

# NORTHERN IRELAND BRIDGE UNION

## COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the NIBU Council held at BTMM offices on Wednesday May 13th 2015 at 5.45pm.

Present: John Bergin (Chairperson)(JB), Michael McFaul (Hon. Secretary)(MMcF), Anne Fitzpatrick (Hon. Treasurer)(AF), Robin Burns (Hon. Master Points Secretary)(RB), Ian Lindsay(IL), Pat Johnston(PJ), Anne Hassan(AH),Eric McNicholl (EMcN), Norma Irwin (NI)

1. Apologies  
Ciara Burns, John Murchan, Colin Jeffries, Ian Hamilton.
2. Declarations of Interest.  
None declared.
3. Minutes of the meeting held on February 4<sup>th</sup> 2015.  
On the proposal by IL, seconded by AH, the Minutes were accepted.
4. Matters Arising.
  - a) Item 5 b(ii)

#### NPC Guidelines

MMcF confirmed that these would be included in a new 'Selection Committee Manual' that he was compiling from all existing documentation. Currently in draft form, the manual would be adopted by the incoming committee.

- b) Item 6(a)

#### Safeguarding

JB reported favourably on the workshop delivered by SportNI, stating that members of the Youth Committee and representatives from NIBU clubs had attended. NI and PJ agreed that the training was very useful and informative and that it provided guidance for the development and implementation of NIBU Safeguarding procedures. Thanks were expressed to Shelagh McCaughan for organising the use of Barnardos premises and to Florence Boyd as the newly-designated Safeguarding Officer.

5. Annual General Meeting  
JB confirmed that the AGM would be held at U3A premises, Waterside, L'Derry on Sunday June 21<sup>st</sup> starting at 2pm. Tea and refreshments would be provided at the meeting followed by Bridge and supper from c. 4pm and concluding c. 7-7.30pm. It was agreed that U3A members wishing to attend as observers would be welcomed as it was hoped to attract their bridge clubs towards NIBU affiliation. It was expected that, for many members, it would be their first time attending the AGM and it was felt that they would benefit from a brief, informative presentation about the NIBU, its activities and the benefits of membership.  
It was agreed to merge office-bearers reports into booklet form.  
It was agreed to recommend a number of minor textual changes to the Constitution for the purposes of clarification.

*Action: MMcF to send preliminary circular to all clubs and to draft changes to the text of the Constitution.*

6. Nominations for Management Committee and Council  
On a proposal by IL and seconded by NI the following officers were nominated:

Management Committee and Council

Chair/President-elect: Anne Hassan  
Hon. Secretary: Michael McFaul  
Hon. Treasurer: Anne Fitzpatrick  
Hon. Masterpoints Secretary: Robin Burns

## Council

Eric McNicholl (Maghera)  
Pat Johnston (Derryvolgie)  
Seamus Sloan (St. Josephs)

*(Secretary's note: Ian Lindsay (Kelvin-Malone) and Pat Coull (City of Derry) were subsequently nominated for Council)*

Following the resignation of John Murchan, it was proposed by AH that the duties of the Competitions Secretary become a collegiate responsibility. After some discussion it was agreed to establish a Tournament Committee that would delegate responsibility for specific aspects of the role to individual members. The Committee would be chaired by the new Competitions Secretary with responsibility for co-ordinating the work of the group. It was proposed that Liz Scott be nominated for the role (subsequently accepted).

Members expressed grateful thanks for their work and service to John Murchan as outgoing Competitions Secretary and to Ciara Burns as outgoing Immediate –Past Chair.

### 7. Congresses & Competitions

AH informed members that 'Hidden Hearing' had withdrawn their sponsorship of the Autumn Congress but that this had now been re-instated. They were keen to contact the NIBU membership directly for marketing purposes. It was confirmed that this could only be done through the Secretary and that the club and members databases could not be distributed to third parties.

On behalf of all present, JB expressed his thanks to those who had helped organise the Spring Congress, Camrose, and Senior Camrose.

IL reminded the meeting that the NIBU hospitality extended to visitors went far beyond that generally offered by the other participating countries.

### 8. Draft Rules for Leagues and Knockout Cups.

IL spoke to his paper, previously circulated. He referred to a number of suggested improvements submitted by Brian McDowell and it was agreed to incorporate these into the document on a proposal by NI and seconded by AH. IL agreed to circulate a final version for adoption.

IL was thanked for the work he had put into the "Rules" and for carrying out the revision so speedily.

AF spoke of the need for all electronic money transfers to be referenced.

### 9. Officers' Duties

It was agreed that each officer would draw up their own revised 'job description' in line with current duties. All versions to be ratified by incoming Council.

*Action: To be sent to MMcF by May 23<sup>rd</sup>. MMcF to draft a version for the Competitions Secretary role.*

### 10. Coaching of Intermediates

JB expressed his thanks to the organisers of the Intermediate trials and subsequent coaching. He spoke of the feedback he had received from trialists, praising efforts to raise the profile of Intermediate players and expressing enthusiasm for the anticipated coaching sessions.

AH expressed strong reservations over the cancellation of planned coaching sessions in May by the Selection Committee. She felt that coaching was to be encouraged and should not be dependent on numbers attending. It was agreed that Intermediate Trials and Coaching would be planned well in advance next year and that the Tournament Committee would agree a going rate for coaching along with minimum numbers required to make it cost-effective. This would include coaching by members of the Youth Committee.

### 11. Dress Code for International Matches

Brian McDowell's paper, previously circulated, had spoken of his regret that the NIBU turnout at the post-Camrose banquet had been disappointing in terms of overall dress standard. Other teams had presented a more professional appearance. AH expressed strong support for his proposal that men wear a lounge suit or blazer with a NIBU tie and logo. This was agreed as was a general requirement that women would be smartly dressed for the occasion.

Monitoring this requirement would be included in the forthcoming list of NPC duties.

### 12. Disability Issue

JB referred to a paper submitted to the Selection Committee from Rex Anderson in which he asked for special consideration during trials to be given to those players with specific medical or stamina issues.

In general members felt strongly that playing conditions in trials should reflect those of the actual event and that it would be inappropriate to make them more favourable. IL said that team trials would suit players with stamina issues as they would have more opportunity to sit out but it was pointed out that all team members must be able to play continuously in case of emergency or sudden withdrawal of a pair – as had happened in the recent Lady Milne.

The matter was referred back to the Selection Committee to enforce its own judgement on the matter.

13. Newsletter

JB reminded all present to encourage members to contribute to the forthcoming summer issue.

14. Treasurer's report

AF reported on the current financial position

15. Youth Committee report

PJ reported on progress with coaching for the Peggy Beare & Junior Camrose. NI reported on coaching P7 at Strandtown Primary school, now into its 3<sup>rd</sup> term and moving on from 'minibridge' to more structured bidding and play.

This news was warmly received by members.

16. Law & Ethics Committee report

MMcF reminded members that the committee was to meet on May 18<sup>th</sup> in order to resolve an outstanding disciplinary matter arising from an incident at the Senior League in March.

17. Correspondence

JB referred to a letter he had received from Toni Sproule in which she expressed concern that due to the incorrect starting time given on the website, she had turned up late for the Spring Congress Pairs and had been unable to play.

Members agreed that from next season, starting times for all events should be standardised as far as possible. It was agreed to record apologies to those who had been misled viz.

Ella Kerrigan, Kate Challis, Roy Blair and Toni Sproule.

18. Date and Venue of next meeting

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday June 24<sup>th</sup> 2015 from 6.00pm at BTMM offices, Belfast

The meeting finished at 8.55pm and JB thanked AF for the use of her premises.

Michael McFaul  
Hon. Secretary.