

NORTHERN IRELAND BRIDGE UNION

COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the NIBU Council held at Walsh's Hotel, Maghera on Wednesday September 17th 2014 from 6.30pm

Present: J. Bergin (Chair), M.McFaul (Hon.Secretary), A. Fitzpatrick (Hon. Treasurer), G. Mackenzie, E. McNicholl, I. Lindsay, R. Burns, P. Dufton (for item 5a)

The Chairperson welcomed Philip Dufton to the meeting.

1. Apologies

C. Jeffries, A. Hassan, I. Hamilton, J. Murchan, P. Johnston

2. Declarations of Interest

None declared

3. Minutes of the meeting held on June 12th 2014.

The minutes were agreed

4. Matters Arising

a) **Email Etiquette** – in the light of different preferences and opinions on the matter, it was agreed not to proceed with designing a policy

b) **Child Protection** – it was agreed to ask the Management Committee to inspect and, if appropriate, to adopt the IBU policy.

Action: MMcF to record as Management Committee business

5. Chairperson's business

a) **Disciplinary Procedure.**

PD spoke to his paper that had been drafted for the Laws & Ethics Committee. He outlined the procedure in other Bridge Unions. The importance of separating the gathering of evidence from the act of judgment was stressed. All evidence would be documented and decisions made solely based on evidence provided.

A vigorous discussion ensued and it was agreed that the Laws & Ethics Committee would oversee the entire procedure up to any appeal. An investigating panel may include non-Committee personnel. Any appeal, by either complainant or respondent would be to Council conditional that no additional evidence would be accepted.

JB asked PD to re-draft his paper to include details of the appeal mechanism and also a possible tariff of penalties that may be imposed.

PD left the meeting.

Action: PD to forward re-draft to JB.

b) Autumn Congress

. The Chairperson expressed his thanks to Anne Hassan and the Organizing Committee for arranging another excellent Congress. It was noted that entries were up overall. This was due to a significant increase in participation by Intermediate players. However entries to the Congress Pairs and Teams were both down. On behalf of members present, AF congratulated JB on his recent successes

c) Commonwealth Bridge Event

MMcF & AF gave an account of their experience in Glasgow. JB congratulated the team on finishing in the top half while recording notable wins against the Scottish President's team and the England '2' team.

d) Gala Pairs

JB thanked Ciara Burns and the Organizing Committee for a great event. He also thanked the sponsors, namely Greer Mackenzie, Anne Fitzpatrick and Ian Lindsay. All agreed it had been a resounding success. A discussion ensued on feedback from participants. It was agreed that a detailed analysis of the feedback comment sheets would greatly assist with the organisation and planning of the next event.

Action: CB to provide feedback analysis.

6. Correspondence

- a) MMcF had received a request from Brian Senior via Diane Greenwood, for information pertaining to past winners of the main NIBU competitions. This was to assist with his task of revising the 'Official Encyclopaedia of Bridge'. It was felt that Rex Anderson, Alan Hill and Ian Lindsay could assist with this matter.

Action: MMcF to notify Diane Greenwood

- b) A letter of thanks had been received from Victoria Frame on behalf of all ten participants in the European Junior Pairs event in Burghausen, Germany who had received support funding from the NIBU. The experience had been very rewarding and thoroughly enjoyed by all.
- c) Colin Jeffries had informed MMcF that Kelvin-Malone had been granted 100% Business Rates exemption. The club would be happy to assist others interested in seeking charitable status or rates exemption.

- d) Correspondence via the IBU regarding the worrying decline in entries for the FISU World University Bridge Championships was noted. This would be referred to the Youth Committee.
- e) A letter from Una Walsh, editor of the Irish Bridge Journal, had been received, asking for suggestions as to how the journal could be improved. It was noted that an online version was being considered.
- f) Bulk copies of leaflets detailing the new season's IBU events were given to those present for distribution to clubs

7. League Rules Revision

IL was asked to check on progress with John Murchan and Alan Hill. Members asked that the updated rules be available prior to the first matches in October.

Action: IL to liaise with JM and AH.

8. Development Officer Role

Council agreed the Management Committee proposal for an NIBU Development Officer and that Ciara Burns would be the ideal person for the position. It was agreed that this post would attract an honorarium of £700 p.a.

Action: JB to liaise with CB over finalised list of duties for presentation at the next Management Committee meeting.

9. Trustees

It was proposed to nominate Greer Mackenzie, Ian Lindsay and Ciara Burns as trustees. JB highlighted a possible anomaly in the Constitution regarding the appointment of trustees. This would be addressed at the next AGM.

10 Terms of Reference

a) **The Management Committee**

IL proposed minor changes to the text that were agreed.

Action: M.McF to re-draft and circulate

b) **The Selection Committee**

IL asked that the Committee provide a more detailed brief on how it proposes to carry out selection, for all events at the start of the season. Others argued that such details would best be provided via the minutes as and when the committee felt it appropriate to deal with competitions that were pending. It was agreed that IL's request would be taken to the Selection Committee for consideration. GMacK asked that the current document headed 'Duties' be re-drafted and edited as 'Terms of Reference'. The latter should be brief and refer to the detail in the 'Draft Regulations'.

A discussion ensued on the contents of the existing 'NIBU Manual' and the desirability of expanding the document. MMcF stated that a new document drawing together all NIBU papers, policies and procedures etc., would be beneficial to all.

Action: MMcF to propose revised manual to the Management Committee.

c) The Laws & Ethics Committee

This now needs to be revised in the light of the new Disciplinary Procedure and Code of Conduct.

Action: MMcF to re-word and circulate.

11. Reports from Officers

AF tabled a budget profile. This was adopted by those present. The Treasurer was asked to investigate a means of re-investing the long-standing National Savings Bond of £11k.

Action: AF to propose a new investment.

RB stated that several players objected to being re-graded as Seniors, thus preventing them continuing to play in Intermediate 'A' events. It was proposed that the Red Point requirement for Senior grade be raised from 10 to 20. Members already re-graded with 10+ red points would have the option of being downgrade if they so wished.

Action: RB to consider the matter further prior to confirming the decision to change the grading level.

12. Reports from Committees

Minutes and reports from the Management Committee, the Laws & Ethics Committee and the Selection Committee were all noted.

13. Youth Business Plan

This was referred to the Management Committee for initial consideration.

14. Bridgemates

EMcN said that many clubs were asking for training on using Bridgemates. It was suggested that this could tie in with a possible seminar on Tournament Directing that was being proposed in Warrenpoint BC. Possible trainers could be Alan Hill, Sandie Millership and Pat Johnston.

15. Date and Venue of next meeting

December 3rd 2014 at the offices of BakerTillyMooney.

The Chairperson thanked EMcN for booking the hotel room and the meeting ended at 9.40pm.

Michael McFaul
Hon. Secretary

