

NORTHERN IRELAND BRIDGE UNION

Annual General Meeting of the Executive Council

(Draft)Minutes of the meeting held at Kelvin & Malone Bridge Club on Sunday June 16th, 2024, from 2.30pm

Present: (35 members)

Harold Curran, Michael McFaul, Diane Greenwood, Brian Mullan, Anne Fitzpatrick, Ian Hamilton, Anne Hassan, Helen Hall, John Forsythe, Helena Mccambridge, Billy Cassidy, Mervyn Elder, Judy Young, Frank Young, Kathleen Cassidy, Toni Sproule, June Lynass, Dorothy Bruce, Norma Irwin, Alan Hill, Heather Hill, Ian Lindsay, Rosemary Kilpatrick, Roy Blair, Emmett Devlin, Michael McNamee, John O'Neill, Rosemary O'Neill, John Baker, Elizabeth Thomas, Lesley Agar, David Greenwood, Stan Lowe, Robin Burns, Sandie Millership.

Brian Mullan took the Chair and welcomed members to the meeting.

1. Apologies

Alan Sharp, Brian McDowell, Paul Tranmer, Ken Hammond, Christine Byrne, Michael Coffey, Fergal O'Shea, Iris Orr, Mary Flynn, Michael O'Kane, Nuala Mooney, Christine Stewart, Anne Milligan.

2. Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting

The Minutes were accepted on a proposal by Toni Sproule, seconded by Rosemary Kilpatrick.

3. Matters Arising

None.

4. Chairmans report

Brian Mullan referred to the difficulty in encouraging members in rural areas to return to playing face-to-face. He encouraged Intermediate players to compete against more senior members in Open Competitions. Visiting clubs and playing with different members had been very interesting and enjoyable. The Chairperson thanked all the officers for their hard work and he concluded by wishing his successor as enjoyable a period in office as he had experienced.

He then handed over to the incoming Chairperson, Diane Greenwood who thanked Brian Mullan and all the Officers for their hard work and support to the Union.

5. President's report

Harold Curran thanked Brian Mullan for his work as Chairperson and he wished Diane Greenwood well as she took over. He went on to stress the importance of attracting young players to Bridge. This could be achieved through work in schools and via social media, stressing Bridge as an activity that will assist cognitive development.

6. Honorary Secretary's Report

Michael McFaul referred to the 32 affiliated clubs and to the estimated number of members (1462). He explained why the total membership figure could only be estimated as some members 'paid twice' if they belonged to more than one club. He went on to highlight one success story for the year in the form of the online Senior & Intermediate leagues which had each attracted 12 teams including entries from the South for the first time.

7. Honorary Treasurer's Report

Anne Fitzpatrick said the Union had incurred a loss of £5k during the past financial year. The biggest expense had been having to fund the Junior Home International events. She went on to praise Ian Hamilton for the revenue he raised in organising the Inter-Club events.

8. Honorary Masterpoints Secretary's Report.

Ian Hamilton expanded on his report, highlighting changes to the Masterpoints allocation table, both red and green. He spoke of the unusual circumstances whereby Intermediate players were reluctant to be re-graded as Senior! He referred to the fact that 7 players listed as Intermediate 'A' were in fact Senior.

9. Honorary Competitions Secretary Report.

Anne Hassan encouraged more players to take on the role of Tournament Director. She thanked Helen Hall for the work she had done in collecting and storing redundant trophies and also Ian Hamilton for his organising of the Inter-Club events. She also spoke of the need for the schools' programme to recommence.

The Officers Reports were all adopted on a proposal by Heather Hill and seconded by John Baker.

10. Committee Reports

- a. **Selection Committee.** Diane Greenwood read out the report in Nuala Mooney's absence. She had highlighted difficulties in recruiting players to represent the Union in North-South events.
- b. **Youth Committee.** Sandie Millership spoke of the difficulties in retaining young players after they leave school. She paid tribute to the work done by Pat Johnston in previous years.

11. Financial Accounts

The Accounts were accepted on a proposal by Alan Hill and seconded by Helen Hall.

12. Election of Office Bearers.

Officers were re-elected as follows:

Michael McFaul (Hon. Secretary) proposed by Heather Hill, seconded by Rosemary Kilpatrick.

Anne Fitzpatrick (Hon. Treasurer) proposed by Helen Hall, seconded by Ian Hamilton

Ian Hamilton (Hon. Masterpoints Secretary) proposed by Heather Hill, seconded by Toni Sproule

Anne Hassan (Hon. Competitions Secretary) proposed by Lesley Agar, seconded by Liz Thomas.

13. Election of Councillors nominated by Clubs.

Lesley Agar (Kelvin & Malone), Helen Hall (Quoile), Heather Hill (Kelvin & Malone), John O'Neill (Bann), John Baker (Dromore), Liz Thomas (Killyleagh), Nuala Mooney (Quoile).

14. Election of the Examining Accountant

Peter Green was appointed on a proposal by Ian Lindsay and seconded by Helen Hall

15. Confirmation of Trustees

Alan Hill, Harold Curran and Ian Lindsay were confirmed on a proposal by Ian Hamilton, seconded by Helen Hall.

16. Affiliation Fee

Following a vigorous and stimulating discussion it was agreed to raise the membership fee to £10 per annum from September 2024. Frank Young spoke of the need for the Constitution to clarify the position of members who belonged to more than one affiliated club.

17. Website Access

Rosemary Kilpatrick proposed that the Constitution be made available to all on the website. Michael McFaul said that the 'Members Only' section would be discarded and all content would become accessible to everyone.

18. Allocation of Masterpoints

Kathleen Cassidy referred to the difference in gradings as being too vast resulting in few opportunities for Intermediates to progress to senior level. Ian Hamilton reminded the meeting that many Intermediates did not want to progress but it was agreed that the revised red point allocation figures would be more generous. They would however still only be available in Open Competitions.

19. Amalgamation of NIBU with CBAI

Toni Sproule asked about progress regarding merging with the CBAI. Michael McFaul said that the CBAI Council had fully supported the proposal to carry out investigatory talks and that these would now become more task centred. He highlighted the merging of a common Masterpoints scheme as being typical and also the creation of a common members database.

20. European Bridge Event

Harold Curran referred to NIBU members playing on the team representing Ireland in the Senior Teams Event in Denmark notably Sam Hall, Hastings Campbell, Ian Lindsay and Ian Hamilton with himself as NPC. This was greeted with warm applause.

21. Leagues 2024-25

John Forsythe asked that the leagues be played face-to-face. Discussions about the format of next year's League would be discussed by Council with Brian McDowell and Helen Hall (current organisers).

22. Presentation of Trophies

The following trophies were presented :

Millership Cup:	Winners - Judy Young, Frank Young, Mary Flynn and Michael McIlroy.
Kelvin Cup:	Winners - Norma Irwin, Kathleen Cassidy, William Dukelow and Dean Bradley.
Mackinnon Cup:	Winners - Brian McDowell, Rex Anderson, Ian Lindsay and Robin Burns.
Senior League:	Winners - Ian Lindsay, Robin Burns, Pat McDaid and Zrinka Kokot.
Intermediate League	Winners - Judy Young, Frank Young, Christine Stewart and Anne Milligan.

The meeting ended at 4.30pm and was followed by a short meeting of Council attended by the Chair, Officers, Toni Sproule, Lesley Agar, John O'Neill, John Baker, Heather Hill, Helen Hall. It was subsequently confirmed that Selection Committee Membership would be: Nuala Mooney, Michael Coffey, Fergal O'Shea, Stan Lowe, David Greenwood and Michael McFaul (ex-officio).

The first meeting of the incoming council was scheduled for Monday September 9th at 11.30am at Kelvin Malone BC.

Michael McFaul
Honorary Secretary