

NORTHERN IRELAND BRIDGE UNION

COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the NIBU Council held at BTMM offices on Wednesday February 4th 2015 at 6.30pm.

Present: Ian Hamilton (President)(IH), John Bergin (Chairperson)(JB), Michael McFaul (Hon. Secretary)(MMcF), Anne Fitzpatrick (Hon. Treasurer)(AF), Robin Burns (Hon. Master Points Secretary)(RB), Ciara Burns (Development Officer)(CB), Greer Mackenzie(GMack), Ian Lindsay(IL), Pat Johnston(PJ), Colin Jeffries(CJ), Anne Hassan(AH),Eric McNicholl (EMcN)

In attendance for item 5: Alan Hill (AH)

In attendance as observers: Heather Hill, Toni Sproule, Clare Watson(CW), Harold Curran(HC)(from 21.00)

The Chairperson welcomed all to the meeting and thanked the observers for their attendance while expressing the wish that this trend be continued

1. Apologies

Norma Irwin, John Murchan.

2. Declarations of Interest.

None declared.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on December 3rd 2014.

CB objected to the tone of minute 11 and asked that it be clarified that her role as Development Officer was to assist with promoting links to clubs and members.

RB asked if he could raise a number of points by proxy but this was ruled as inadmissible by the Chairman.

CB stated that minute 5 did not reflect the fact that four members of the Inter-Provincial Intermediate team had complained in writing.

NM should read NI (item 5)

Otherwise the minutes were agreed.

4. Matters Arising.

a) Item 5 b(i)

Selection Committee

“Clear guidelines to be drawn up setting out in unambiguous terms the extent to which senior players who compete in trials were obliged to play in certain IBU events. Draft for consultation by the February Council meeting”

A paper setting out proposed changes to the Selection Committee Terms and Conditions was tabled. CB reminded members that the paper should have been circulated in advance. JB agreed but noted that the proposals were very concise. Council proceeded to take the matter under consideration.

AH reiterated her strong opposition to ‘forcing’ players to enter certain IBU events.

A lengthy debate ensued on the merits and demerits of consulting players over the choice of NPC for International competitions. JB invited CW to comment. She stressed that the intention was to sound out players preferences but that the final choice of NPC would rest firmly with the committee itself. It was agreed that the consultation process should include individual players rather than teams.

CB objected strongly to being selected for the Ladies team in the forthcoming Sonya Britton trophy as a consequence of winning the Lady Milne trials. Her preference was to play on the Open team. It was pointed out that the Open Team would comprise only partnerships that had played in the Camrose trials. It was agreed however to delete participation in the Lady Milne trials as rendering players liable for selection for the Sonya Britton , Moylan and Inter- Provincials.

Otherwise the revisions were accepted.

Item 5 b(ii) NPC Guidelines & Approved list.

Preparation of new guidelines is on-going. The current IBU guidelines have been adopted in the interim.

Moylan.

It was noted that entries had significantly improved both in numbers and standard of pairings. 14 entries had been submitted and 8 pairs had been selected. It was agreed that any request to increase the representation from NIBU would be strengthened by monitoring entries for next year which, hopefully, would be similarly successful. It was agreed to defer requesting an increase in places until then.

(Item 7) League & Cup Rules

Revised League & Cup Rules were not presented at the meeting. Members agreed that the 2014-15 rules would apply this year. IL offered to undertake the task for the new season.

Action: IL to revise League & Cup rules for 2015-16 season. Draft for April Council.

(Item 10F) Youth Committee Business Plan

No additional comments about the YC Business Plan had been forwarded to the Youth Committee. The Business Plan was approved.

NEW Business

5. TD Course

The Chairman welcomed Alan Hill to the meeting. AH reported favourably and in detail on his recent attendance at the EBL workshop in Alicante. Examples of work undertaken were cited. AH informed Council that the EBL applied a stringent TD grading system. He offered to train local directors as required and reminded members that he would be usually 'on call' to deal with any queries that may arise during play e.g. at clubs or at Knockout Cup games.

JB thanked AH for his report and expressed congratulations for achieving the highest TD grading award from the EBL.

Alan & Heather Hill left the meeting.

6. Chairperson's business

a) Safeguarding.

JB and Shelagh McCaughan had been tasked to produce a Child Protection/Safeguarding policy for the NIBU. JB reported they were both agreed that practical guidance and awareness-raising are arguably more important than required documented policies and that this would be best achieved through workshop training. Sport NI agreed to run a fully-accredited seminar for the NIBU covering all necessary safeguarding criteria and content. In addition, Sport NI had agreed to assist with the development of a framework for safeguarding standards, as required.

JB requested approval from Council to cover the £300 cost of the training workshop. This was agreed.

JB informed Council that SMcC and he would meet with the Youth Committee and proposed that the YC would nominate members to attend. CJ asked that the team from Kelvin Malone, already working in schools, be included in the training. This was agreed.

b) AGM

JB asked that the NIBU consider rotating the AGM around the NI regions hosted by affiliated clubs. He was of the opinion this would encourage greater interest from members and more involvement in the NIBU. He also suggested that the

host clubs may wish to combine the AGM with a one session charity fundraising bridge event, organised and nominated by the affiliate hosts.

JB proposed that the 2015 AGM be held in the City of Derry.

The proposal was discussed with some members questioning whether regular attenders would be prepared to travel to Derry. In general the proposal was welcomed as an opportunity to reach out to the wider membership and ameliorate the view some have that the NIBU is a Belfast based organisation.

There was discussion as to the most suitable date with June 21st agreed.

JB thanked Council and undertook to firm up arrangements and table a detailed proposal at the next Council meeting.

7. Recent Inter-Club Events

PJ expressed concern that the last event clashed with the League and that has had a serious effect on the number of entries. Derryvolgie had 6 tables instead of an expected 14 with a consequent loss of revenue to the NIBU. CB said that the Competitions Secretary did the best he could to avoid clashes but in a crowded fixture list, it was not always possible to do this.

8. Reports from Committees

b) Management Committee.

JB reported on business transacted earlier.

c) Youth Committee

PJ reported in detail on the Peggy Bayer & Junior Camrose teams. Members were delighted to hear that two coaching sessions had been organised and that junior players were all active on BBO. Report from YC appended to the Minutes.

9. Any Other Business

a) CB asked that clubs be reminded of the cost advantages of purchasing items via the CBAI shop e.g. bridge tables were only £65 each and 50 had been purchased from NIBU funds. HC offered the convenience of The Spinning Wheel in Belfast as a pick-up point for clubs. JB thanked him for his generous offer.

b) The Chairman congratulated Anne Fitzpatrick and Hilary Ferguson on their team winning the McMEnamin bowl (Ladies teams). He also thanked Anne for her hospitality.

10. Date and Venue of next meeting.

Wednesday April 22nd 2015 at BTMM offices, Clarendon Rd.

The meeting concluded at 10.00pm

Michael McFaul

Hon. Secretary.