The AI invented the attendees.

Here's why Royal Portrush went back to a human minute taker.

When an AI tool started making up who was at the meeting, two of Royal Portrush Golf Club's senior staff found themselves spending hours checking every set of the club's minutes, which meant drafts could take a couple of weeks to circulate. Today, draft minutes arrive in two to three days, and the club has the confidence that they'll be accurate.

BEFORE	NOW	FROM THE FIRST MEETING
Weeks	**2–3 days**	**Accurate**
Drafts took up to a couple of weeks to circulate	Draft minutes typically within two to three days	"The best minutes that were produced"

At a glance	
Client	Royal Portrush Golf Club, Northern Ireland
Meetings	AGM, Governance, Council and Committee, House & Social, Finance
Service	Virtual minute-taking from live Zoom meetings or recordings
Before	Several hours to check full Council minutes, and up to a couple of weeks to circulate them
Now	Draft minutes typically within two to three days

The challenge: when the AI started writing its own minutes

Council and Committee meetings at a club like Royal Portrush involve detailed discussion, sensitive decisions and a record that members and future committees rely on. To ease the load, the club tried an AI tool. It didn't go to plan.

> *"AI started making its own minutes, making up names of who was attending and introducing topics that weren't even remotely related to the meeting, nor anything to do with a golf club".*

The club's final minutes stayed accurate, but only because Terry Dobbin, the Financial Controller worked with the club's HR manager to check and correct every set by hand. Full Council minutes could take several hours to check, and both were fitting it around full-time jobs. As a result, draft minutes could take a couple of weeks to reach the committee.

"It was me and our HR manager. Neither of us really had the time".

What we did

Royal Portrush's General Manager contacted us at S.A.M. Ltd and we had a Zoom meeting to chat through the issues and discuss how we could support them. As a result, the club engaged S.A.M. Ltd as its virtual minute-taking partner. We matched the club with Katie, an experienced minute taker with a background in senior PA and company secretary support, to look after all of the club's meetings.

Katie attends via Zoom or works from a recording, and produces clear, accurate minutes in a consistent format, with drafts typically turned around in two to three days. Because we work virtually, distance isn't a barrier: we support the club in Northern Ireland from our base in Gloucestershire.

The turning point: the very first meeting

The difference was clear straight away.

> ***"After the very first meeting, the minutes were the best minutes that were produced".***

The difference

	Before: AI tool	Now: S.A.M. Ltd
First draft	Invented attendees and unrelated topics	Accurate minutes in the club's own format
Checking	Several hours for full Council minutes, by two senior staff	Handled by an experienced minute taker
Turnaround	Up to a couple of weeks	Typically two to three days

What the club says

> *"Having the confidence that we will get an accurate set of minutes in a great timeframe has made all the committee Chairs' jobs easier".*
>
> **Terry Dobbin, Financial Controller, Royal Portrush Golf Club**

> *"We decided to try an AI tool as a solution but, in the end, it produced more problems than answers. What next, we asked, and through our General Manager the concept of a Virtual PA was introduced. Katie from S.A.M. Ltd was engaged to service the function and from the Zoom meetings or recordings of meetings she has produced excellent meeting minutes with content accuracy while always demonstrating total integrity. I would have no hesitation in recommending S.A.M. Ltd for minute-taking."*
>
> **Richard McDermott, Council Member and Links Convenor, Royal Portrush Golf Club**

> *"Can I just say that your minutes are excellent. Clear, concise but comprehensive. Thank you for your continued good work".*
>
> **Chris Clarke, Royal Portrush Golf Club**

Is your club in a similar position?

We often hear from clubs where:

- An AI tool has been tried, and senior staff are still spending hours correcting the output
- The Club Secretary or General Manager is writing minutes on top of a busy day job
- A volunteer secretary is stepping down, or the role is hard to fill
- Draft minutes take weeks to circulate, and actions drift or get missed
- A sensitive or disciplinary meeting needs an independent minute taker

How it could work for your club

- ✓ Virtual attendance at Council, committee and sub-committee meetings, or minutes taken from a recording
- ✓ Draft minutes typically within two to three days, in a consistent format from one meeting to the next
- ✓ Action tracking to help the Chair see decisions through
- ✓ An independent minute taker for sensitive or disciplinary meetings
- ✓ Support with your AGM, from agenda and papers through to the minutes

Getting started is simple

1	Schedule a discovery call and have an informal chat with me, Sam.
2	You'll receive a detailed quote based on what we discussed.
3	If you decide to go ahead, we'll issue a contract.
4	You'll have an informal video call with your minute taker before the first meeting, then share recent minutes, templates and a list of who's who so your minutes read like your club's own. Everything is handled in strict confidence, with a confidentiality agreement built into our contract.

We usually work on an annual retainer, paid monthly, based on the number of regular meetings you have over a 12 month period. You're very welcome to start with a single meeting to see how it feels.

Let's talk

If your club needs minutes it can rely on, accurate, impartial and on time, we'd be glad to have a short, no-obligation conversation about how we could help.

Book a call

Sam Johnstone Director, S.A.M. Ltd