

# NORTHERN IRELAND BRIDGE UNION

## LAWS & ETHICS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on Wed. 7<sup>th</sup> August 2013 at 161 Moss Rd. Lambeg.

Present: A.Hill (AH), M.McFaul (MMcF), R.Anderson (RA), J.Spiers (JS),  
I.Lindsay (IL)

### 1. Apologies.

There were no apologies.

### 2. Election of Chairman

AH was proposed by IL and seconded by JS. Agreed by all. AH took the chair.

### 3. Minutes of last meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2012

The minutes were accepted.

### 4. Matters Arising

RA queried why Council had only appointed four members to the committee rather than six. It appeared that departing members had simply not been replaced and co-option was not possible. Since four members were required to make a meeting quorate, practical difficulties were envisaged.

RA suggested changing the relevant standing order to two-thirds of members (i.e. in this instance three members) would provide a quorum.

AH agreed, pointing out that he would obviously not be present during discussions on items involving his Tournament directing, appeals etc.

***ACTION – Council is recommended to amend the Standing Orders of the Laws & Ethics Committee as follows:***

#### **To delete 1.5.1**

***‘No business shall be transacted at any meeting of the committee unless 4 members of the committee are present at the time when the committee proceeds to business’***

#### **And replace with 1.5.1**

*'No business shall be transacted at any meeting of the committee unless two-thirds of the members of the committee are present at the time when the committee proceeds to business'*

## **5. Revues of Standing Orders, Disciplinary Procedures & Appeals Rules & Procedures**

AH asked members to consider the matter raised by the Competitions Secretary at the recent AGM. It was agreed that current standing orders and procedures catered for the situation. Matters involving behaviour and discipline should be referred to the Laws & Ethics Committee. A general discussion ensued with members emphasising the need for players at all levels and at all venues, to call the Director should any irregularity occur. JS highlighted the reluctance that players – especially novices – have in doing so lest they cause unpleasantness at the table. It was proposed that a number of key ethical features be highlighted each year in order to forcefully remind all players of correct procedure. These could include:

- a) Calling the director is a requirement – it does not mean you are accusing the opponents of cheating.
- b) Boards must remain open on the table during play.
- c) Bridgemate scores must be verified by the opponents.
- d) Declarer must call cards to be played from Dummy.

***ACTION: AH to draft list of suggested reminders for Council approval.***

RA tabled copies of a letter he had received from the Secretary regarding comments made by the former in a Newsletter article. He considered the letter to be wholly unacceptable, given the facts of the matter. Council's view was that, regardless of the facts, the Newsletter was not an appropriate medium through which to highlight a potential disciplinary matter involving another player.

RA vigorously defended his article on the grounds that the matter had not been addressed but rather had been covered up. The incident in question had been highlighted in the Captain's report to the Selection Committee. He had expected the matter to then be taken to Council and subsequently referred to the Laws & Ethics Committee for action but this had not happened. IL confirmed that the matter had been mentioned at Selection Committee but not discussed.

A lengthy discussion took place after which RA furnished the Secretary with a draft reply to his letter in which he sought a withdrawal of the perceived admonition.

***ACTION: MMcF agreed to update Council and fellow Office-Bearers on developments in relation to this matter.***

**6. Systems and conventions for each category of player to be drafted for publication on the Union website [App 2 5]**

And

**7. Systems and conventions for each category of player to be submitted to Council for Ratification**

IL suggested WBF regulations should apply for all open competitions. It was suggested that teachers could advise on appropriate regulations for Inter A's and B's.

*ACTION: AH agreed to research allowable systems for all levels.*

**8. Any other business.**

It was agreed that the full detail of appeals arising from a Tournament Director's decision should be open and explicit.

AH asked if it would be appropriate to devise a procedure for reporting psyches but it was agreed that the practice had diminished in recent decades following the advancing years of the average bridge player.

No action deemed necessary.

**9. Date of next meeting**

To be agreed.

Michael McFaul  
Hon. Secretary NIBU