



**THE ULSTER BRANCH OF THE  
IRISH RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION**

**BYE-LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

**2017**

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# THE ULSTER BRANCH OF THE IRISH RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

## 1. INTERPRETATION

### **In these Bye-laws:**

“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;

“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-law 14;

“Coaching Committee” means the Coaching Committee established as a sub-committee of the Domestic Game Committee to oversee and manage coaching of the Amateur Game;

“Commercial and Marketing Committee” means the Commercial and Marketing Committee provided for in Bye-law 12;

“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;

“Domestic Game Committee” means the Domestic Game Committee provided for in Bye-law 10;

“Finance Committee” means the Finance 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 the International Rugby Board;

“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 Committee” means the Professional Game Committee provided for in Bye-law 9;

“Schools Committee” means the Schools Committee referred to in Bye-law 15;

“Ulster Society of Rugby Football Referees” has the meaning assigned to it in Bye-law 17;

“Union” means the Irish Rugby Football Union;

“Women’s Committee” means the Women’s Committee established as a sub-committee of the Domestic Game Committee to manage the playing of women’s rugby football by clubs affiliated to the Branch;

“Youth Committee” means the Youth Committee established as a sub-committee of the Domestic Game Committee to manage the playing of youth rugby football by clubs affiliated to the Branch.

## **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 of the Union and the 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 Chairman of the Management Committee, all Past Presidents, six delegates from each All Ireland League Club affiliated to the Branch, three delegates from each Ulster Qualifying 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 and one delegate from the Schools 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 Chairman, 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 20 due by his Club shall have been paid to the Branch.
- (v) The chairman of the Council shall have a casting vote in addition to his first vote.

#### **5. GENERAL MEETINGS**

- (i) The Annual Meeting of the Council shall be held not later than the third Friday in June 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.
- (ii) A Special Meeting of the Council shall be convened by the Honorary Secretary of the Branch on his being instructed to do so by the Committee or upon his 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 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 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 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 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 Meeting or at any adjournment thereof transact the following business:-
  - (a) Consider and approve with or without amendment the minutes of the previous Annual 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 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 Secretary of the Clubs Committee are herein collectively referred to as “the Honorary Officers of the Branch”;
  - (e) Receive the nomination from the Committee of a person to be Chairman of the Management Committee
  - (f) Receive the following nominations for representation on the Committee:-
    - One nomination from each Club affiliated to the Branch participating in the All Ireland League;
    - Five nominations, from the Clubs Committee, of representatives of the Clubs affiliated to the Branch, other than those participating in the All Ireland League;

One nomination from the Association of School and College Leaders;

One nomination from the Ulster Society of Rugby Football Referees;

One nomination from the Schools Committee;

- (g) Appoint auditors to audit and report upon the accounts of the Branch;
- (h) Adjudicate on all matters submitted by any affiliated Club;
- (i) 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 27.
- (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;
  - (c) Make any interpretation of the Bye-laws of the Branch as it shall consider appropriate.

## **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 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 delegates 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.

## 7. THE COMMITTEE

- (i) The Honorary Officers of the Branch, the Chairman of the Management Committee, the persons nominated pursuant to Bye-law 5(ix)(f) 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 quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be twelve.
- (iv) The Chairman of the Committee, and likewise the Chairmen of each Standing Committee and sub-committee in the transaction of its business shall have a casting vote in addition to his first vote.
- (v) 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.
- (vi) A representative of a Club on the Committee, or any Standing Committee or sub-committee, shall not vote in a dispute in which his Club is concerned.
- (vii) Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing the Committee shall in particular have the following powers:-
  - (a) To appoint the requisite number of delegates to represent the Branch on the Council of the Union;
  - (b) To nominate two persons to represent the Branch on the Committee of the Union;
  - (c) 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;
    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. The Chairman 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;
  5. 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 Committee, (c) the Domestic Game Committee, (d) the Finance Committee and (e) the Commercial and Marketing Committee ; and
  6. No person may be President of the Branch and Chairman 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 suspend from the Branch or to punish in such manner as it may seem fit, including the imposition of a fine, but not expel, 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 so dealt with 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;
  - (i) Subject to the Laws of the Union, Branch Regulations and these Bye-laws, to hear 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 oversee the Professional Game Committee, the Domestic Game Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Commercial and Marketing Committee;
    2. to ensure the Professional Game Committee, the Domestic Game 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 Committee, the Domestic Game Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Commercial and Marketing Committee ;
    4. to deal with such employment and appointment matters as may be delegated to it by the Committee;
    5. 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 Chairman of the Management Committee;
  - 2. the Honorary Officers of the Branch
  - 3. the Chairman of the Professional Game Committee;
  - 4. the Chairman of the Domestic Game Committee;
  - 5. the Chairman of the Finance Committee;
  - 6. the Chairman of the Commercial and Marketing Committee;
  - 7. one representative of the Committee who is a member of the Committee of the Union;
- (ii) The Chief Executive may be required to attend meetings of the Management Committee but shall not be entitled to vote;
- (iii) The Chairman of the Management Committee shall be appointed by the Committee and nominated to the Council for a three year term, subject to annual review and approval by the Committee and the entitlement of the Committee to remove the Chairman from office at any time. No person may be Chairman of the Management Committee for more than six consecutive years;
- (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 COMMITTEE**

- (i) The Professional Game Committee 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 professional and Ulster Academy teams (“the Professional Game”), and its management and development;
    - 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;

- (b) report on its activities at each meeting of the Committee;
- (c) consist of the following persons:-
  - 1. a Chairman appointed by the Committee in consultation with the Union;
  - 2. one representative of the Committee who is a member of the Committee of the Union;
  - 3. the Honorary Treasurer;
  - 4. the Team Manager;
  - 5. one representative of the Committee;
  - 6. two persons appointed by the Committee, who shall not be members of the Committee;
- (ii) The Chief Executive may be required to attend meetings of the Professional Game Committee but shall not be entitled to vote;
- (iii) The Chairman of the Professional Game Committee shall be appointed for a three year term, subject to annual review and approval by the Committee and the entitlement of the Committee to remove the Chairman from office at any time. No person may be Chairman of the Professional Game Committee for more than six consecutive years;
- (iv) The Professional Game Committee shall have the power to establish one or more sub-committees as considered necessary, and as approved by the Committee;
- (v) For the sake of clarity it is affirmed that:-
  - 1. matters of discipline within the Professional Game in Ulster shall be the responsibility of the Disciplinary Committee established by the Union, or by a relevant Disciplinary Committee or officer established by the organising committee of any competition;
  - 2. the Professional Game Committee shall not have the authority to incur expenditure unless such expenditure has been approved by the Finance Committee.

## 10. DOMESTIC GAME COMMITTEE

- (i) The Domestic Game 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;
    2. 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;
  - (b) report on its activities at each meeting of the Committee;
  - (c) consist of the following persons:-
    1. a Chairman appointed by the Committee;
    2. two persons representing those Clubs affiliated to the Branch participating in the All Ireland League ;
    3. two persons representing those Clubs affiliated to the Branch participating in the Qualifying League ;
    4. the Chairman of the Youth Committee;
    5. the Chairman of the Schools Committee;
    6. the Chairman of the Women’s Committee;
    7. the Chairman of the Coaching Committee;
    8. a representative of the Ulster Society of Rugby Football Referees;
    9. one representative of the Committee who is a member of the Domestic Game Committee of the Union;
    10. the Honorary Secretary of the Clubs Committee;
- (ii) The Chief Executive may be required to attend meetings of the Domestic Game Committee but shall not be entitled to vote;

- (iii) The Domestic Game 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 Domestic Game Committee shall not have authority to incur expenditure unless such expenditure shall have been approved by the Finance Committee;

## **11. FINANCE COMMITTEE**

- (i) The Finance Committee shall:-
  - (a) perform the following functions:-
    1. to consider and implement all financial matters connected with the administration and development of the Professional Game and the Amateur Game in Ulster;
    2. to give prior authority for contracts, commercial arrangements and other obligations entered into by, or on behalf of, the Branch;
  - (b) report on its activities at each meeting of the Committee;
  - (c) consist of the following persons:-
    1. the Chairman, who shall be the Honorary Treasurer of the Branch;
    2. the Chairman of the Professional Game Committee;
    3. the Chairman of the Domestic Game 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;
    5. the Honorary Secretary;
- (ii) The Chief Executive may be required to attend meetings of the Finance Committee but shall not be entitled to vote;
- (iii) The Finance Committee shall have the power to establish one or more sub-committees as considered necessary, and as approved by the Committee;

## **12. COMMERCIAL AND MARKETING COMMITTEE**

- (i) The Commercial and Marketing Committee shall:-
  - (a) perform the following functions :
    - 1. to develop and manage the commercial and marketing activities of the Branch under authority delegated by the Committee in accordance with policies as approved by the Committee from time to time and within parameters agreed with the Management Committee;
    - 2. to negotiate and establish all commercial and marketing activities of the Branch;
  - (b) report on its activities at each meeting of the Committee;
  - (c) consist of the following persons :-
    - 1. a Chairman appointed by the Committee;
    - 2. other persons appointed by the Chairman of the Commercial and Marketing Committee;
    - 3. other persons appointed by the Management Committee;
- (ii) The Chief Executive may be required to attend meetings of the Commercial and Marketing Committee but shall not be entitled to vote;
- (iii) The Commercial and Marketing 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 Commercial and Marketing Committee shall not have authority to incur expenditure or enter into any contracts, commercial arrangements or other obligations on behalf of the Branch unless such expenditure, contracts, commercial arrangements and other obligations shall have been approved by the Finance Committee

## **13. AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE**

- (i) The Committee shall appoint a sub-committee, hereinafter referred to in these Bye-laws as “the Audit and Risk Committee”, which shall:-
  - (a) perform the following functions:-

1. to oversee audit arrangements on behalf of the Branch;
  2. to satisfy itself, through the use of internal and external auditors, that:-
    - (i) the systems of internal control employed by the Branch are adequate and are operating effectively, and
    - (ii) the Branch is operating with due financial and commercial probity, and in accordance with the Laws of Northern Ireland;
- (b) report on its activities to the Committee as necessary;
- (c) consist of three persons appointed by the Committee, two of whom shall be members of the Committee;
- (ii) No person may be President of the Branch, Chairman of a Standing Committee, or member of the Finance Committee, and a member of the Audit and Risk Committee at the same time.
- (iii) The quorum for a meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee shall be two.

#### **14. CLUBS COMMITTEE**

- (i) The Committee shall appoint a sub-committee, hereinafter referred to in these 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-law, to make such regulations and decisions as may be necessary for the conduct and management of all Branch cup and league rugby football.
- (b) report on its activities at each meeting of the Committee.
- (c) consist of the following persons:-
1. the Honorary Officers of the Branch;



2. one person nominated by each Club affiliated to the Branch (except Schools);
  3. one person nominated by the Ulster Society of Rugby Football Referees;
  4. one person nominated by the Youth Committee;
  5. one person nominated by the Women's 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-law 7 (i) the Clubs Committee shall have power:-
- (a) to elect its Honorary Secretary, who shall be an Honorary Officer of the Branch;
  - (b) to nominate five representatives to the Committee from the Clubs Committee from the representatives of Clubs other than those affiliated to the Branch participating in the All Ireland League;
  - (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.

## **15. SCHOOLS COMMITTEE**

The Committee shall appoint a sub-committee representative of the schools affiliated to the Branch ("the Schools Committee"), to manage the affairs of schools rugby football. All decisions and recommendations of the Schools Committee shall be subject to the approval of the Committee.

## **16. TRUSTEES**

- (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 Chairman 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.

## **17. 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 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.

## **18. DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEES**

- (i) The Committee shall set up a Disciplinary Committee, and a Committee of Appeal against decisions of the Disciplinary Committee, (“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, whether on or off the playing enclosure, arising from 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.
- (ii) The Disciplinary Committees shall deal with all matters arising under the preceding sub-clause subject to the Laws of the Union.

## **19. 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 20, 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.

## **20. 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.

## **21. 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.

## **22. 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.

## **23. 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 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 shall or may incur or sustain by reason or on account of any act undertaken or omission by him on behalf of the Branch in his capacity as such official, or by reason or on account of any liability incurred by him in his capacity as such official, provided always in the case of liability incurred in his capacity as such official that such liability was not incurred through his own fraud.

## **24. 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.

## **25. 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.

## **26. 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.

## **27. ALTERATIONS**

- (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.

## **28. 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 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 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.

## **29. 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.

### **30. 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.

### **31. 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. An Honorary Vice President shall not have the right to attend meetings of the Committee, but shall have the right to attend the Annual 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.

### **32. OPERATIVE DATE**

These Bye-laws shall come into force as and from the 15<sup>th</sup> day of June 2017 and shall take the place of all previous Bye-laws which shall thereupon cease to have force or effect.