

# NORTHERN IRELAND BRIDGE UNION

Minutes of a meeting of the NIBU Council held at Kelvin-Malone on Thursday  
June 12<sup>th</sup> 2014 from 6.30pm.

Present: J. Bergin (Chair), M.McFaul (Hon. Secretary), A. Fitzpatrick (Hon. Treasurer), J. Murchan (Hon. Competitions Secretary), R. Burns (Hon. Master Points Secretary), C. Burns (Immediate Past Chair), G. Mackenzie, E.McNicholl, I. Lindsay, A. Hassan, P.Johnston, N.Irwin.

1. Apologies

Colin Jeffries

2. Minutes of the meeting held on April 24<sup>th</sup> 2014

The Minutes were agreed

3. Matters Arising

- a) JM queried why a third dealing machine was being costed as the existing two were sufficient to meet needs. AH confirmed that the Playing Cards had been ordered.
- b) MMcF tabled a working document produced by the Youth Committee which outlined the areas it was proposing to look at. It was suggested that 'bridge' be mentioned in the Mission Statement The document was welcomed but members requested a more detailed, costed plan be available for the next Council meeting in September.

*Action: MMcF to brief Diane Greenwood (Committee Chair)*

- c) MMcF confirmed that the Chair of Selectors had provided a response to the '6-Signature letter' regarding the Teltscher Trophy team selection. The response had been forwarded to the 6 signatories.
- d) The Kelvin Cup final had not yet been concluded due to holidays but was pending. JM held strongly to the view that the issues around the unplayed Premier League match and the Kelvin Cup should've been left to himself and Alan Hill, Chair of the Laws & Ethics Committee to resolve without Council involvement. JB reminded members of Council's previous request to examine and revise rules governing League matches and Knockout Cups for the 2014-15 season onwards.

*Action: JM, IL and Alan Hill to revise the League Rules by next Council meeting.*

- e) It was confirmed that the IBU Seniors Congress would be held at La Mon from March 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> 2015. AH expressed concern that the event followed immediately after the Camrose weekend also at La Mon.

#### 4. Chairperson's business

##### a) Conflict of interest policy

JB introduced his paper and spoke of the need for such a policy to ensure good decision-making. It was essential to protect the integrity of the NIBU. He suggested an amendment that would allow a committee meeting to count all members in attendance as contributing to quorate requirements i.e. where a meeting is quorate and one or more members have to withdraw due to a conflict of interest, then the remaining members shall be deemed quorate. This was approved by all members and the policy adopted.

*Action: JB to finalise policy and post on website. All Council and Committee meetings to ensure 'Declarations of Interest' will be a standing agenda item for all meetings.*

##### b) Code of Ethics

As with the previous item, it was now standard practice for all organisations to adopt a set of explicit core values. The Chair asked that the Laws & Ethics Committee draft a policy for the next Council meeting.

*Action: JB to liaise with Chair of L&E Committee*

##### c) Email etiquette.

JB asked that members clearly differentiate between business items and items for general discussion when emailing. MMcF suggested using the website for a discussion forum, supported by GMacK and RB. Members raised several issues currently causing difficulty and leaving room for improvement. It was agreed that all business emails emanating from officers would use the NIBU logo and signature.

*Action: MMcF will draft an email etiquette policy.*

#### 5. Correspondence.

MMcF briefed members on a response from Rex Anderson to his request for information on his position regarding certain outstanding matters previously deferred to the L&E Committee. The response appeared to imply that the organisation was prevented from dealing with any outstanding business items occurring under the previous Constitution. He had recommended seeking clarification from Learned Counsel.

*Action: MMcF to forward RA's response to barrister for comment.*

JB had received a communication from Toni Sproule in which she advocated the use of MP scoring for the Senior Camrose trials. It was agreed to refer this item to the incoming Selection Committee

*Action: Selection Committee to consider merits of MP scoring for Senior Camrose Trials.*

*Action: JM agreed to correspond with Paul Porteous on the collection of previously ordered Bridgemates*

*Action: It was agreed that all correspondence would be circulated to members in advance of meetings*

6. Reports from Officers.

AF said league winners had not yet received their winnings. JM agreed to notify treasurer of winners.

*Action: Competitions Secretary to brief Treasurer on competition winners*

7. Reports from Committees

There were no reports.

8. Committees – Terms of Reference.

a) The Management Committee

As this is a newly formed committee, no previous template exists. The officers should meet and draft terms of reference for submission to next Council meeting.

*Action: MMcF to convene*

*AF left the meeting at 7.50pm*

b) The Selection Committee

IL suggested that the new Committee should give priority to setting out its proposed timetable for the season ahead and submit it for Council approval. He insisted all information relating to selection matters should be made explicit and posted on the website. CB felt strongly that Council should not interfere with Selection Committee matters. A lengthy discussion ensued and JB read extracts from the SBU Constitution. It was agreed that the Selection Committee would determine its own terms of reference based on IL's proposal and drawing on SBU guidance. MMcF asked that the terms of reference be not too prescriptive in order to preserve the flexibility offered by the 2014 constitution. JM subsequently asked that Council approve the requirement that all players entering trials for Camrose and Lady Milne, be deemed to have made themselves available for at least two of the Inter-Regionals, Moylan, North-South match and Egan, if selected. This was agreed.

*Action: Selection Committee to draw up terms of reference for approval by September Council.*

c) The Laws & Ethics Committee.

*Action: L&E Committee to draw up terms of reference for September Council approval.*

9. Appointment of members to Committees:

a) The Selection Committee

It was agreed to elect 7 members. Those Council members present who were also nominees left the room while voting took place. As a consequence, the following were elected as comprising the Selection Committee –

Anne Fitzpatrick, Greer Mackenzie, Michael McFaul, Nuala Mooney, Robert Plunkett (Convenor), Toni Sproule, Clare Watson.

b) The Laws & Ethics Committee.

It was agreed to elect 9 members. After some discussion the following were elected – Philip Dufton, Alan Hill (Convenor), Norma Irwin, Colin Jeffries, Ian Lindsay, Sandie Millership, Shelagh McCaughan, Bill Scott, Alan Sharp, Michael McFaul (Non-Voting Secretary)

10. Appointment of delegates to:

a) The Irish Bridge Union

The 8 delegates to the IBU Council will be – John Bergin, Ciara Burns (Incoming IBU President), Barbara Collins, Harold Curran (Joint-Secretary), Anne Fitzpatrick, Colin Jeffries, Ian Lindsay, Michael McFaul. AF agreed to forward all IBU minutes.

b) Bridge Great Britain.

Brian McDowell was re-elected as the NIBU representative.

11. New Constitution.

MMcF alerted members to an unfortunate side-effect of the new Constitution merging both senior posts from 2016 being that the President was in theory no longer a member of Council. Members felt strongly that the President's role should be maintained until then in recognition of his continuing hard work on behalf of the Union. Council agreed to welcome his attendance at Council meetings in a non-voting capacity and also that his role as figurehead for the NIBU be maintained.

12. AGM reflection.

JB asked for an action list for next year to ensure that the unpleasant atmosphere of the recent AGM was not repeated. IL said it had never happened before and was unlikely to be repeated. CB said she was very disappointed that more members had not spoken

positively from the floor. EMcN said it was a process that had to be gone through, given the recent discord. IL suggested merging the various officers' reports and MMcF suggested a root-and-branch review of the AGM proceedings to include a general presentation by the Management Committee as a team, perhaps using audio-visual aids and focussing on positive developments during the previous year.

**13. Diaries.**

MMcF asked for members' views on whether a better quality diary should be requested. JM proposed that he devise 2 fixture lists – one general one and one for intermediates. He agreed to cost a runoff of 3000 such lists. After some discussion it was agreed to purchase 300 copies of the basic diary but excluding the information duplicated on the website.

*Action: MMcF to arrange diary printing. JM to send him the Fixture list for inclusion.*

**14. Any Other Business.**

JB asked if the teams for the North-South match had been selected and JM said they had not – this was a pressing matter for the incoming Selectors. He also reminded JB that he must select his own team of Officials. It was expected that the match would be played on August 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> at Citynorth hotel.

*Action: Selection Committee to address North-South match team selection.*

PJ stated that recent experience in taking bridge into schools highlighted the need for the NIBU to draft a Child Protection Policy.

*Action: Youth Committee to devise a Child Protection policy.*

**15. Date and Venue of next meeting.**

Maghera 6.30 17<sup>th</sup> September. Exact venue to be confirmed.

The meeting ended at 10.55pm.

*Michael McFaul  
Hon. Secretary*