single structure. Clubs will also be free to retain their existing structure. Golf Ireland will provide guidance on best practice governance structures and will be at hand to provide support for any club that decides to transition to a one club model.
- Golf Ireland will seek to ensure that clubs treat all members fairly and that rights and entitlements are determined by membership categories and not by gender.

Slide 4 – Clubs in Golf Ireland

- The decision to implement change will be for individual golf clubs to decide themselves. A set of overarching principles are available, and these principles will be promoted by Golf Ireland. If clubs follow them, they will progress along the road towards improved governance and management practices.

Slide 5 – Clubs in Golf Ireland

- All clubs currently affiliated to the GUI and ILGU will automatically be affiliated to Golf Ireland on its establishment. Each club will affiliate as one entity to Golf Ireland and clubs will be members of the company. Golf Ireland will provide support and guidance to clubs on how to manage the process of change from ILGU/GUI affiliation to Golf Ireland.
- The CGI will be dissolved and the services that it currently provides will be retained and extended by Golf Ireland. These services will be delivered at regional level, so clubs will have direct contact with their development/club support officer.
- Many sports in Ireland are administered on a provincial basis and it is a structure that has served them well. Golf Ireland will have a National Board which will be appointed by affiliate clubs at the AGM. There will be four Regional Executives, consisting of 14 members nominated by affiliate clubs and elected by clubs at Regional AGMs. The administration of Golf Ireland will be managed from a central Head Office with support from the Regional Executive Offices. All of Golf Ireland's regional offices will be sufficiently staffed to ensure the game of golf is administered efficiently in each region.
- Events such as the Men's and Womens' Cups and Shields will continue to be played and will be administered by Golf Ireland, as will the various championships for golfers of all ages.
- A proposal will be developed on how to administer the competitions and how to integrate a new events calendar to facilitate women's and men's competitions.

Slide 6 – Equality in Golf Ireland

- Golf Ireland will seek to ensure that clubs treat all members fairly and that rights and entitlements are determined by membership categories and not by gender.
- Golf Ireland will lead from the front in promoting equality and inclusivity for all golfers. The role of Golf Ireland President will alternate between men and women, and there will be a minimum 30% representation of both genders at Board and Regional level. Golf Ireland is committed to ensuring that the voice of both men and women is equally heard. The voting system at Golf Ireland General Meetings and Regional Meetings has been devised to ensure that male and female club members will have a say in the outcome of elections and voting on notices of motion.

Slide 7 – Financial Arrangements

- It is proposed that the operations and structure of Golf Ireland will be funded from the combined resources of the current organisations, the GUI, ILGU and CGI. Replacing three



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organisations with one will provide the opportunity to remove duplication, enhance efficiency, achieve cost savings and ensure that a more cost effective and comprehensive service is provided. These savings can then be used to develop and improve the game of golf in Ireland.

- A single affiliation fee will be in place for both men and women, and a lower rate will be in place for junior golfers. The affiliation fee will be paid by each club to Golf Ireland for every club member. The adult fee will be €24 in Ireland and £20 in Northern Ireland. The junior fee will be €5 and £3.50. These amounts will be fixed for the first two years of Golf Ireland.

Slide 8 – Club Voting in Golf Ireland

- The proposed voting system encourages men and women to vote as one club. It is a weighted voting system based on the number of members. It varies between 1-5 votes for smaller to larger clubs.
- Two men and two women are entitled to attend the AGM's of Golf Ireland and the voting club delegate will receive and cast the vote(s) at Golf Ireland meetings.
- A provision is included in the voting system to allow clubs to split their votes in the instance that men and women cannot agree. They must inform Golf Ireland of this in advance of the AGM and Golf Ireland will organise for the club vote to be split. The distribution of votes is set out on page 10 of the proposal.

Slide 9 – Organisational Structure

- This sets out the governance structure at national and regional level, for information purposes. Pages 22-24 in the Proposal sets out the composition of the Board and Regional Executives and how the rotation will work.

Slide 10 – Transition Period

- Due to the amount of detail involved and the work to be undertaken it is envisaged that the transition to Golf Ireland will take up to 2 years. If there is a positive vote outcome on 19th January 2019 at the respective EGMs of the GUI and the ILGU then the transition period will begin on 20th January and will last until the end of 2020 before Golf Ireland is formally established in January 2021. At this stage the GUI and ILGU will be dissolved and Golf Ireland will be the governing body for golf in Ireland.
- You will see some of the major activities listed on the slide that need to be done through the transition, namely that of setting up a Transitions Board and a Transitions Team to carry out and oversee the work. Recruiting a CEO, transferring staff and setting up the regions are some of the other major activities to be done during this time.

Slide 11 – Next Steps

- Representatives from the club should attend the ILGU and GUI EGM's on 19th January and cast their vote(s) on behalf of their club. The GUI also allow postal voting on the matter of Golf Ireland.
- Golf Ireland is the future of the game and will make our game better and more attractive to prospective members. It's for the good of the game!