

NORTHERN IRELAND BRIDGE UNION

COUNCIL

(Draft) Minutes of a meeting held at La Mon Hotel on Monday March 10th, 2025, from 11.30am

Present: Harold Curran (President), Diane Greenwood (Chair), Michael McFaul (Secretary), Anne Fitzpatrick (Treasurer), Helen Hall (Website and Match Manager), Heather Hill, Brian Mullan, Toni Sproule, Liz Thomas, Lesley Agar, John Baker, John O'Neill.

In Attendance: Sandie Millership, Alan Hill, Dermot O'Brien (CBAI)

1. Apologies

Ian Hamilton, Nuala Mooney.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on December 2nd, 2024.

Agreed on a proposal by BM, seconded by HHi.

3. Matters Arising:

Item 3: MMcF said 31 clubs were now paid up and AF confirmed total receipts of £12474 and a membership of c.1247 (subject to a small number paying twice through multi-club membership)

Item 5: Substitutes – MMcF said he not yet amended the Selection Committee Manual

Action: MMcF

HHa asked for thanks to be recorded to Derryvolgie BC in lieu of the Novice duplicate sessions being held at their club. This initiative was much appreciated.

4. Camrose Report

MMcF reported on the overall performance of the NI and NIBU teams. However there was agreement that the weekend's organisation at La Mon had been excellent as usual and very much praised by the visiting teams. TS expressed disappointment that an active Viewgraph facility had not been provided. HHa outlined a proposal to improve the method by which the playing tables are set up – this involves purchasing 12 new poles for supporting the wooden screens (6 tables x 2 poles). These would be stored with the trays and not stored in the table legs. Council gave approval for this purchase.

Action: HHa

HHa identified the need for more Vugraph Operators to be trained before the Lady Milne 2026. She proposed that 'live' training sessions be organised in early 2026.

Action: BM (as IMM)

HHa suggested that the Sunday evening banquet be held in the extended breakfast area. Request to be put to La Mon in planning meeting prior to the Lady Milne in 2026.

Action: BM (as IMM)

5. Junior Camrose & Peggy Bayer.

SM spoke in support of the Peggy Bayer players, stating they were very keen to develop and worth investing time and money in. HC proposed that support for the Junior Camrose team be dropped unless it could be shown that players were invest the necessary time and effort to justify the expense. SM asked that the matter be left with the Junior Committee which would report back to Council in November with its recommendations.

Action: SM

It was agreed that Peggy Bayer players be asked to train as Viewgraph Operators.

Action: BM (as IMM)

6. Lady Milne.

DO'B reported that BGB were considering changing the event to one for Mixed Pairs given the apparent preference women had for that format.

7. Teltscher Trophy

MMcF said that trials had been held but the team had not yet been confirmed.

Action: MMcF remind Michael Coffey.

8. Entries to Trials & Competitions.

A general discussion took place. MMcF suggested allowing free entry to trials could increase representation. HC suggested NIBU events all be marketed as 'Intermediate Pairs/Teams with a separate 'Senior section in an attempt to boost entry levels.

9. Membership

It was agreed that direct contact with individual members was preferable to working through club secretaries. Following discussion it was agreed to purchase 'Mailchimp' as a vehicle for the speedy transmission of emails directly to members.

Action: MMcF

JB suggested an annual membership card be provided and he agreed to investigate the feasibility of this idea.

Action: JB

10. Annual General Meeting

June 22nd from 2.30pm at Kelvin & Malone.

Action: MMcF to book

11. Sonya Britton Trophy (N-S match)

MMcF to ask the Selection Committee to recruit teams.

Action: MMcF

12. Amalgamation

DO'B outlined in detail the CBAI's approach to the proposed merger. He confirmed that he would shortly draft a detailed paper on future plans.

13. Masterpoint Harmonisation.

DO'B stated that the NIBU database could easily be added to the CBAI by the simple addition of a '9' to all NIBU numbers. It was agreed to send the NIBU database of members to the CBAI on a proposal by TS, seconded by HC.

Action: IH

14. Website Manager.

HHa stated that she had now resigned this role in addition to her post of International Match Manager. DG(Chair) agreed to contact Wayne Somerville who had expressed an interest in taking on this role.

Action: DG

15. Date of next meeting

Tuesday May 13th from 11am at Kelvin & Malone.

**Michael McFaul
Hon. Secretary**