

## NIBU COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the NIBU Council held at the City Hotel, L'Derry on September 14<sup>th</sup> 2013 at 10.00am.

In attendance: I.Hamilton (President), C. Burns (Chair), M.McFaul (Secretary), R. Burns (Masterpoints Secretary), I.Lindsay,N.Irwin,R.Connolly,E.McNicholl.

1. Apologies

N.Cauwood (Treasurer), J. Bergin, P. Johnston

2. Minutes of the meeting held on June 12<sup>th</sup> 2013

The minutes were approved.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising

4. Verbal reports from office-bearers

CB commented on the growing success of the Stena Bridge Cruises, after a slow start.

MMcF reported that Asdon had delivered the diary on time and could offer office equipment, stationery etc. to the NIBU at a favourable price.

He also reported on correspondence received.

IH reported on the forthcoming Inter-Club duplicate.

5. Minutes of the Finance & Membership Committee meeting on July 18<sup>th</sup> 2013.

NI expressed concern that the minutes were recorded as stating that no audit had been carried out and if that was the case, why was expenditure of c. £700 incurred? IL clarified that the NIBU was not obliged to carry out a full official audit but rather submits its accounts for inspection in order to gain an 'Accounts Certificate'. This was quite in order for a voluntary body.

The Strategic Plan was accepted in principle.

RB updated members on developments with the website and it was agreed that a committee consisting of himself, Ruth Connolly, Brian McDowell and Greer McKenzie would oversee the website.

It was agreed that the long-standing NIBU 'Area structure' no longer had any real significance and should be abandoned.

The minutes were noted and accepted.

**Action: MMcF to co-ordinate delegation of visits by council members to unaffiliated clubs.**

**Action: CB to finalise insurance letter to unaffiliated clubs and to ensure council members have a clear and explicit understanding of how to brief clubs on the advantages of taking out NIBU umbrella insurance.**

6. Minutes of the Laws & Ethics Committee meeting held on August 7<sup>th</sup> 2013

IL reported on the need to amend the Constitution in order to ensure that this committee meets the quorate requirement. The amendment was agreed and the minutes noted and accepted.

7. Review of the Constitution

Members expressed concern that the Constitution was over-prescriptive in some areas and under-prescriptive in others. Given the extent to which the organisation depended on volunteers, it was felt that the Constitution should reflect practicalities more clearly and that a less bureaucratic model be devised while maintaining the need for clear direction and proper procedure to be followed.

CB proposed that a sub-committee be set up to carry out a review of the Constitution and that such a review should strongly reflect the views of those working within the organisation as well as the general membership.

**Action: MMcF to co-ordinate a sub-committee to include CB, IL and Derek Cannell.**

*IH left the meeting at 11.00am*

8. Clarification of Constitutional issues

The comments submitted by Rex Anderson were noted and gratefully accepted.

9. Sonya Britton match

Members noted the comments submitted by Rex Anderson and agreed that no action would be taken.

10. Irish Bridge Journal

MMcF reported on communication he had with Una Walsh, editor of the Journal. Complimentary copies had been made available during the Congress and all had been taken, including many subscription forms. It was agreed that MMcF would draft an official NIBU news column for the journal. Suggestions for news items should be sent to him. He would also write to Tony O’Gallagher in lieu of this decision.

**Action: MMcF to draft official NIBU news column for the Irish Bridge Journal.**

11. NIBU Newsletter

Members agreed that editorial control should be delegated to Derek Cannell, Pat Johnston, Liz Scott and MMcF. It was agreed that a full database of NIBU members would allow the Newsletter to reach a much broader readership online. It was hoped that a Public Relations/Marketing role would be delegated to a new or existing office-bearer in 2014.

12. Proposal to manage contentious issues, grievances and complaints.

This item was not discussed.

13. Review of NIBU Fixtures

CB stated that due to the terms under which the Spring Congress was financed, the NIBU made no money from the event in Armagh. She suggested replacing the Spring Congress with a two-day Belfast Congress at La Mon House. This hotel seemed keen to accommodate the NIBU and members supported the proposal in principle. It was also suggested that room could be made available for the NIBU to buy and store its own tables and other playing materials, at the hotel.

A general review of the fixture list would also identify opportunities to create new competitions and delete failing events.

The Competitions Secretary was congratulated on achieving a 15 table entry for the recent Belfast Pairs.

***Action: CB to liaise with La Mon House over increasing use of the hotel for competitions and whether storage space could be made available at favourable rates.***

14. Any Other Business.

It was proposed that starting times for the Congress Pairs second session and Mixed Pairs should be one hour later than at present i.e. 1.00pm (currently noon) and 7.30pm (currently 6.30pm).

***Action: CB to liaise with Anne Hassan over proposed change.***

15. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at Reagans Bar, Hall Street, Maghera on December 4<sup>th</sup> 2013.

The meeting closed at 11.40am

Michael McFaul  
Hon. Secretary.