

# **The Bristol Rugby Referees Society Constitution**

## **Preliminary**

For the avoidance of doubt the use of the masculine shall include the feminine at all times in this constitution.

### **1. Name**

- 1.1 The Society shall be known as **the Bristol Rugby Referees Society** and shall be a member of the Gloucestershire Association of Rugby Referees under the authority of the Rugby Football Union and shall hereafter be referred in this constitution as “the Society”.

### **2. Aims and objectives**

- 2.1 The aims and objectives of the Society will be to:

- develop and support rugby union refereeing;
- offer training, development, assessment and coaching for new and active referees;
- provide match observers for the personal improvement of referees;
- provide referees and match observers to rugby matches of such clubs and organisations (which for the avoidance of doubt shall include schools) who have paid their annual subscription to the Society where demanded of them;
- promote the Society within the local rugby community and to promote refereeing to the wider community;
- provide its services in a way that is fair to everyone;
- ensure that all present and future members receive fair and equal treatment.
- to comply with and uphold the Rules and Regulations of the RFU and World Rugby as amended from time to time and the Rules and Regulations of anybody to which the RFU is registered or affiliated.

- 2.2 For the avoidance of any doubt “providing its service in a way that is fair to everyone” shall include but not be necessarily limited to:

- ensuring that no member, associate or volunteer shall receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of their age, gender, disability, race, ethnic origin, religious or political belief, or sexual orientation;

- complying with any child or vulnerable protection policies as required by the Rugby Football Union from time to time.

### 3. Membership

- 3.1 Membership shall consist of general members and officers of the Society.
- 3.2 All persons who become members will be subject to the rules of the constitution and by joining the Society and/or by paying their annual subscription will be deemed to accept these rules that the Society has adopted.
- 3.3 A person can become a member by being proposed and seconded by a current member of the Society who is then elected as a member at a General Meeting and who pays his annual subscription in accordance with Rule 4 hereafter.
- 3.4 Members shall be enrolled in one of the following categories:
- “full member” who is either an active referee, a past referee or a match observer who has paid his annual subscription
  - “junior member” who is an active referee who is under the age of 18
  - “life member” who is a member who has rendered the Society particular service and who is nominated by the General Committee and elected at a General Meeting as such. A Life Member does not have to pay any subscription.
- 3.5 Only those members who have been awarded the Gloucestershire County Badge by the Society shall be entitled to wear a "County Badge".
- 3.6 Members shall not accept an invitation (however obtained) to referee a game other than one to which they have been appointed in accordance with Rule 6.
- 3.7 Members shall not see or receive payment for refereeing a game to which they have been appointed but may, if they so wish, receive defrayment of their genuine expenses.

#### **4. Membership fees**

- 4.1 Membership fees will be set annually for the next season.
- 4.2 The General Committee will decide what the annual subscription should be on advice from the Treasurer and will make their recommendation to the next Annual General Meeting ("AGM").
- 4.3 The members at the AGM will then decide on the level of the annual subscription in accordance with Rule 8 below and once accepted such fees shall be referred to as the "annual subscription" and will become payable by the members for that season by whatever method of payment is prescribed by the General Committee from time to time.
- 4.4 Unless otherwise agreed by the General Committee each member shall pay his annual subscription at the first General Meeting of the season or no later than 4pm on the 31<sup>st</sup> October of each year.
- 4.5 Any person who joins the Society at any time after the first General Meeting shall be liable to pay and shall pay the full annual subscription for that year forthwith upon joining.

#### **5. Officers of the Society**

- 5.1 The officers of the Society will be:
- Chair
  - President
  - Vice-Chair
  - Honorary Secretary
  - Treasurer
  - Appointments Secretary
  - Sunday Appointments Secretary
  - Midweek Appointments Secretary
  - Grading & SADO Secretary
  - Head of Training & Development
- 5.2 Save as is provided at 5.3 Officers will be elected annually at the AGM. Each proposed Officer shall be nominated and seconded by a member (as defined in Rule 3.4) and elected by the

members at the AGM. No member shall be entitled to hold more than two posts as an Officer at the same time.

- 5.3 i) The President's post will continue until it is determined by his resignation, his death, or by a vote of No Confidence by the members at either the AGM, or an EGM called by the Honorary Secretary in accordance with Rule 8.9; while he is President the President shall not be entitled to hold any other Officer's post. The President will be the Society's figurehead.

ii) The Chair shall be elected at the AGM and may only be occupied by one individual member for a maximum of 3 consecutive years and in any event his office will come to an end at the AGM in his third year of office. The Office of Chair is the most senior office in the Society and is the person responsible for identifying and formulating the policies of the Society, formulating the Agenda for the General Committee and the General Meetings, and together with the General Committee, running the business of the Society.

*The Chair during the 2017-2018 season shall remain Chair for the 2018-2019 season notwithstanding it is his fourth year of office. His office will come to an end at the AGM in the 2018-2019 season. For the avoidance of any doubt, at that point the office of Chair will again be as set out in clause 5.3 ii).*

iii) The Honorary Secretary shall be elected at the AGM and may only be occupied by an individual member for a maximum of 5 consecutive years and in any event his office will come to an end at the AGM in his fifth year of office.

- 5.4 Apart from the President, the Chair, and the Honorary Secretary, all other officers will retire automatically at the end of each year which is deemed to be the date of the AGM, but they will be eligible for re-appointment.

- 5.5 In the event of an Officer resigning or retiring before the next AGM :

- i) Such a resignation is not effective until it is made in writing (which can be in an e-mail) and has been received by the Honorary Secretary;
- ii) Upon receipt of the Notice of Resignation the Honorary Secretary shall notify all current members for whom he has a current e-mail address of the resignation within 21 days of receipt by him of the Notice; notification shall be in writing which can include by email;

- iii) The General Committee shall continue its business in the absence of the Officer who has resigned;
- iv) Nominations for the vacant post which must be supported by a seconder (both of whom must be members of the Society at the time) shall be provided to the Honorary Secretary by no later than 14 days after the date when Members have been notified. In the event that there are no proper nominations/seconders received within the time set out in Rule 5.5 (ii) then the General Committee shall continue its business thereafter with the Officers currently in post;
- v) In the event that more than one nomination is received, the Honorary Secretary shall call forthwith an EGM for the purpose of electing the new Officer.

## **6. Committees**

- 6.1 The general management of the Society shall be vested in the General Committee consisting of the Officers as defined in Rule 5 above from time to time which shall be chaired and run by the "Chair".
- 6.2 The General Committee will usually meet once a month during the playing season or when convened by the Honorary Secretary of the Society giving 7 days written notice to each of the General Committee members (which for the avoidance of doubt can include by electronic mail ("e-mail")).
- 6.3 The quorum required for business to be agreed at the General Committee shall be no less than 4.
- 6.4 The General Committee will be responsible for the general management of the Society and for adopting new policy, rules or codes of practice that affect the organisation of the Society. For the avoidance of doubt each post of Officer of the Society as defined at Rule 5.1 shall have one vote at Committee. In the event that two posts of Officer as defined at Rule 5.1 above are held by the same member, that Officer will still have one vote in respect of each post of Officer.
- 6.5 The General Committee will have powers to appoint sub-committees as necessary and appoint advisers or to co-opt a member to it as necessary to fulfill its business.

- 6.6 The General Committee will be responsible for disciplinary hearings of members who infringe the Society rules or its constitution and shall be responsible for taking any action of suspension or other discipline following such hearings.
- 6.7 The Appointments Committee shall consist of the current Chair, or in his absence such member as he shall nominate; Head of Training & Development; Appointments Secretaries; and the Grading Secretary and the Committee shall:
- Appoint Society referees to any match
  - Recommend referees through the appropriate channels for appointment to senior games
  - Arrange for the interchange of referees with other societies
  - Arrange coaching, grading, and examinations
- 6.8 For the avoidance of doubt members will be covered by the Society's policy of insurance for indemnity in respect of acting as a referee where that referee has either been appointed by the Appointments Committee or by one of the Appointments Committee members.
- 6.9 The quorum required for business to be agreed at the Appointments Committee shall be no less than 2.

## **7. Finance**

- 7.1 All monies collected by the Treasurer in that capacity in respect of the annual subscription and in respect of club or other organization subscriptions shall be collected by him for and on behalf of the Society and he will bank such monies in an account held in the name of the Society. All monies so collected and held are deemed to belong to the Society and its Members as defined in Rule 3.4.
- 7.2 The annual Society subscription shall be collected by the Treasurer from each member (which such person, for the avoidance of doubt, will not become a member each year until his subscription has been paid).
- 7.3 The Treasurer will be responsible for the finances of the Society. He shall have power to open and keep a bank account in the name of the Society and may use on-line as well as the usual forms of banking. He shall act in relation to any such bank account only in accordance with that Banks' mandate, which mandate must be approved by the General Committee before that account can be used.

- 7.4 The financial year of the Society will end on 31<sup>st</sup> May each year.
- 7.5 The accounts shall be audited annually and it will be the responsibility of the Treasurer to present the annual audited accounts to the AGM.
- 7.6 Any cheques drawn against Society funds should be so drawn only in accordance with the Bank's mandate as approved by the General Committee. In respect of all and any payments made electronically the Treasurer shall submit a statement of such payments to the General Committee at its next meeting after any such payment has been made.

## **8. Meetings**

- 8.1 General Meetings shall usually be held in the first week of each month during the playing season or such other times as the members may decide.
- 8.2 The Annual General Meeting shall be held in June of each year.
- 8.3 Notice of the AGM will be given by the Honorary Secretary. Not less than 21 clear days' notice is to be given to all members as defined in Rule 3.4 (and for the avoidance of doubt such notice can be given by e-mail).
- 8.4 The AGM will receive a report from officers of the General Committee and a statement of the Society's accounts.
- 8.5 Nominations for officers of the General Committee will be sent to the Honorary Secretary not less than 14 days prior to the AGM.
- 8.6 Elections of officers shall take place at the AGM.
- 8.7 All members as defined at Rule 3.4 shall have the right to vote at the AGM.

- 8.8 The quorum for any resolution to be passed at the AGMs shall be 51% except :
- i) a Vote of No Confidence in the President, which shall require at least two-thirds (66%) of members;
  - ii) those referred to at Rule 10.1 and 11.1 (which will be 75% and 66% respectively).

to include those present and those who have provided the Honorary Secretary with their proxy in writing (which can include by e-mail).

- 8.9 The General Committee has the right to call Extraordinary General Meetings (“EGMs”) outside the AGM. Procedures for EGMs will be the same as for the AGM.
- 8.10 In the event that at least 20 members (as defined by Rule 3.4) invite the Honorary Secretary to call an EGM he shall do so as soon as practicable and in any event notice shall be given in accordance with Rule 8.3.

## **9. Discipline and appeals**

- 9.1 Where applicable the procedures laid down within the Rugby Football Union Discipline & Appeals Procedures will be adhered to.
- 9.2 All complaints regarding the behaviour of members shall be submitted in writing to the Honorary Secretary.
- 9.3 The General Committee will meet to hear complaints within 28 days of a complaint being lodged with the Honorary Secretary. The Committee has the power to take appropriate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the Society or suspension up to and including 6 months.
- 9.4 The outcome of a disciplinary hearing should be notified in writing which can include by e-mail to the person who lodged the complaint and the member against whom the complaint was made within 14 days of the hearing. The member against whom the complaint was made shall be deemed to have received notification 2 days after a letter is posted by 1<sup>st</sup> class post to the member’s last known address, or on the same day as an e-mail is sent unless the e-mail was not registered as “sent”.



- 9.5 There will be the right of appeal to the Rugby Football Union following disciplinary action being announced but any such appeal must be received by the Honorary Secretary in writing or by e-mail within 28 days of the member being notified of the sanction pursuant to Rule 9.4.

## **10. Dissolution**

- 10.1 A resolution to dissolve the Society can only be passed at an AGM or EGM through a vote of at least three-quarters (75%) of the membership.
- 10.2 In the event of dissolution, any assets of the Society that remain will become the property of the current members as defined by Rule 3.4 in equal shares.

## **11. Amendments to the Constitution**

- 11.1 The constitution will only be changed through a vote of at least two-thirds (66%) of the membership (as defined at Rule 3.4) at an AGM or EGM.
- 11.2 Any proposed amendment to the constitution shall be reduced into writing and submitted to the Honorary Secretary for inclusion on the Agenda for the AGM or an EGM at least 21 days before the meeting takes place.

## **12. Declaration**

- 12.1 *The Bristol Rugby Referees Society* hereby adopts and accepts this constitution as a current operating guide regulating the actions of members.

*Chairman, Steve Leyshon*

Date 4 April 2018

*Honorary Secretary, James Bennett*

Date 4 April 2018