

THE ULSTER BRANCH OF THE IRISH RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

BYE-LAWS AND REGULATIONS

DATE: 19th November 2026

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THE ULSTER BRANCH OF THE IRISH RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

1. INTERPRETATION

In these Bye-laws:

"Age Grade Committee" means the Age Grade Committee referred to in Bye-Law16:

"All Ireland League Club or AIL Club" means a Club the most senior team of which is playing in either the All Ireland League or the Women's All Ireland League or their equivalents;

"Amateur Game" has the meaning assigned to it in Bye-Law 10 (i);

"Association of School and College Leaders" means the Association of School and College Leaders Northern Ireland;

"Audit and Risk Committee" means the Audit and Risk Committee provided for in Bye-Law 13;

"Branch" means the Ulster Branch of the Union;

"Championship League Club" means a Club the most senior team of which is playing in the League immediately below the All Ireland League;

"Chief Executive" means a Chief Executive of the Branch as provided for in Bye-Law 7;

"Club" means a club as defined in the Laws of the Union;

"Clubs Committee" means the Clubs Committee provided for in Bye-Law15;

"Committee" means the Committee of the Branch provided for in Bye-Law 7;

"Committee of the Union" means the Committee of the Union constituted under Law 15 of the Laws of the Union;

"Council" means the Council of the Branch provided for in Bye-Law 4;

"Council of the Union" means the Council of the Union provided for in Law 12 of the Laws of the Union;

Development Committee means the Development Committee provided for in Bye-Law 14;

"Rugby Committee" means the Rugby Committee provided for in Bye-Law 10;

"Finance & Commercial Committee" means the Finance & Commercial Committee provided for in Bye-Law 11;

"Game" means rugby football played in accordance with the Laws of the Game;

"Honorary Officers of the Branch" has the meaning assigned to it by Bye-Law 5 (ix) (d);

"Laws of the Game" means the Laws of the Game as laid down by World Rugby;

"Laws of the Union" means the Laws of the Union, and includes Regulations made by the Union;

"Management Committee" means the Management Committee provided for in Bye-Law 8;

"Professional Game" has the meaning assigned to it in Bye-Law 9 (i);

"Professional Game Board" means the Professional Game Board provided for in Bye-Law 9;

"Schools Committee" means the Schools Committee referred to in Bye-Law17;

"Ulster Society of Rugby Football Referees" has the meaning assigned to it in Bye-Law 21;

"Union" means the Irish Rugby Football Union;

"Union Committee" means the Committee of the Union referred to in Bye-Law 5(ix);

"Women and Girls Committee" means the Women and Girls Committee referred to in Bye-Law 13;

"Youth Committee" means the Youth Committee referred to in Bye-Law 18;

"High Schools Committee means the High Schools Committee referred to in Bye-Law 19.

2. NAME

The name of this Branch, being one of the four branches of the Union, shall be "the Ulster Branch of the Irish Rugby Football Union".

3. OBJECTS

The objects of the Branch shall be, in co-operation with the Union, to promote, foster, develop and administer the Game in the Province of Ulster ("Ulster") in accordance with

the Laws and policies of the Union.

4. THE COUNCIL

(i) The management and control of the affairs of the Branch shall be in the hands of the Council which shall consist of the Honorary Officers of the Branch, the Chairs of the Standing Committees, the Trustees, all Branch IRFU Representatives and Branch IRFU Office Holders, all Past Presidents, six delegates from each All Ireland League Club affiliated to the Branch, three delegates from each Ulster Championship League Club, two delegates from each other Club playing league rugby, one delegate from each other affiliated Club, two delegates from the Association of School and College Leaders, three delegates from the Ulster Society of Rugby Football Referees, one delegate from the Womens and Girls Committee, one delegate from the Age Grade Committee, one delegate from the Schools Committee, one delegate from the High Schools Committee, and one delegate from the Youth Committee.

(ii) Any member of the Committee as hereinafter constituted who is not a person mentioned in (i) of this Bye-law shall be entitled to attend a meeting of the Council but shall not vote.

(iii) The auditors appointed to audit the accounts of the Branch or their representative or the Branch's legal advisor may be permitted to attend and, if granted leave by the Chair, to address a meeting of the Council, but they shall not vote.

(iv) No Club delegate shall be entitled to attend a meeting of the Council unless the subscription mentioned in Bye-law 23 due by his/her Club shall have been paid to the Branch.

(v) The Chair of the Council shall have a casting vote in addition to his/her first vote.

5. GENERAL MEETINGS

(i) The Annual General Meeting of the Council shall be held not later than the third Friday in August in Belfast, or at such other time, or in such other place within the jurisdiction of the Branch as may be decided by the Committee. The Annual General Meeting may if necessary, pursuant to sub-paragraph (viii), be held in two parts, with the first part of the meeting being adjourned to a second part regarded as a continuance of the first meeting, to facilitate the approval of accounts or any business which may not be available for consideration at the first meeting.

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(ii) A Special Meeting of the Council shall be convened by the Honorary Secretary of the Branch on his/her being instructed to do so by the Committee or upon his/her receipt of a requisition to do so signed by the Honorary Secretaries of not less than one third of the Clubs affiliated to the Branch.

(iii) No business other than that stated on the requisition shall be considered at a Special Meeting of the Council.

(iv) The date and place of a Special Meeting of the Council shall be determined by the Committee, and shall be held within four weeks of the Honorary Secretary of the Branch receiving the requisition.

(v) Notice of the Annual General Meeting, or of a Special Meeting, of the Council shall be sent to the Honorary Secretaries of affiliated Clubs for distribution to Club delegates and to the other persons entitled thereto as referred to ~~as mentioned~~ in Bye-law 4 (i) at least seven days before the date on which such meeting is to be held.

(vi) The accounts of the Branch shall be audited and abstracts reported to the Annual General Meeting by the Honorary Treasurer along with a report by the Audit & Risk Committee Chair on the Auditors' opinion of the Accounts. ~~thereof sent to the persons entitled to receive notice of the Annual Meeting of the Council together with the notice convening such a meeting.~~

(vii) Fifty persons shall form a quorum at a meeting of the Council.

(viii) Annual General Meetings or Special Meetings of the Council may be adjourned to such a date and place as the meeting shall direct.

(ix) The Council shall at each Annual General Meeting or at any adjournment thereof transact the following business:-

a) Approve with or without amendment the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting and any Special Meetings held during the year;

b) Receive a report from the Committee and make any order or amendment that may be appropriate in regard to same;

c) Receive a report on the accounts and balance sheet for the preceding financial period and the auditors' report thereon and adopt or make any order that may be appropriate in regard to same;

d) Elect a President, a Senior Vice-President, a Junior Vice-President, an Honorary Secretary and an Honorary Treasurer, who together with the

Honorary Competitions Secretary of the Clubs Committee are herein collectively referred to as "the Honorary Officers of the Branch";

e) To note the persons appointed by the Committee to represent the Branch for the coming year on the Union Committee which satisfy the criteria set by the IRFU. In the event that any such appointment becomes permanently vacant for any reason prior to the next Annual General Meeting, it shall be for the Committee to appoint a substitute representative to fill any such vacancy;

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f) Receive the nominations from the Committee for persons to be the Chairs of the Standing Committees namely, the Management Committee, the Professional Game Board, the Rugby Committee, the Finance & Commercial Committee (the Honorary Treasurer), the Audit & Risk Committee, the Women & Girls Committee and the Development Committee;

g) Receive the following nominations for representation on the Committee:-

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- One nomination from each All Ireland League Club affiliated to the Branch; each Club participating in the adult women's Premiership will be entitled to nominate an additional female representative;
- Six nominations, from the Clubs Committee, of representatives of the Clubs affiliated to the Branch (other than All Ireland League Clubs) with at least one of the nominations being female and at least one of the nominations being male;
- One nomination from the Association of School and College Leaders;
- One nomination from the Ulster Society of Rugby Football Referees;
- One nomination from the Age Grade Committee
- One nomination from the Schools Committee;
- One nomination from the Youth Committee;
- One nomination from the High Schools Committee;
- Three nominations from the Women and Girls Committee;

When making nominations due regard will be paid to the promotion of equality and diversity and any positive action measures which are deemed appropriate from time to time;

(h) Appoint auditors to audit and report upon the accounts of the Branch;

(i) Adjudicate on all matters submitted by any affiliated Club;

(j) Consider and, with or without amendment, accept or reject any amendment of, or alteration to, the Bye-laws of which due notice shall have been given or dispensed with in accordance with Bye-law 31.

(x) The Council may at any Annual Meeting or adjournment thereof, transact in accordance with these Bye-laws any business relating to the affairs of the Branch and in particular (without prejudice to the generality of this sub-paragraph) may:-

(a) Set aside or amend any regulation, adjudication, interpretation or decision made by the Committee or a sub-committee appointed by the Committee;

(b) Make any regulation or regulations it shall think fit for the administration, management and control of the Branch subject to clause 34, (Cup and League Competitions Regulations);

(c) Make any changes or interpretation of the Bye-laws of the Branch as it shall consider appropriate, subject to clause 31 (Alterations to the Bye Laws).

6. QUALIFICATION

(i) Other than is approved by the Management Committee, no person shall take part in the management and control of the Branch nor hold any office under these Bye-laws unless he/she is a life member or paid-up member of a Club which is affiliated to the Branch. A person may be a member of more than one Club.

(ii) A Club shall not be entitled to send representatives to any meeting of the Branch or take part in the management and control of the Branch unless the number of its life and paid-up members during the preceding season shall have exceeded thirty, and unless an audited statement of its accounts for that season shall have been furnished to the Branch in accordance with the Bye-laws.

(iii) Positive action measures to increase equality and diversity representation in the Branch may lead the Management Committee to approve representatives who might not otherwise meet the requirements of 6(ii) above.

7. THE COMMITTEE

(i) The Honorary Officers of the Branch and the Chairs of the ~~Management Committee and other~~ Standing Committees, the Trustees,~~:~~ ~~the Management Committee, the Professional Game Board, the Rugby Committee, the Finance Committee, the Audit & Risk Committee, the Womens & Girls Committee and the Commercial & Marketing Committee,~~ all Branch representatives on the IRFU Union Committee and IRFU office holders, the persons nominated pursuant to

Bye-law 5(ix) ~~(e), (f) &~~ (g) together with the Past Presidents of the Branch shall constitute the Committee which, subject to the superior authority of the Council, shall be responsible for the conduct, management and control of the affairs of the Branch in all matters, and shall have power from time to time to make such regulations and decisions as it shall think fit for the well-being of the Branch but which shall not be inconsistent with these Bye-laws or the Laws of the Union.

(ii) The Committee shall have power to co-opt for one season such non-voting members as the Committee deem necessary.

(iii) The Committee shall have the power to co-opt for one season up to six members to promote equality and diversity on the Committee. Persons co-opted for this purpose shall be entitled to vote.

(iv) Particular regard will be had to positive action measures to increase gender representation on the Committee.

(v) The quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be twelve.

(vi) The Chair of the Committee, and likewise the Chairs of each Standing Committee and sub-committee in the transaction of its business shall have a casting vote in addition to their first vote.

(vii) All regulations and decisions of the Committee shall be binding upon the affiliated Clubs, and the individual members of such Clubs, until revoked by the Committee or set aside by a meeting of the Council.

(viii) A representative of a Club on the Committee, or any Standing Committee or sub-committee, shall not vote in a dispute in which his/her Club is concerned.

(ix) Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing the Committee shall in particular have the following powers:-

(a) To appoint the requisite number of representatives s to represent the Branch on the Council of the Union who satisfy ~~meet~~ the criteria set ~~provided~~ by the IRFU ;

~~(b) To nominate two persons to represent the Branch on the Committee of the Union;~~

(b) To appoint, and remove from time to time, such sub-committees as it deems necessary and to delegate to such sub-committees such of its powers as it deems appropriate and necessary subject always to the following :-

1. The Committee may determine the reporting relationship and the terms of reference of any sub-committee to it;

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2. Each sub-committee shall have power to co-opt persons who are not members of the Committee, subject to the approval of the Committee;

3. Each sub-committee shall decide its own quorum and procedures;

4. Each sub-committee shall have regard to seeking equality and diversity in its composition. Particular regard will be had to positive action measures to increase gender representation;

5. The Chair of each sub-committee shall be appointed by the Committee and shall have authority to act on behalf of the sub-committee in dealing with day to day matters within the competence and powers of such sub-committee;

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6. The Committee shall designate from time to time which of its sub-committees shall be known as Standing Committees and unless and until the Committee decides otherwise the Standing Committees shall be:- (a) the Management Committee, (b) the Professional Game Board, (c) the Rugby Committee, (d) the Finance & Commercial Committee, ~~and~~ (e) the Audit and Risk Committee, ~~(f) the Commercial and Marketing Committee,~~ and (f) the Women and Girls Committee and (g) the Development Committee;

7. Except for the Finance & Commercial Committee Chair (the Honorary Treasurer), standing Committee chairs shall be appointed by the Committee and nominated to the Council for a four-year term, subject to annual review and approval by the Committee and the entitlement of the Committee to remove the Chair from office at any time. No person may be Chair of a Standing Committee for more than eight consecutive years save when approved by the Committee to serve an additional year(s) to ensure smooth transition/succession. The Chair of the Finance & Commercial Committee (Honorary Treasurer) at the discretion of the Committee may be appointed for up to three, four-year terms.

8. No person may be President of the Branch and Chair of a Standing Committee at the same time.

(d) To appoint a representative to the Council of the Ulster Society of Rugby Football Referees;

(e) To control and apply the finances of the Branch, subject to any direction of the Council, and to incur such reasonable and proper expenses as it may consider desirable to further the interests of the Branch and the Game;

(f) From time to time to open or close such bank account or accounts as it may decide and to prescribe by resolution how the same shall be operated;

(g) 1. To nominate a Chief Executive to the Union for employment by the Union

upon such terms and remuneration as are agreed by the Union;

2. To appoint, remove, or suspend employees (other than players or others contracted to the Union) upon such terms and remuneration as it may deem necessary and think fit;

(h) Subject to the Laws of the Union, Branch Regulations and these Bye-laws, to punish in such manner as it may seem fit, including the imposition of a fine, to suspend or expel from the Branch, any Club or member of a Club infringing the Laws of the Union, the Bye-laws of the Branch or the Laws of the Game; and in general to deal with any Club or member of a Club whose conduct the Committee shall deem detrimental to the best interests of the Branch or the Game provided that any Club or Club member expelled shall have the right within one month from such decision being served in writing on such Club or person to appeal to the Committee of the Union; for the avoidance of any doubt any resolution to expel a club shall be passed by a majority of not less than two-thirds of those present and entitled to vote as per Bye Law 29;

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(i) Subject to the Laws of the Union, Branch Regulations and these Bye-laws, to hear through its Committee of Appeal, any appeal or objection by any Club or player or other person affected by a decision of any sub-committee or person acting on behalf of the Branch and to make such ruling or determination as may seem fit to deal with the matter;

(j) To adjudicate on disputes save where, in its opinion, the matter is such that the decision of a Club ought to be final;

(k) By co-option, to fill any casual vacancy which may occur on the Committee;

(l) To interpret the Bye-laws of the Branch;

(m) To appoint trustees whenever necessary;

(n) To convene Special Meetings of the Council;

(o) To deal with and adjudicate on all matters in connection with the affairs of the Branch, not specifically mentioned above, which may arise between the Annual Meetings of the Council.

8. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

(i) The Management Committee shall:-

(a) perform the following functions:-

1. to monitor and oversee the work of the Professional Game Board, ~~the~~ the Rugby, Finance & Commercial, Development, Audit & Risk and ~~the~~ Women and Girls ~~Commercial and Marketing~~ Committees and to ensure that these Committees adhere to the Laws of the Union, and to Union and Branch policies and Regulations;

2. ~~to ensure the Professional Game Board, the Rugby Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Commercial and Marketing Committee adhere to the Laws of the Union, and Union and Branch policies and Regulations;~~

3. ~~to monitor the performance of the Professional Game Board, the Rugby Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Commercial and Marketing Committee;~~

4~~t~~. ~~t~~o oversee the work of the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team and to develop strategies, business plans and budgets for approval by the Committee and to deal with ~~with f~~such ~~f~~inancial, commercial, development, disciplinary, ~~employment and appointment~~ employment and any other matters as may be delegated to it by the Committee;

3~~5~~. to promote equality and diversity in the game and in the administration of the Branch;

4~~6~~. to determine and take whatever decisions and actions are necessary in the discharge of the foregoing functions;

(b) report on its activities at each meeting of the Committee;

(c) consist of the following persons:-

1. the Chair of the Management Committee appointed by the Committee;

2. the Honorary Officers of the Branch

3. the Chair of the Professional Game Board;

4. the Chair of the Rugby Committee;

5. the Chair of the Finance & Commercial Committee;

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6. the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee;

~~7. the Chair of the Commercial Development and Marketing Committee;~~

7. the Chair of the Development Committee;

8. the Chair of the Women and Girls Committee:

9. ~~o~~One representative of the Committee who is a member of the Union Committee.

(ii) the Committee may appoint additional members to promote equality and diversity;

(iii) The Chief Executive and members of the Management Team may be required to attend meetings of the Management Committee but shall not be entitled to vote;

(iv) The Management Committee shall have the power to establish one or more sub-committees as considered necessary, and as approved by the Committee.

9. PROFESSIONAL GAME BOARD

(i) The Professional Game Board shall:-

(a) perform the following functions:-

1. within the guidelines, directions and parameters set for it by the Union, to carry out the operation and implementation of all matters pertaining to the playing of the Game in Ulster by all Men's and Women's professional and Ulster Academy squads ("the Professional Game"), and its management and development pathways;

2. to make such provisions and arrangements as are necessary for players contracted to the Union and assigned to, and who play for, Ulster, and also for players attached to the Ulster Academy and High Performance Pathway;

(b) consist of the following persons:-

1. a Chair appointed by the Committee in consultation with the Union;

2. two representatives of the Committee, one of whom shall be a member of the Committee of the Union;

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3. the Honorary Treasurer;

4. a maximum of two persons with a minimum of one person, appointed by the Committee, who shall be members of the Professional Game staff. Appointed Staff members shall not be entitled to vote;

6. two persons appointed by the Committee, who shall not be members of the Committee;

7. the Chief Executive, who shall not be entitled to vote.

(c) have regard to seeking equality and diversity on the Board. Particular regard will be had to positive action measures to increase gender representation on the Board.

(ii) The Professional Game Board shall have the power to establish one or more sub-committees as considered necessary, and as approved by the Committee.

(iii) Matters of on field discipline within the Professional Game in Ulster shall be the responsibility of the relevant Disciplinary Committee or officer established by the organising committee of any competition.

(iv) Matters of employee discipline within the Professional Game in Ulster shall be the responsibility of staff line management policies as outlined in each employee contract of employment. The Chief Executive shall inform the Chair of the Professional Game Board of any suspensions and/or disciplinary sanctions imposed on any such employee by staff line management.

(v) The Professional Game Board shall not have the authority to incur expenditure over and above the annual budget agreed by the Finance & Commercial Committee unless such expenditure has been approved by the Finance & Commercial Committee.

(vi) The quorum for a meeting of the Professional Game Board shall be 50% of the number of the members of the committee plus one or, where the number of members is uneven, 50% of the number of members of the committee rounded up to the nearest whole number.

(vii) The Chair of the Professional Game Board shall provide a report or update on its activities at each meeting of the Management Committee and at each meeting of the Committee.

10. RUGBY COMMITTEE

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(i) The Rugby Committee shall:-

(a) perform the following functions:-

1. to carry out the operation and implementation of all matters pertaining to the playing of the Game in Ulster at every level other than the Professional Game ("the Amateur Game"), and its management and development;

1. to make recommendations to the Committee, and to consider such matters as are referred to it by the Committee, in regard to the Amateur Game;

3. make such recommendations as deemed appropriate for the promotion of equality and diversity.

(b) report on its activities at each meeting of the Committee;

~~(c)~~ consist of the following persons:-

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1. a Chair appointed by the Committee;

2. two persons representing AIL Clubs affiliated to the Branch;

3. two persons representing Championship League Clubs affiliated to the Branch;

4. the Chair of the Age Grade Committee;

5. the Chair of the Youth Committee;

6. the Chair of the Schools Committee;

7. the Chair of the Women ~~Womens~~ and Girls ~~-~~Committee;

8. a representative of the Ulster Society of Rugby Football Referees;

9. one representative of the Committee who is a member of the Rugby Committee of the Union;

10. the Honorary Secretary of the Clubs Committee;

11. The Chair of the High Schools Committee.

(ii) The Chief Executive may be required to attend meetings of the Rugby Committee but shall not be entitled to vote;

(iii) The Rugby Committee shall have the power to establish one or more sub-committees as considered necessary, and as approved by the Committee;

(iv) For the sake of clarity it is affirmed that the Rugby Committee shall not have authority to incur expenditure unless such expenditure shall have been approved by the Finance & Commercial Committee;

11. FINANCE & COMMERCIAL COMMITTEE

(i) **The Finance & Commercial Committee shall: -**

(a) perform the following functions: -

1. to consider and implement all financial matters necessary for the proper administration of the Branch and for the support and development of the Professional Game and the Domestic Game in Ulster;
2. to formulate and recommend financial policies, plans and budgets to the Management Committee. To monitor the Branch financial position and performance against budget and plan and bring to the notice of the Branch and Management Committees any issues identified requiring their attention;
3. to review contracts, commercial arrangements and other obligations being entered into by, or on behalf of, the Branch as delegated by the Management Committee and to ensure they are value for money, affordable and properly budgeted for;
4. to explore and bring forward to the Management and Branch Committees opportunities to deliver cost savings and better value for money for Ulster Rugby through initiatives such as Digital, Shared services and improved procurement.

(b) the Chair of the Finance & Commercial Committee (the Honorary Treasurer) shall provide a report or update on the financial position of the Branch to each

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meeting of the Management and Branch Committees. This will include notification of any risks or issues of significance.

(c) consist of the following persons: -

1. the Chair, who shall be the Honorary Treasurer of the Branch;

2. the Chair of the Professional Game Board;

3. the Chair of the Rugby Committee;

4. one representative of the Committee who is a member of the Finance Committee of the Union or, if there is no such representative, any one member of the Committee of the Union;

the Honorary Secretary;

5.

6. up to 3 coopted members, as approved by the Committee, who will who bring an expertise or skill relevant to the work of the Committee and/or improve the diversity of the committee membership;

(ii) The Chief Executive and the Finance Manager should be in attendance at meetings of the Finance & Commercial Committee but shall not be entitled to vote.

(iii) The Finance & Commercial Committee shall have the power to establish one or more sub-committees as considered necessary, and as approved by the Committee.

(iv) The Finance & Commercial Committee shall recommend the annual budget of the Branch for submission to the Management and Branch Committees for their approval.

(v) The Finance & Commercial Committee shall recommend the Annual Accounts of the Branch for submission to the Management and Branch Committees for their approval.

(vi) The Chairperson of the Finance & Commercial Committee will present the Annual Accounts of the Branch, -as approved by the Committee, to the Council of the Branch annually.

(vii) The quorum for a meeting of the Finance & Commercial -Committee will be 5 members.

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(viii) The Finance & Commercial Committee will meet at least 4 times a year.

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12. AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE

(i) The Audit and Risk Committee" shall:-

(a) perform the following functions:-

1. to oversee the internal and external audit arrangements on behalf of the Branch;

2. to satisfy itself, through the use of internal and/or external auditors and its own investigations, that:-

(i) the systems of internal control employed by the Branch are adequate and are operating effectively in providing early warning of control failures and/or notice of emerging risk;

(ii) that senior management are effectively implementing internal Control measures and that all issues/recommendations raised by the Internal and External Auditors have been appropriately dealt with;

(iii) the Branch has appropriate policies and procedures in place for the Management of risk, internal control, financial reporting and Governance and is operating with due financial and commercial probity and in accordance with the laws of Northern Ireland;

(iv) the Branch is paying due regard to equality legislation and to its commitment to diversity;

(v) the Annual Financial Statements prior to submission to the Branch are complete, consistent with information known to the Committee, reflect appropriate accounting standards and principles, and present accurately Ulster Rugby's financial position.

(b) Consist of the following persons:

1. The Chair appointed by the Committee;

2. A member of the Committee;

3. Up to 3 Co-opted members (at least one of whom will be independent), as approved by the Committee, who will bring an expertise or skill relevant to the work of the Audit and Risk Committee and/ or improve the diversity of its membership.

(ii) No person may be President of the Branch, Chair of a Standing Committee, or member of the Finance & Commercial Committee, and a member of the Audit and Risk Committee at the same time.

(iv) Members of the Audit and Risk Committee, including the Chair, will sit on the committee for up to four years and shall be eligible for reappointment for a further term of up to four years. No member shall ordinarily serve more than two consecutive terms.

(iv) -The Audit and Risk Committee will normally meet four times a year. The Chair may convene additional meetings-, as the Chairperson deems necessary.

(v) The Management Committee and/or the Committee may ask the Audit and Risk Committee to convene further meetings to discuss or investigate particular issues on which they seek the Audit and Risk Committee's advice .The Audit and Risk Committee may also carry out any special projects or investigations it deems necessary within the scope of its duties and responsibilities.

(vi) The quorum for a meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee shall be 50% of the number of the members of the committee plus one or, where the number of members is uneven, 50% of the number of members of the committee rounded up to the nearest whole number, A Committee member shall be present for a meeting to be considered quorate and should chair the meeting, if the appointed chair is not present.

(vii) The business of the Audit and Risk Committee will require the Honorary Treasurer, Chief Executive, relevant senior managers, the Internal and External Auditors to attend for specific meetings or agenda items, at the Committee's request. The Audit and Risk Committee may also ask other staff members to assist it with its discussions / investigations on any matter.

(viii) The Committee may ask any or all of those who normally attend, but who are not committee members-, to withdraw from the meeting to facilitate open and frank discussion on a particular matter.

(ix) The Audit and Risk Committee will ensure the effectiveness and adequacy of the Branch's anti- fraud and whistleblowing policies and staff awareness of them , including being notified of any action taken under those policies.

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(x) The Audit and Risk Committee shall review its own effectiveness each year and report the results of review to the Management Committee.

(xi) The Audit and Risk Committee shall facilitate communication between the Internal Auditor, the External Auditor and the Branch. The Internal Auditor and the representative of the External Auditor shall have confidential access to the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee.

(xii) The Audit and Risk Committee shall review the External Auditor's Report with those charged with Governance, the letter of representation, and management's response and meet with the External Auditor annually to ensure that there are no unresolved issues of concern and make the External Auditor aware of any emerging risks, or governance issues.

(xiii) The Audit and Risk Committee shall agree with management and the Internal Auditor, the Internal Audit Charter and the annual audit plan. To consider regular progress reports on the audit plan assignments, ensuring there are no restrictions or limitations placed on the work of internal auditors.

(xiv) The Audit and Risk Committee shall assess the adequacy of the internal audit function and review the Internal Audit working relationship with the External Auditor, to ensure cooperation, avoidance of duplication and limit the gaps in audit coverage .

13 WOMEN AND GIRLS COMMITTEE

(i) The Women & Girls Committee shall:-

(a) perform the following functions:-

1. to oversee the development of the women's and girls' game in Ulster in line with IRFU and Ulster Rugby objectives with the purpose of creating a vibrant, welcoming and quality rugby environment;

2. to oversee all matters pertaining to the women's and girls' game in Ulster monitoring and reporting on the progress against Ulster Branch and IRFU initiatives and development targets in both the Professional Game and Amateur Game in Ulster;

3. to work with other Branch committees as appropriate to further advance the development of the women's -and girls' game including the Age Grade Committee, Schools Committee, High School Committee, Youth

Committee, Clubs Committee etc

3.4. to oversee the running of all women's and girls' competitions in Ulster and subject to the primacy of the Competitions Management Committee (C.M.C.), making recommendations to address any issues which come to light;

4.5. to monitor and report on the number of girls youth and adult teams and make recommendations on how these can be increased in a sustainable manner supporting clubs and schools, and girls' rugby and working with Ulster Rugby Development staff on initiatives which promote the game in Ulster;

(b) consist of the following persons:-

1. A Chair and a Vice Chair who shall be appointed by the Committee;
2. A Committee Secretary with primary responsibility for the Committee's administrative arrangements.
3. A representative of the Competitions Management Committee;
4. A representative of the Medical Committee;
5. A Committee representative (usually JVP);
6. A representative from the Ulster Society of Rugby Football Referees;
7. A women's All Ireland League Representative;
8. Adult Women's Rugby Representatives (max of 2);
9. Youth Girls Rugby Representatives (max of 2);
10. Mini Girls Rugby Representatives (max of 2);
11. The Women & Girls Committee may co-opt up to two members based on specific skills, expertise or knowledge required to support the committee at any given time.

ii. Staff shall be invited to attend meetings as required but shall not be entitled to vote.

iii. The Women & Girls Committee shall have the power to co-opt members whose skills, expertise or knowledge are required to support the committee at any given time.

iv. The Women & Girls Committee will meet as required by the Chair of the Women & Girls Committee (at least four times a year).

v. Notice of meetings shall be given to all members of the Women & Girls Committee at least seven days in advance, unless otherwise agreed by a majority of the cCommittee.

vi. Decisions of the Women & Girls Committee shall be made by a majority of those present and entitled to vote. In the event of a tie, the Chair shall have a casting vote.

vii. The quorum for a meeting of the Women & Girls Committee shall be one third of the members including the Chair or the Vice Chair.

viii. Minutes of each meeting shall be recorded and circulated to all members of the cCommittee and reported at each meeting of the committee.

ix. At the beginning of each season the Women & Girls Committee will nominate three members to represent it on the Committee for the following season one of which shall be the Chair of the Women & Girls Committee.

x. At the beginning of each season the Women & Girls Committee will elect/appoint one member to represent it on the Rugby Committee, one member to represent it on the Clubs Committee and two members to the IRFU Women's Sub Committee (Chair plus one other).

xi. The Women & Girls Committee shall not incur any expenditure on behalf of the Ulster Branch unless such expenditure has been approved by the Finance & Business Committee.

xii. The Women & Girls Committee shall not deal with any discipline matters. All matters of discipline remain the responsibility of the On and Off the field Disciplinary Committees.

xiii. The Women & Girls Committee shall not enter formal negotiations with any external party without the permission of the Committee.

14. DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

(i) The Development Committee shall :-

(a) Perform the following functions :-

1. oversee all aspects of the maintenance, development and use of rugby facilities which are under the stewardship of the Branch;

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2. produce an Annual Development Plan for approval by the Management Committee and inclusion in the overall Branch budget;

3. develop a Capital Investment Strategy for Stadium development and refurbishment for approval by the Management Committee and the Committee;

4. ensure that approvals, finance and appropriate management arrangements for successful project delivery are in place prior to commencement of all projects;

5. identify and develop funding opportunities for rugby facility refurbishment and development;

6. ensure that existing Branch facilities are maintained to a high standard;

7. ensure that good relations are maintained with external stakeholders in respect of Branch facilities;

8. provide support to the CEO and the Senior Management Team in respect of facilities development and management.

(b) consist of the following persons :-

1. the Chair
2. the Chief Executive Officer
3. the Financial Controller
4. the Stadium Manager
5. the Funding Manager
6. the Development Manager
7. co-options as required with approval by the Committee

(ii) The Chair of the Development Committee shall provide a report on Development Committee activities to each meeting of the Management Committee and the Committee.

(iii) The Chair of the Development Committee shall be appointed for a four-year term subject to annual review and approval by the Committee and the entitlement of the Committee to remove the Chair from office at any time. A person may not be Chair for more than eight consecutive years.

15. CLUBS COMMITTEE

(i) The Committee shall appoint a sub-committee, hereinafter referred to in these

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Bye-laws as “the Clubs Committee”, which shall:-

(a) perform the following functions:-

1. to provide a forum for communication between the Branch and the Clubs affiliated to the Branch;

2. subject to sub-paragraph (v) of this Bye-Llaw, to make such regulations and decisions as may be necessary for the conduct and management of all Branch cup and league rugby football;

3. make such recommendations as deemed appropriate for the promotion of equality and diversity in relation to the activities of Clubs.

(b) report on its activities at each meeting of the Committee.

(c) consist of the following persons:-

1. the Chair who shall be the President of the Branch;
2. the Honorary Officers of the Branch;
3. one person nominated by each Club affiliated to the Branch (except Schools);
4. one female representative from each Club playing in the adult women's AIL, adult women’s premiership and/or Championship (in addition to their nomination in point 2);
5. one person nominated by the Ulster Society of Rugby Football Referees;
6. one person nominated by the Youth Committee;
7. one person nominated by the Womens and Girls Committee;

(ii) The Chief Executive may be required to attend meetings of the Clubs Committee but shall not be entitled to vote.

(iii) The quorum for a meeting of the Clubs Committee shall be fourteen.

(iv) Subject as provided in Bye-Llaw 7 (i), the Clubs Committee shall have power:-

(a) to elect its Honorary Competitions Secretary who shall be an Honorary Officer of the Branch;

(b) to nominate six representatives to the Committee from the Clubs Committee from the representatives of Clubs other than AIL Clubs affiliated to the Branch with at least one of these representatives being female and at least one being male;

(c) to establish one or more sub-committees as considered necessary, and as approved by the Committee;

(v) Such regulations and decisions of the Clubs Committee shall be binding on all Clubs affiliated to the Branch and the members thereof, unless revoked by the Committee or the Council.

16. AGE GRADE COMMITTEE

(i) The Committee shall appoint a sub-committee ("the Age Grade Committee"), which shall report to the Rugby Committee, and be responsible for proposing and overseeing a strategy and operational oversight for the development of Age Grade rugby players and their progression through to adult rugby. The Age Grade Committee shall make recommendations as it deems appropriate for the promotion of equality and diversity. All decisions and recommendations of the Age Grade Committee shall be subject to the approval of the Committee.

(ii) The members of the Age Grade Committee shall include :-

(a) The Chair of the Age Grade Committee appointed by the Committee;

(b) The Chair of the Youth Committee;

(c) The Chair of the Schools Committee;

~~(d)~~ (d) The Chair of the High Schools Committee.

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17. SCHOOLS COMMITTEE

The Committee shall appoint a sub-committee representative of the schools affiliated to the Branch ("the Schools Committee"), which shall report to the Age Grade Committee, and be responsible for managing the playing of schools' rugby football. The Schools Committee shall make recommendations as it deems appropriate for the promotion of equality and diversity. All decisions and recommendations of the Schools Committee shall be subject to the approval of the Age Grade Committee.

18. YOUTH COMMITTEE

The Committee shall appoint a sub-committee representative of clubs affiliated to the Branch ("the Youth Committee"), which shall report to the Age Grade Committee, and be responsible for managing the playing of youth rugby football. The Youth Committee shall make recommendations as it deems appropriate for the promotion of equality and diversity. All decisions and recommendations of the Youth Committee shall be subject to the approval of the Age Grade Committee.

19. HIGH SCHOOLS COMMITTEE

The Committee shall appoint a sub-committee representative of the High Schools affiliated to the Branch ("the High Schools Committee"), which shall report to the Age Grade Committee, and be responsible for managing the playing of High Schools rugby football. The High Schools Committee shall make recommendations as it deems appropriate for the promotion of equality and diversity. All decisions and recommendations of the High Schools Committee shall be subject to the approval of the Age Grade Committee.

20. TRUSTEES

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(i) All the property of the Branch shall be invested in three Trustees, appointed by the Committee, who may, from time to time, invest any funds of the Branch and hold such investments solely for the promotion and advancement of the Game in Ulster.

(ii) Subject to sub-paragraph (iii) of this Bye-law, any deed, document act or thing signed executed or done by the Trustees on behalf of the Branch, shall be binding on the Branch, if authorised or confirmed by a resolution of the Committee.

(iii) The Trustees, may from time to time, with the sanction of a resolution of the Committee passed in manner hereinafter provided by this Bye-law, do all or any of the following acts or things, that is to say, sell, exchange, partition, lease, let, mortgage, charge or otherwise dispose of or deal with any property of the Branch (whether the same be real or personal) for the time being vested in the Trustees. Any such sanctioning resolution shall be voted on by not less than twelve members of the Committee and shall only be passed by a majority of at least three-quarters of those voting.

(iv) A certificate signed by the Chair of the Committee meeting at which any resolution referred to in this Bye-law has been passed shall be conclusive evidence of the passing of such resolution in manner provided by this Bye-law and of the terms of

such resolution.

(v) The Trustees shall remain in office until death or resignation, or until a meeting of the Council shall think proper to remove them or any of them. No personal liability shall attach to any Trustee except to the extent of such funds of the Branch as may be actually received by him.

(vi) In case of a vacancy in the office of Trustee, the Committee shall appoint a new Trustee to fill such vacancy. The surviving or continuing Trustee or Trustees shall have power to act notwithstanding any casual vacancy in the number of Trustees.

21. THE ULSTER SOCIETY OF RUGBY FOOTBALL REFEREES

(i) The Council recognises the Society known as "the Ulster Society of Rugby Football Referees" ("the Society") as a Society for the purpose of promoting interest in the art of refereeing rugby football matches and of providing competent referees.

(ii) The Society, so long as its rules and regulations shall have been approved by the Committee, shall be entitled to send three delegates to meetings of the Council and one representative to each of the Committee, the Rugby Committee and the Clubs Committee as provided in these Bye-laws.

(iii) In the event of the Committee refusing or omitting to approve of the rules and regulations of the Society, or any of them, or any proposed alteration or addition thereto, the Society may have the matter referred to a meeting of the Council and the decision of such meeting shall be final and the Committee shall be bound to act in accordance with any such decision.

(iv) The rules and regulations of the Society at the time of coming into force of these Bye-laws shall be deemed to be the approved rules and regulations for the purpose of this Bye-law unless, and until, the Committee shall otherwise by resolution determine.

22. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEES

(i) The Committee shall set up an On Field -Disciplinary Committee, an Off the Field Disciplinary Committee, ("the Disciplinary Committees"), -and a Committee of Appeal against decisions of ~~the On Field Disciplinary Committee and the Off the Field~~ the Disciplinary Committees, which shall have power to act in the name of the Branch in dealing with:-

(a) disciplinary cases, sendings off, citings, misconduct, or conduct detrimental to the best interests of the Union, the Branch, or the Game or which could bring the Game into disrepute, whether on or off the playing enclosure, relating to or in connection with matches under the jurisdiction of, or approved by, the Branch or to be otherwise dealt with by the Branch, and

(b) any other matter referred to it from time to time by the Committee through the Honorary Secretary, including matters related to or in connection with the conduct of a Club, or member or supporter of a club, affiliated to the Branch which could be regarded as detrimental to the best interests of the Union, the Branch or the Game or which could bring the Game into disrepute.

(ii) The Disciplinary Committees shall deal with all matters arising under the preceding sub-clause subject to the Laws of the Union.

23. AFFILIATION

(i) Any Club in Ulster playing the Game and willing to conform to the Laws of the Union, and to these Bye-laws, shall be eligible to apply for affiliation to the Branch.

(ii) Applications for affiliation shall be made to the Branch in writing and shall not be considered by the Committee unless sponsored by two Clubs affiliated to the Branch.

(iii) Before approving an application for affiliation, the Committee must be satisfied that the constitution, grounds, accommodation and dressing facilities of the Club meet with its approval.

(iv) On being affiliated to the Branch and on payment of its annual subscription in accordance with Bye-law 24, a Club shall:-

(a) become a member of the Branch and the Union and shall accept the obligations of membership of the Union as provided in the Laws of the Union; and

(b) be furnished with a copy of the Bye-laws of the Branch and the Laws of the Union, and such Club and every individual member thereof, shall thereupon become bound thereby.

(v) Any Club excluded from affiliation by the Committee shall have a right of appeal to the Committee of the Union.

24. SUBSCRIPTION AND INSURANCE

(i)

(a) The annual subscription for each Club affiliated to the Branch shall be at a rate per team playing the Game whether competitive or otherwise. The rate shall be fixed by the Committee subject to approval by the Council at the Annual Meeting. This subscription shall be in addition to the annual fee payable by a Club to the Union.

(b) A certificate signed by the Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer of a Club certifying the number of teams in the Club shall be accepted by the Branch as conclusive evidence of the number of teams playing the Game in that Club.

(c) The annual subscription for each school affiliated to the Branch shall be determined annually by the Committee. This subscription shall be in addition to the annual fee payable by a school to the Union.

(d) Annual subscriptions shall be due on 1 October in each season.

(e) The name of any Club whose annual subscription to the Branch shall remain unpaid on 30 September in the following year shall be struck off the list of affiliated Clubs. No such Club shall be eligible for re-affiliation to the Branch until all arrears due by it to the Branch shall have been paid.

(ii) Each affiliated Club shall pay to the Branch, not later than 1 October in each season, an amount sufficient to provide such insurances as shall be determined from time to time by the Committee of the Union. In the event of an affiliated Club failing to make such payment by the appointed date, it shall be prohibited forthwith from playing the Game until payment of the amount outstanding is received by the Branch.

25. ANNUAL RETURNS

Every Club affiliated to the Branch shall, on or before 31 October in each year, send to the Honorary Secretary of the Branch the names and addresses of its Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, the number of its paid-up members during that season and an audited statement of its accounts for the preceding season.

26. DISTRIBUTION OF RESERVES AND PROPERTY

Notwithstanding any power of the Committee set out in these Byelaws the Committee shall ensure that:-

(i) All the assets, funds and income of the Branch, howsoever arising in each financial period, and from time to time, shall be applied to the administration, promotion, development, general advancement and benefit of the Game in Ulster; and

(ii) In the event of the dissolution of the Branch, for any cause or purpose other than a legal re-structuring, all funds and assets remaining after due settlement of all liabilities and claims shall be donated to the Union but subject to the express condition that such funds and assets may only be applied by that body in the manner specified in the preceding sub-clause and subject also to such other conditions that the Council shall determine at the time of dissolution not being inconsistent with these Bye-laws and the Laws of the Union.

27. INDEMNITY

(i) In this Bye-law the expression "official of the Branch" shall include a member of the Council, a member of the Committee, a Trustee, and any person holding office in the Branch or employed by the Branch who the Committee shall decide is an official of the Branch, which definition may include the Chief Executive.

(ii) Every official of the Branch for the time being and his/her executors and administrators shall be entitled to be indemnified out of the assets of the Branch from and against all actions, claims, demands, costs, losses, damages and expenses which he/she shall or may incur or sustain by reason or on account of any act undertaken or omission by him/her on behalf of the Branch in his/her capacity as such official, or by reason or on account of any liability incurred by him/her in his/her capacity as such official, provided always in the case of liability incurred in his/her capacity as such official that such liability was not incurred through his/her own fraud.

28. LAWS OF THE GAME

(i) All matches under the jurisdiction of the Branch shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game for the time being approved by the Union. The Committee of the Union shall be deemed to be the appellate body on all questions relating to the Laws of the Game.

(ii) The Committee alone shall have power to refer any questions relating to the Laws of the Game to the Committee of the Union.

29. EXPULSION FROM THE BRANCH

In the case of wilful or systematic infringement of the Laws of the Union or these Bye-laws or of objectionable conduct by any Club, the Committee shall have power by resolution to suspend or expel such Club from the Branch provided that such resolution shall be passed by a majority of not less than two-thirds of those present and entitled to vote, and provided further that any Club so suspended or expelled shall have a right of

appeal to the Committee of the Union within one month from such decision being served in writing on such Club or person.

30. COUNCIL OF THE UNION

Save as otherwise provided in the Laws of the Union, the Council of the Union is the ultimate tribunal for adjudicating on all matters connected with the Game in Ireland. In case of any differences between the Laws of the Union and these Bye-laws, the Laws of the Union shall prevail.

31. ALTERATIONS TO THE BYE-LAWS

(i) No amendment of or alteration to the Bye-laws of the Branch shall be considered by the Council unless:-

(a) it shall have been proposed by the Committee, or any two Clubs affiliated to the Branch; and

(b) notice thereof shall (except in the case of an amendment or alteration proposed by the Committee) have been sent in writing to the Honorary Secretary of the Branch at least three weeks before the meeting of the Council at which such amendment or alteration is intended to be proposed.

(ii) Notice of every such amendment or alteration shall be sent to affiliated Clubs and to persons entitled to receive notice of the Annual Meeting of the Council under Bye-law 5, at least a week before the meeting and no such amendment or alteration shall be considered by the Council unless such notice shall have been given, or unless two-thirds of the members of the Council present and voting shall resolve to consider such proposed amendment or alteration notwithstanding the omission to give such notice.

(iii) No Bye-law shall be introduced, amended, rescinded or added to without the consent of at least two-thirds of the members of Council present and voting at a meeting of the Council.

(iv) Any new Bye-law or alteration or addition to these Bye-laws shall require the approval of the Committee of the Union, failing which the Branch shall be entitled to appeal to the Council of the Union.

32. SERVICE OF NOTICES

(i) Notification for the purposes of these Bye-laws to any Club or to a member of any

such Club shall be deemed to be well served:

(a) on the day after the posting of such notification if the same shall have been sent by prepaid ordinary first-class post, or

(b) immediately after the sending of an electronic mail or facsimile addressed to the person appearing on the records of the Branch to be the Honorary Secretary or acting Honorary Secretary of such Club (or in the case of a school, the rugby representative of such school), to his/her postal, electronic mail or facsimile, address appearing in such records.

(ii) Such service as aforesaid on a Club shall be deemed to be service on each and every member thereof.

33. LEAGUES AND COMPETITIONS

(i) Subject to the approval of the Committee, no league or other combination of affiliated Clubs formed for the purpose of competition, shall be organised otherwise than under the control and authority of the Clubs Committee.

(ii) The proposed regulations governing such league or other competition and any subsequent alterations thereto, must be submitted to and approved by the Clubs Committee, which shall have power:-

(a) to decide which Clubs may take part in such league or competitions;

(b) to forbid the formation or continuance of such league or competitions;

(c) to discharge or suspend any Club contravening the regulations of any league or competitions;

(d) to suspend any Club which plays a match with a Club which has been discharged or suspended from membership, or with a Club which has been formed out of a nucleus of any suspended Club.

(iii) No Club affiliated to the Branch or any individual member of such Club, shall take part in a league or cup or other rugby football competition which is not under the control and jurisdiction of the Branch provided that a Club may, with the permission of the Committee, take part in a competition under the jurisdiction of any other Branch of the Union or of the Council of the Union.

34. CUP AND LEAGUE COMPETITIONS REGULATIONS

(i) The regulations set out in the schedules to these Bye-laws shall apply to the cup and league competitions played between Clubs affiliated to the Branch as are therein mentioned.

(ii) No new regulation or alteration, deletion or addition to the said regulations shall be made without the approval of the Committee.

(iii) Each affiliated Club shall be notified of any changes made to competition regulations.

(iv) In the case of any inconsistency between competition regulations and the Bye-laws of the Branch, the latter shall prevail.

35. APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY VICE PRESIDENTS

The Committee may recommend to the Council the appointment of any person who in its opinion has rendered outstanding service to the Branch to be an Honorary Vice President of the Branch for life with such privileges as the Committee may accord him/her. An Honorary Vice President shall not have the right to attend meetings of the Committee unless granted this privilege by the Committee, but shall have the right to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Council and any Special Meeting thereof without the right to vote thereat. The number of Honorary Vice Presidents to be recommended to the Council for appointment shall be at the discretion of the Committee.

36. OPERATIVE DATE

These Bye-laws shall come into force as and from the date hereof and shall take the place of all previous Bye-laws which shall thereupon cease to have force or effect.