

SHEFFIELD BRIDGE CLUB

CONSTITUTION

As adopted by Members at a Special General Meeting on 27 October 2008

1. NAME AND LOCATION

- (a) The name of the Club shall be “Sheffield Bridge Club” (“the Club”).
- (b) The Club is located at 6, Thornsett Road, Sheffield S7 1NA. (“the Club Premises”).

2. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply throughout this Constitution:

The Committee = The Officers and the Ordinary Committee Members.

The Officers = The five Officers whose duties are described in Rule 5(a).

The Ordinary Committee Members = The Members of the Committee excluding the Officers.

Members = Members of the Club.

A Visitor = A person visiting the Club not accompanied by a Member.

A Guest = A person visiting the Club accompanied by a Member.

Annual General Meeting = A meeting for all Members held regularly once each year for purposes as described in Rule 10(a).

Extraordinary General Meeting = A meeting for all Members required from time to time in addition to the Annual General meetings, as described in Rule 10(c).

General Meeting = An Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting

3. OBJECTIVES

- (a) The Club is established for the playing of contract bridge, to provide a social environment for its Members, and to provide facilities for less experienced players to learn and to play contract bridge in a friendly and supportive atmosphere
- (b) The Club shall be affiliated to the Yorkshire Contract Bridge Association and the English Bridge Union.

4. MEMBERSHIP

Membership will be open to all who share the objectives of the Club without regard to age, disability, race, gender, sexual orientation or religion. Save for Members subject to restrictions under Rule 9(e), all categories of Members shall be entitled to all the benefits and advantages of the Club including the right to vote at General Meetings.

5. MANAGEMENT

- (a) The Management of the Club shall be vested in a Committee of Members consisting of the Officers and up to seven Ordinary Committee Members. The Officers shall be:

- Chairman – to co-ordinate the management of the Club for the benefit of its Members
- Vice-Chairman – to assist and to deputise for the Chairman
- Treasurer – to keep proper books and manage the finances of the Club for the benefit of Members
- Secretary – to produce agendas and minutes of meetings and to oversee in consultation with the Committee all legal matters
- Chief Tournament Director – To plan and manage the programme of play and competitions and to oversee all tournament director functions

(b) The Officers shall be elected and be eligible for re-election annually at the Annual General Meeting. No Member may simultaneously hold more than one office.

(c) All Ordinary Committee Members shall be elected and be eligible for re-election at the Annual General Meeting, except those with three years' consecutive elected service on the Committee shall be ineligible for re-election during the ensuing year (but may be eligible to be co-opted in the event of a vacancy).

(d) Nominations for the election of Officers and Ordinary Committee Members must be made in writing and delivered to the Secretary for posting on the Club notice board at least 48 hours before the due start of the Annual General Meeting. The Secretary may post a pro-forma on the Club notice board to facilitate this process. Valid nominations must be proposed by one Member, seconded by another Member and accompanied by the written consent of the nominee.

(e) The election or re-election of Officers and Ordinary Committee Members shall be by ballot and balloting lists shall be prepared containing the names of the candidates only and each Member shall be entitled to vote for any number of such candidates not exceeding the number of vacancies. Scrutineers shall be appointed by and from the Members present to count the votes and to certify to the Chairman the result of the ballot. If two or more candidates obtain an equal number of votes, a further ballot shall be taken to decide which of such candidates shall be elected. In the event of there not being enough candidates, the Committee shall have the power of co-option to fill the vacancies (see Rule 5(c) and (g)).

(f) Any Officer or Ordinary Committee Member wishing to resign from the Committee shall notify the Chairman or Secretary in writing, such resignation having effect from the date specified in the resignation, or, in the absence of such specification, with immediate effect.

A Committee Member may be removed from office by a vote at a General Meeting.

(g) The Committee shall have the power to co-opt Members to fill vacancies for Officers and Ordinary Committee Members that are created during the year. (Such co-opted Ordinary Committee Members are considered to be non-elected for the purpose of Rule 5(c).)

(h) At least seven days' notice shall be given of all Committee meetings (except in an emergency) and they shall be summoned:-

- on the instructions of the Chairman, or in his/her absence the Vice-Chairman.
- at the request of three or more Members of the Committee for the discussion of a particular matter or of particular matters.

(i) The quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be five including at least one Officer.

(j) The accounts and books kept by the Treasurer shall be audited annually by a person or two persons selected and appointed by the Committee. Such persons shall not be Officers or Ordinary Committee Members but may otherwise be Members of the Club.

(k) In the case of an equality of votes the Chairman of the Committee meeting shall be entitled to a further casting vote.

(l) The Committee may formulate and shall publish such regulations as it thinks expedient for the efficient and harmonious running of the Club, provided that such regulations are supplementary to this Constitution and that such regulations do not conflict with this Constitution. Such regulations may not be retrospective, and changes to the regulations during the course of a year must put before the Members for approval at the next Annual General Meeting (or earlier at an Extraordinary General Meeting) and will cease to have effect if not approved

6. TRUSTEES

(a) There shall be not less than two and not more than four Trustees of the Club Premises. Trustees must be Members.

(b) The Committee shall appoint the Trustees and the Club Premises shall be vested in the Trustees.

(c) The Trustees must deal with the Club Premises as directed by resolution of the Committee, and an entry in the Committee's minute book shall be conclusive evidence of such resolution.

(d) The Trustees shall be indemnified (i) against properly incurred expense out of Club funds; and (ii) against risk incurred in the proper performance of their duties out of Club funds and any applicable Club policy of insurance.

(e) Where by reason of the death or resignation of a Trustee, or on removal of a Trustee by resolution of the Committee, a new Trustee needs to be appointed, or if the Committee deems it expedient to appoint an additional Trustee or Trustees, the Committee may by resolution nominate the person or persons to be appointed as the new Trustee or Trustees. To give effect to such nomination

- the Chairman (or failing him/her, the Vice-Chairman) is nominated as the person to appoint new Trustees within the meaning of Section 36 of the Trustee Act 1925 (as may be amended, replaced or supplemented from time to time).
- the Chairman (or Vice-Chairman) shall formally appoint the person or persons nominated by the Committee as the new Trustee or Trustees of the Club.
- the provisions of the Trustee Act 1925 (as may be amended, replaced or supplemented from time to time) shall apply to any appointment.

7. ELECTION OF CLUB MEMBERS

(a) Every candidate for admission as a Member shall be proposed by one Member and seconded by another stating for how long they have known him/her and that the particulars on the application form are correct. The candidate shall be proposed by completing an application form (which includes the candidate's full postal address) to

be displayed on the Club notice board for not less than 28 consecutive days. During the period the application is on the board, the candidate shall be entitled to the rights and privileges and advantages of the Club except that he/she may not attend General Meetings, vote on any issue, stand for election, propose candidates for election or membership, or sign in Guests or Visitors.

(b) The election of candidates for membership shall be vested in the Committee. A candidate for election who receives the vote of the majority of the Committee present and voting shall be declared elected.

(c) In the event of a past Member seeking re-admission to the club, the Committee shall have the power to waive the procedure laid down in Paragraphs 7(a) and (b) and may accept the past Member forthwith.

(d) Upon the election of a Member, notice thereof shall be given to him/her and he/she shall be furnished with a copy of this Constitution and Club regulations; after which he/she shall be entitled to all the benefits and advantages of the Club (subject to compliance with Rule 9).

(e) The Committee shall have the power to defer the admission of new Members if in their opinion the Club membership is full.

8. HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

The Committee may nominate a Member for honorary membership of the Club to a General Meeting. Such a nominee shall fulfil the following conditions:

- Is a well respected person, sufficiently distinguished and likely to reflect credit on the Club, or has rendered special services to the Club.
- Has received the approval for nomination by at least two thirds of the entire membership of the Committee.

An honorary Member may be elected at a General Meeting of the Club. Such election shall be determined only by a vote of at least two thirds of those voting, being in favour of the election. Spoilt ballot papers and abstentions will not count as votes cast. An honorary Member shall have the rights of a full Member but shall not be liable to pay a subscription. Honorary Membership shall be for life.

9. SUBSCRIPTIONS.

(a) Subscriptions shall be due on 1st August in each year; a maximum level of subscription being determined at the Annual General Meeting that precedes that date. Subsequent to such Annual General Meeting, the Committee will define subscription levels to be applied. A Member under 25 years of age and pursuing a course of full time education shall be eligible for a reduction in membership fee as determined from time to time by the Committee. Members completing a stand-by duty shall be entitled to a reduction in membership fee as determined from time to time by the Committee. The Committee may determine from time to time other reductions in membership fee for groups of Members that satisfy other conditions.

(b) Members admitted to Membership after 31st August in any year shall pay a reduced subscription if so determined by the Committee.

(c) Where a Member, due to illness or to other circumstances which satisfy the Committee, is prevented from using the Club for a considerable length of time, the Committee may grant that Member a reduced membership fee or a rebate.

(d) All Members may undertake a standby duty on a normal evening duplicate session or at other times as defined by the Committee. Any Member who has fulfilled the standby duty, or has been granted an exemption, will be entitled to claim a rebate on subscriptions as determined by the Committee. The Committee may grant exemptions from standby duty for any adequate reason. The requirements for a standby duty on an evening are to be posted on the Club notice board.

(e) Should any Member's subscription be one month in arrears, such subscription shall be applied for by the Treasurer, and a surcharge may be made, the amount being determined by the Committee. If the subscription is not paid within 14 days of such demand, the Member shall forfeit all privileges of membership. The Committee may, however, reinstate such Member at their discretion.

10. GENERAL MEETINGS

(a) The Annual General Meeting of the Club shall normally be held in October

- to receive the audited annual accounts,
- to elect the Officers and Ordinary Committee Members,
- to appoint auditors and solicitors, and
- to carry out such business as may properly be transacted at an Annual General Meeting.

(b) At least fourteen days' notice shall be given of an Annual General Meeting.

(c) At least seven days' notice shall be given of any Extraordinary General Meeting which

- may be called by the Committee for special business
- shall be called by the Chairman at the request of at least twenty Members eligible to vote. In such case, the Meeting is to be held at a date no later than four weeks after the date of the request.

(d) Business conducted at an Extraordinary General Meeting must be confined to the business for which the meeting is called and which is stated in the notices calling that meeting.

(e) The quorum at a General Meeting shall be twenty Members eligible to vote. If no quorum is present after 15 minutes, the meeting shall be adjourned and 14 days notice given of the adjourned meeting. The quorum at a meeting adjourned for this reason shall be the number of Members actually present. General Meetings shall be chaired by the Chairman or, in his/her absence, the Vice-Chairman, or, in his/her absence, by a person elected for the purpose by the meeting.

(f) In the event of an equality of votes where a simple majority is required the chairman of the meeting shall be entitled to a further casting vote

(g) Members unable to attend a General Meeting of the Club may bring forward any proposal by proxy or in writing (subject to Rules 5(d) and 10(h) on notice) but may not, unless a change of this Constitution is involved, register a vote unless present at the time of voting.

(h) No alterations of this Constitution shall be made except at a General Meeting and then shall be determined only by a vote of at least two thirds of those voting, being in favour of the motion. Spoilt ballot papers and abstentions will not count as votes cast.

Where a change of this Constitution is involved, the use of proxy votes is permitted. Proxy votes must be registered with the Chairman or Vice Chairman 24 hours before the meeting stating which vote is to be registered on which motion.

A proposed alteration to this Constitution must be posted on the Club notice board at least twenty-one clear days before a General Meeting.

(i) No winding up of the Club shall occur except following a resolution at a General Meeting, and then shall be determined only by a vote of at least two thirds of the number of Members entitled to attend and vote at the General Meeting at which the resolution is put. Spoilt ballot papers and abstentions will not count as votes cast.

The use of Proxy votes is permitted (See (10g)).

Such a resolution must be posted on the Club notice board at least twenty-one clear days before a General Meeting.

In the event of such a resolution being passed:

- Disposition of the premises and any other assets of the club shall be resolved by a simple vote of the Members present at the General Meeting.
- The Committee will then be asked to oversee and carry out the dissolution of the Club in accordance with the law, ensuring that the Club fulfils to their satisfaction the payment of all debts and liabilities, and banks the net proceeds from the sale of the Club's assets to be equally distributed among the Members.

(j) The Members of the Club at General Meeting shall be deemed to be the final authority for the interpretation of this Constitution.

11. CONDUCT

(a) Each Member, Visitor or Guest shall be required to conform to the standards of fair play, courtesy and personal deportment prescribed in a policy document to be maintained and promulgated by the Committee.

(b) A full set of procedures, including appeals procedures, shall be described in the Club's regulations for the processing of

- any allegations relating to the conduct of a Member, a Visitor or a Guest, within the Club or elsewhere, that is considered to be injurious to the character or interests of the Club, or
- any Member that refuses to adhere to the requirements of this Constitution.

The procedures for complaints concerning Members shall include the following:

1. (Instigation.) Any allegations relating to the conduct of a Member, a Visitor or a Guest must be presented to the Secretary in writing.

2. (Investigation.) The Committee shall appoint an investigation committee to investigate such allegations fully, allowing for response by the alleged offender(s) and for possible counterclaims before reporting to the Committee.
3. (Committee consideration.) The Committee shall consider the report of the investigation committee. The Committee or an alleged offender may require that a hearing be called. Members of the investigation committee who are Members of the Committee will be ineligible to vote with the remainder of the Committee at this stage.
4. (Notification of outcome.) Decisions of the Committee are to be notified to the complainant(s) and to the alleged offender(s), giving either of such parties a right of appeal on the grounds of an incorrect verdict or where the sanctions are considered too severe.
5. (Possibility of appeal.) In the event of an appeal, the Chairman shall appoint three well respected Members of the Club, none of whom are members of the Committee, to an appeal committee to review the decisions. Such appeal committee may make any decisions that the Committee shall have been entitled to make.

(c) Possible disciplinary measures shall be listed in the Club regulations and shall include termination of the membership of a Member, whereupon such person shall not thereafter be admissible to the Club premises as a Guest or Visitor unless specific permission is granted.

12. GUESTS AND VISITORS

(a) A Member may introduce Guests to the Club premises. The Member introducing them must enter his/her full name and the full name of the Guest in the Visitors' Book provided for the purpose. The Member will be responsible for his/her Guests while they are on the club premises.

(b) No Guest or Visitor shall be allowed to be introduced into the Club to participate in events organised and run solely by the club during the Club's financial year more than a reasonable number of times as may be defined in regulations made by the Committee from time to time. Members of the club will be held responsible for the names of Guests and Visitors being entered in the Guests and Visitors' Book.

(c) Visitors who are members of another bridge club, or of the English Bridge Union, and who are playing in matches or competitions organised at the Club, must enter their names in the Visitors' Book and be countersigned by a Member of the Club.

13. GENERAL

(a) The Club shall be open on such days and at such times as the Committee shall from time to time determine.

(b) The supply of intoxicating liquors shall be regulated by the Committee within the licensing laws in force at the time.

(c) A charge per session or part thereof shall be made for card table money payable by each player, in amounts to be determined by the Committee from time to time.

(d) Special table money charges and other charges for the use of Club premises shall be determined by the Committee.

14. RUBBER BRIDGE

(a) All Bridge debts must be settled before the players leave the table.

(b) Stakes shall be agreed at the table before the start of play. The Committee may determine a maximum stake allowed on the Club premises.

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