

CLUB RULES AND CONSTITUTION

Rules of a registered members' club

1. Interpretation and Status

1.1 In this Constitution, unless the context otherwise requires:

- “the Club” means the Northern Ireland Civil Service Social Club;
- “NICSSA” means the Northern Ireland Civil Service Sports Association Limited;
- “the Committee” means the Management Committee constituted under this Constitution;
- “the Order” means the Registration of Clubs (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 and any statutory amendment or re-enactment;
- “the Regulations” means the Registration of Clubs (Accounts) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997 and any statutory amendment or re-enactment.

1.2 References to the singular include the plural and vice versa. References to any gender include all genders.

1.3 This Constitution shall be interpreted and applied in accordance with the laws in force in Northern Ireland, including all licensing and registration requirements applicable to registered clubs.

1.4 Any matter not expressly provided for in this Constitution, or any question concerning its interpretation or application, shall be determined by the Committee, whose decision shall be final and binding on the members.

2. Name, Premises and Affiliation

2.1 The Club shall be known as “The Northern Ireland Civil Service Social Club”.

2.2 The Club occupies premises at the Pavilion Complex, Stormont under a memorandum of understanding with NICSSA.

2.3 The Club is affiliated to NICSSA and operates in cooperation with it, while remaining a separate organisation with its own governance, finance and responsibilities.

3. Purpose and Powers

- 3.1 The purpose of the Club is to promote and encourage social, recreational, entertainment, cultural and educational activities for the benefit of its members.
- 3.2 In pursuing this purpose, the Club may:
- (i) provide and maintain facilities, amenities and services for members and authorised visitors;
 - (ii) operate as a registered club in compliance with all statutory requirements;
 - (iii) acquire, lease, hold or manage or dispose of property and rights, which the Club may think necessary or convenient for its purpose;
 - (iv) borrow money and provide security in accordance with this Constitution;
 - (v) support or contribute to charitable, sporting or community organisations;
 - (vi) do all lawful things incidental or conducive to achieving the Club's purpose.

4. Membership

- 4.1 Membership categories of the Club shall consist of:
- a) **Ordinary Members;** and
 - b) **Honorary Life Members.**
- 4.2 Ordinary Members must be aged 18 years or over and shall enjoy full rights of membership, including the right to vote at General Meetings and to stand for election to the Committee.
- 4.3 Honorary Life Membership may be awarded to persons who, in the opinion of the Committee, have rendered distinguished or exceptional service to the Club.
- 4.4 Honorary Life Members shall not be required to pay subscriptions and shall enjoy the general privileges of membership, but shall not vote, hold office, serve on the Committee, or claim any interest in the Club's property upon dissolution.

5. Eligibility, Application and Election

- 5.1 Ordinary membership is open to persons aged 18 years of age or over, who are ordinary or associate members of the NI Civil Service Sports Association.

- 5.2 Every application must be proposed and seconded by two Ordinary Members, both vouching for suitability from personal knowledge. The Committee may require additional information in support of the application.
- 5.3 Applications which must include applicants' home addresses, shall be submitted to the Secretary not less than two weeks before election and displayed on Club premises for at least seven days.
- 5.4 Admission to membership is by election of the Committee. An applicant shall be elected where a majority of Committee members present and voting are in favour.
- 5.5 The Committee may refuse any application where, in its reasonable opinion, the applicant's admission would be contrary to the interests or good order of the Club. The Committee shall not be required to give reasons for its decision.
- 5.6 Where the Committee has determined that membership is temporarily closed, applications shall be placed on a waiting list and considered in the order in which they are received.
- 5.7 The Committee may invalidate an application where material inaccuracies or omissions are identified.

6. Commencement, Resignation and Cessation

- 6.1 Membership shall commence upon election and payment of the first subscription, at which point the member agrees to be bound by this Constitution and all regulations.
- 6.2 A member may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Secretary. Unless otherwise stated, resignation shall take effect on the day following receipt of notice.
- 6.3 A member who resigns, is suspended or whose membership is terminated shall forfeit all rights, privileges and claims against the Club and its property.

7. Subscriptions and Arrears

- 7.1 The rate of annual subscription shall be determined by the Committee and may vary between categories of membership.
- 7.2 Subscriptions shall be payable annually without demand (except the first subscription of a new member) and shall normally be collected by direct debit or such method as the Committee may approve.

- 7.3 Where a subscription remains unpaid, the Secretary shall issue written notice drawing the member's attention to the arrears.
- 7.4 If payment is not received within 14 days of such notice, the Committee may suspend the member's privileges and may, after further consideration, terminate membership.
- 7.5 A member whose membership has been terminated for non-payment may, at the discretion of the Committee, be reinstated upon payment of all arrears and provision of a satisfactory explanation.

8. List of Members

- 8.1 An alphabetical list of the names and home addresses of every official and member of the Club shall be kept on the premises of the Club.

9. Discipline and Conduct

- 9.1 The Committee may make and amend rules governing standards of behaviour and discipline, as it thinks necessary for the management and well-being of the Club, provided such rules are consistent with this Constitution.
- 9.2 Any alleged breach of this Constitution or of disciplinary rules shall be referred to a Disciplinary Sub-Committee (appointed by the Committee) to consider the breach as soon as reasonably possible.
- 9.3 The member concerned shall be given reasonable written notice, by the Secretary, of:
- a) The nature of the complaint;
 - b) The date, time and place of the hearing; and
 - c) Their right to make representations.
- 9.4 The member may present an explanation either orally or in writing and may be accompanied by another member.
- 9.5 Following the hearing, the Disciplinary Sub-Committee may, by majority decision, impose such sanction as it considers appropriate, including suspension from the privileges of membership or expulsion from the Club.
- 9.6 The member shall be notified in writing of the decision of the Disciplinary Sub-Committee and the reasons for that decision.

- 9.7 A member who considers themselves aggrieved by a disciplinary decision shall have the right to appeal. Any such appeal must be made in writing to the Secretary within seven days of the notification decision.
- 9.8 The appeal shall be heard by the Arbitration Sub-Committee as soon as reasonably practicable and, where possible, within 28 days of receipt of the written appeal.
- 9.9 The decision of the Arbitration Sub-Committee shall be final and binding on the member.
- 9.10 A suspended member shall not enjoy the privileges of membership but shall remain liable for subscriptions during suspension.
- 9.11 Any member holding office or serving on the Committee who is suspended or expelled shall vacate that office immediately.

10. Governance and Management

10.1 Management Committee

10.1.1 The management and control of the club shall be vested in a Management Committee who also shall be trustees of the Club.

10.1.2 This Committee shall consist of Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and five other ordinary members all of whom must be elected at the Annual General Meeting.

10.1.3 Two members will be nominated by the Board of NICSSA, who will fill the posts of the Chairperson and Treasurer.

10.1.4 Of the remaining six positions, no fewer than three shall be filled by nominees of Pavilion-based sports clubs.

10.1.5 Committee members shall normally serve for a minimum term of three years and shall be eligible for re-election.

10.1.6 Committee meetings shall normally be convened by the Secretary but if three or more committee members request that a committee meeting should be convened then the Secretary shall arrange such a meeting within fourteen days of the request.

10.2 Election, Vacancies and Removal

10.2.1 Committee members shall be elected at an Annual General Meeting.

10.2.2 At the end of each three-year term Committee members shall retire but may offer themselves for re-election.

10.2.3 Any two Ordinary members may propose and second another Ordinary Member for election by written notice to the Secretary at least seven days before the AGM.

10.2.4 Every ordinary member of the Club present at AGM is entitled, but not obliged, to vote for as many candidates as there are vacancies.

10.2.5 Up to the number of vacancies, the candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected (subject to rule 5.6). In the event of equality, the Chairperson shall have a casting vote or may determine the matter by lot.

10.2.6 The Committee may appoint an ordinary member to fill a casual vacancy until the next Annual General Meeting.

10.2.7 A Committee member may resign in writing or verbally at a duly constituted Committee meeting.

10.2.8 A Committee member who fails to attend three consecutive meetings without reasonable excuse may be removed by the decision of the Committee.

10.2.9 The Committee may appoint a Vice-Chairperson from one of its members who is not the Chairperson, Treasurer or Secretary.

11. Officers

11.1 The Secretary shall be responsible for the day-to-day administration of the Club, including meetings, correspondence, records, disciplinary arrangements and statutory & legal compliance

11.2 The Treasurer shall be responsible for receiving, safeguarding and banking all monies, arranging payment of approved accounts, the keeping of proper books of account and ensuring compliance with all financial Regulations.

12. Annual and Special General Meetings

12.1 An Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held once each year, normally in conjunction with the NICSSA AGM, at a date and time fixed by the Committee.

12.2 The AGM shall:

- receive the Committee's report and the audited accounts;
- elect Committee members and appoint an auditor;
- consider resolutions properly submitted; and
- transact any other business determined by the Committee.

12.3 The Committee may convene a Special General Meeting (SGM) at any time and shall do so upon written requisition by not fewer than twenty-five Ordinary Members, stating the business to be considered.

12.4 At least fourteen days' notice of every AGM or SGM shall be given, specifying the business to be transacted. No other business shall be considered.

13. Proceedings at General Meetings

13.1 The Chairperson shall preside at all General Meetings or, in their absence, the Treasurer or Vice-Chairperson.

13.2 Eight Ordinary Members shall form a quorum, of whom not fewer than four shall be Committee members.

13.3 For constitutional amendments or removal of an officer, twelve members including five Committee members shall form a quorum.

13.4 If a quorum is not present within thirty minutes, a requisitioned meeting shall be dissolved; otherwise, the meeting shall adjourn for one week.

13.5 Each Ordinary Member present shall have one vote. In the event of equality, the Chairperson of any particular General Meeting" [The Treasurer or Vice-Chairperson, in the absence of the actual Chairperson may be acting as chairperson of a particular General Meeting – see new Rule 13.1] shall have a casting vote.

13.6 Proxy, written or electronic voting may be permitted by the Committee were lawful.

13.7 Business conducted at General Meetings shall be confidential.

14. Committee Meetings and Membership

14.1 The Committee shall examine the accounts and arrange the affairs of the Club and meet as required but not less than quarterly. Four members shall form a quorum.

14.2 A Committee member may resign by giving written notice to any officer of the Club or by resignation stated at a duly constituted Committee meeting.

14.3 A Committee member shall cease to hold office if they fail to attend three consecutive Committee meetings without reasonable excuse acceptable to the Chairperson or, in their absence, a majority of the Committee members present and voting.

14.4 The Committee may appoint sub-committees and delegate powers as appropriate.

14.5 An Arbitration Sub-Committee of not fewer than three members of at least five years' standing shall hear appeals. Its decision shall be final.

15. Employees

The Committee may appoint, pay and dismiss a manager and such other employees as it deems necessary, subject always to the provisions of the Employment Rights (NI) Order 1996 and any amendment thereto, and to the common law.

16. Finance

16.1 The financial year of the Club shall end on 31 December.

16.2 Proper books of account shall be kept and the accounts shall be audited annually by a suitably qualified person who is not a member of the Club.

16.3 Borrowing may occur only following a resolution of a General Meeting. Every member, whether voting or not, is deemed to have assented to such resolution.

16.4 The Committee may borrow up to £250,000 but not borrow more than £250,000 in total on behalf of the Club unless a higher limit is authorised by resolution of a General Meeting.

16.5 No surplus, profit or asset of the Club shall be distributed to members while the Club continues to operate.

17. Opening of Premises

17.1 The Club premises shall be open to members daily during such hours as the Committee may from time to time determine.

17.2 The Committee may close the premises as necessary for cleaning, maintenance, staff holidays or where it considers closure to be in the interests of the Club.

18. Visitors

18.1 Members may introduce visitors subject to regulations made by the Committee and statutory requirements.

18.2 Visitors must be accompanied by the introducing member and entered immediately upon arrival in a visitors' book kept for that purpose.

18.3 Except for close family members (parent, spouse, partner or child), no person may attend as a visitor on more than five days in any twelve-month period.

18.4 A visitor shall not be supplied with intoxicating liquor except in the company of and upon the invitation of a member.

18.5 Members are responsible for visitors' conduct.

18.6 No suspended or expelled member, or any person deemed objectionable by the Committee, may be admitted as a visitor.

18.7 In accordance with Schedule 1 Rule 13 of the Order, and the Club being a sporting club, a person may on payment of a daily fee use facilities determined by the Committee without being recorded as a visitor for that day

19. Games and Activities

19.1 The Committee may regulate the playing of games and the use of gaming or amusement machines on the Club premises.

19.2 The Committee may prohibit any game or activity which it considers injurious to the interests or good order of the Club.

20. Liquor and Licensing

20.1 Intoxicating liquor may be supplied only to members and their guests for consumption on the Club premises and only during permitted hours in accordance with licensing legislation.

20.2 Intoxicating liquor shall not be supplied for consumption off the Club premises.

20.3 No member, officer, employee or other person shall derive any private or personal benefit from the supply or purchase of intoxicating liquor by or on behalf of the Club, other than benefit accruing to the Club as a whole.

21. Permitted Hours

21.1 The permitted hours for the supply of intoxicating liquor in the Club shall be those prescribed by the Registration of Clubs (Northern Ireland) Order 1996.

21.2 The Committee may vary the permitted hours from time to time were authorised by statute and in accordance with licensing requirements.

22. Use of Club Address

22.1 No member shall use the address of the Club for business, commercial or advertising purposes.

22.2 No member shall give the Club address in any advertisement or business communication without the prior written approval of the Committee.

23. Conduct, Damage and Complaints

23.1 Any member who causes damage to Club property, whether directly or through a guest, shall make good such damage to the satisfaction of the Committee.

23.2 Suggestions or complaints relating to the affairs or management of the Club shall be made in writing to the Secretary and placed before the next Committee meeting.

24. Functions

24.1 Any member, section or organisation wishing to hold a function on the Club premises must apply in writing to the Secretary and comply with licensing and accounting requirements.

24.2 Permission to hold functions shall be at the sole discretion of the Committee.

25. Interpretation and Statutory Compliance

25.1 Headings are for convenience only and shall not affect interpretation.

25.2 This Constitution shall be read and interpreted in conjunction with all applicable statutory provisions, including licensing and registration legislation.

25.3 Any provision inconsistent with statute shall be void to the extent of that inconsistency.

26. Interpretation

26.1 The Committee shall be the sole authority for the interpretation of this Constitution; any disciplinary rules and any regulations made under it.

26.2 The decision of the Committee on any question of interpretation, or on any matter affecting the Club not expressly provided for in this Constitution, shall be final and binding on the members.

27. Amendment of Rules

27.1 This Constitution may be added to, repealed or amended only by resolution passed at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting.

27.2 The Committee may amend this Constitution where necessary to ensure compliance with statutory or regulatory requirements, without the need to seek approval of the membership.

28. Dissolution

28.1 Dissolution shall require:

- a) a resolution passed by a simple majority at a General Meeting; and
- b) confirmation at a Special General Meeting held not less than four weeks later, with two weeks' notice, by a two-thirds majority.

28.2 Upon dissolution, after discharge of liabilities, remaining assets shall be transferred by the Club trustees to NICSSA to be applied for sporting or social purposes as its Board determines.

29. Equality and Inclusion

29.1 The Club is committed to promoting equality of opportunity, good relations and the elimination of discrimination in line with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and all other relevant equality and anti-discrimination legislation.

30. Data Protection

30.1 The Club shall comply with all applicable data protection legislation, including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Personal data shall be processed fairly, lawfully and transparently.

31. Conflict of Interest

31.1 All Members, staff and volunteers must declare any potential conflicts of interest and act in accordance with the organisation's conflict of interest policy.

31.2 Conflicts shall be recorded and managed to ensure transparency and integrity in decision-making.