

# CONSTITUTION

of

“Scottish Bridge Union” [SC051361]

Last Updated: AGM 24 May 2022

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## **GENERAL**

### **Type of organisation**

- 1 The organisation will, upon registration, be a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO).

### **Scottish principal office**

- 2 The principal office of the organisation will be in Scotland (and must remain in Scotland).

### **Name**

- 3 The name of the organisation is Scottish Bridge Union.

### **Purposes**

- 4 The organisation's purposes are:
  - 4.1 To promote, protect and support, the development of the sport of bridge within Scotland and internationally
  - 4.2 To organise recreational activities which relate to the promotion, learning, teaching and playing of bridge
  - 4.3 To provide educational opportunities for the general public, including children and young persons, to assist their development and understanding of the game.
  - 4.4 To help improve the mental health and social welfare of the general public through education, participation and social interaction playing bridge.

### **Powers**

- 5 The organisation has power to do anything which is calculated to further its purposes or is conducive or incidental to doing so.
- 6 No part of the income or property of the organisation may be paid or transferred (directly or indirectly) to the members or a person appointed to the board under clause 75, either in the course of the organisation's existence or on dissolution - except where this is done in direct furtherance of the organisation's charitable purposes.

### **Liability of members**

- 7 The members of the organisation have no liability to pay any sums to help to meet the debts (or other liabilities) of the organisation if it is wound up; accordingly, if the organisation is unable to meet its debts, the members will not be held responsible.
- 8 The members and charity trustees have certain legal duties under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005; and clause 7 does not exclude (or limit) any personal liabilities they might incur if they are in breach of those duties or in breach of other legal obligations or duties that apply to them personally.

## **General structure**

- 9 The structure of the organisation consists of: -
- (a) the MEMBERS - who have the right to attend members' meetings (including any annual members' meeting) and have important powers under the constitution; in particular, the members appoint people to serve on the board and take decisions on changes to the constitution itself.
  - (b) the BOARD - who hold regular meetings, and generally control the activities of the organisation; for example, the board is responsible for monitoring and controlling the financial position of the organisation.
- 10 The people serving on the board are referred to in this constitution as CHARITY TRUSTEES.
- 11 Membership is open to any individual
- 11.1 There are the following categories of membership: Member, Honorary Member and Honorary Life President. Other categories and sub categories may be determined by the board from time to time.
  - 11.2 Any person becomes an Honorary Member of the Union when elected by means of an ordinary resolution at a General Meeting.
  - 11.3 Any person becomes the Honorary Life President when elected by means of an ordinary resolution at a General Meeting. There shall be at most one Honorary Life President at any one time.
- 12 Employees of the organisation are eligible for membership although in total they will not exceed 1% of the total membership at any one time.
- 13 **Application for membership**
- 13.1 Any person who wishes to become a member must sign a written application for membership, or, where they are below the age of consent, arrange for a parent or guardian to submit a duly signed application on their behalf.
  - 13.2 The board may, at its discretion, refuse to admit any person to membership.
- 14 **Membership subscription**
- 14.1 Members shall pay an annual subscription as may be determined by means of an ordinary resolution at an annual general meeting. The fee may vary by category and sub categories that may be determined by the board from time to time.
  - 14.2 Annual membership subscriptions shall become due on 1<sup>st</sup> September in each year and shall be payable by 30<sup>th</sup> November in the same calendar year.

## **Register of members**

- 15 The board must keep a register of members, setting out
- (a) for each current member:
    - (i) their full name and address; and
    - (ii) the date on which they were registered as a member of the organisation.
    - (iii) the type of membership.
  - (b) for each former member - for at least six years from the date on which they ceased to be a member:
    - (i) their name, and
    - (ii) the date on which they ceased to be a member.
- 16 The board must ensure that the register of members is updated within 28 days of any change:
- (a) which arises from a resolution of the board, or a resolution passed by the members of the organisation; or
  - (b) which is notified to the organisation.
- 17 If a member or charity trustee of the organisation requests a copy of the register of members, the board must ensure that a copy is supplied to them within 28 days, providing the request is reasonable; if the request is made by a member (other than a charity trustee), the board may provide a copy which has addresses and other personal data redacted as the board deem reasonable.

## **Transfer of membership**

- 18 Membership of the organisation may not be transferred by a member.

## **Re-registration of members**

- 19 The board may, at any time, issue notices to the members requiring them to confirm that they wish to remain as members of the organisation and allowing them a period of 28 days (running from the date of issue of the notice) to provide that confirmation to the board.
- 20 If a member fails to provide confirmation to the board (in writing or by e-mail) that they wish to remain as a member of the organisation before the expiry of the 28-day period referred to in clause 19, the board may expel them from membership.
- 21 A notice under clause 19 will not be valid unless it refers specifically to the consequences (under clause 20) of failing to provide confirmation within the 28-day period.

## **Expulsion from membership**

- 22 Any person may be expelled from membership by way of a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of those present and voting at a members' meeting, providing the following procedures have been observed:
- (a) at least 21 days' notice of the intention to propose the resolution must be given to the member concerned, specifying the grounds for the proposed expulsion.
  - (b) the member concerned will be entitled to be heard on the resolution at the members' meeting at which the resolution is proposed.
- 23 If an SBU Disciplinary Tribunal finds that a case of unacceptable conduct has been proven it may impose sanctions, without reference to a meeting of members, which may include one of the following:
- (a) Permanent Suspension of Membership
  - (b) Suspension of Membership for a specified period of time.
- 24 The SBU, being recognised as the Scottish National Bridge Organisation (NBO), is a member of various collective bridge organisations at the UK, European and Worldwide levels. It, therefore, has mutual obligations such that it is required to impose equivalent sanctions on any SBU member who has been sanctioned for unacceptable conduct outside Scotland.

## **Termination**

- 25 Membership of the organisation will terminate on death.

## **DECISION-MAKING BY THE MEMBERS**

### **Members' meetings**

- 26 The board must arrange a meeting of members (an annual members' meeting or "AGM") in each calendar year.
- 27 The gap between one AGM and the next must not be longer than 15 months.
- 28 Notwithstanding clause 26, an AGM does not need to be held during the calendar year in which the organisation is formed; but the first AGM must still be held within 15 months of the date on which the organisation is formed.
- 29 The business of each AGM must include:
- (a) a report by the chair on the activities of the organisation.
  - (b) consideration of the annual accounts of the organisation.
  - (c) the election/re-election of charity trustees, as referred to in clauses 71 to 74.
- 30 The board may arrange a special members' meeting at any time.

### **Power to request the board to arrange a special members' meeting**

- 31 The board must arrange a special members' meeting if they are requested to do so by a notice (which may take the form of two or more documents in the same terms, each signed by one or more members) from members who amount to 5% or more of the total membership of the organisation at the time, providing:
- (a) the notice states the purposes for which the meeting is to be held; and
  - (b) those purposes are not inconsistent with the terms of this constitution, the Charities and Trustee (Investment) Scotland Act 2005 or any other statutory provision.
- 32 If the board receive a notice under clause 31, the date for the meeting which they arrange in accordance with the notice must not be later than 28 days from the date on which they received the notice.

### **Notice of members' meetings**

- 33 At least 14 clear days' notice must be given of any AGM or any special members' meeting.
- 34 The notice calling a members' meeting must specify in general terms what business is to be dealt with at the meeting; and
- (a) in the case of a resolution to alter the constitution, must set out the exact terms of the proposed alteration(s); or
  - (b) in the case of any other resolution falling within clause 56 (requirement for two-thirds majority) must set out the exact terms of the resolution.
- 35 The reference to "clear days" in clause 33 shall be taken to mean that, in calculating the period of notice,
- (a) the day after the notices are posted (or sent by e-mail) should be excluded; and
  - (b) the day of the meeting itself should also be excluded.
- 36 Notice of every members' meeting must be given to all the members of the organisation, and to all the charity trustees; but the accidental omission to give notice to one or more members will not invalidate the proceedings at the meeting.
- 37 Any notice which requires to be given to a member under this constitution must be: -
- (a) sent by post to the member, at the address last notified by them to the organisation;  
*or*
  - (b) sent by e-mail to the member, at the e-mail address last notified by them to the organisation.

- 38 If members and charity trustees are to be permitted to participate in a members' meeting by way of audio and/or audio-visual link(s) (see clause 41), the notice (or notes accompanying the notice) must:
- (a) set out details of how to connect and participate via that link or links; and
  - (b) (particularly for the benefit of those members who may have difficulties in using a computer or laptop for this purpose) draw members' attention to the following options:
    - (i) participating in the meeting via an audio link accessed by phone, using dial-in details (if that forms part of the arrangements).
    - (ii) appointing the chairperson of the meeting as proxy, and directing the chairperson on how they should use that proxy vote in relation to each resolution to be proposed at the meeting
    - (iii) (where attendance in person is to be permitted, either on an open basis or with a restriction on the total number who will be permitted to attend) attending and voting in person at the meeting.
    - (iv) (where clause 39 applies) submitting questions and/or comments in advance of the meeting
- 39 Where a members' meeting is to involve participation *solely* via audio and/or audio-visual link(s), the notice (or notes accompanying the notice) must include a statement inviting members to submit questions and/or comments in advance of the meeting, which (subject to clause 40) the chairperson of the meeting will be expected to read out, and address, in the course of the meeting.
- 40 Where clause 39 applies, the chairperson of a members' meeting will not require to read out or address any questions or comments submitted by members in advance of the meeting if and to the extent that the questions or comments are of an unreasonable length (individually or taken together), or contain material which is defamatory, racist or otherwise offensive.

### **Procedure at members' meetings**

- 41 The board may if they consider appropriate (and must, if this is required under clause 43) make arrangements for members and charity trustees to participate in members' meetings by way of audio and/or audio-visual link(s) which allow them to hear and contribute to discussions at the meeting, providing:
- (a) the means by which members and charity trustees can participate via that link or links are not subject to technical complexities, significant costs or other factors which are likely to represent - for all or a significant proportion of the membership - a barrier to participation.
  - (b) the notice calling the meeting (or notes accompanying the notice) contains the information required under clause 39; and
  - (c) the manner in which the meeting is conducted ensures, so far as reasonably possible, that those members and charity trustees who participate via an audio or audio-visual link are not disadvantaged with regard to their ability to contribute to discussions at the meeting, as compared with those members and charity trustees (if any) who are

attending in person (and vice versa).

- 42 If restrictions arising from public health legislation or guidance are likely to mean that attendance in person at a proposed members' meeting would not be possible or advisable for all or a significant proportion of the membership, the board must make arrangements for members and charity trustees to participate in that members' meeting by way of audio and/or audio-visual link(s) which allow them to hear and contribute to discussions at the meeting; and on the basis that the requirements set out in paragraphs (a) to (c) of clause 41 will apply.
- 43 A members' meeting may involve two or more members or charity trustees participating via attendance in person while other members and/or charity trustees participate via audio and/or audio-visual links; or it may involve participation solely via audio and/or audio-visual links.
- 44 References in clauses 38-43 to members should be taken to include proxies for members
- 45 The quorum for a members' meeting shall be 25 persons entitled to vote, each being a member or a proxy for a member.
- 46 An individual participating in a members' meeting via an audio or audio-visual link which allows them to hear and contribute to discussions at the meeting will be deemed to be present in person at the meeting.
- 47 If a quorum is not present within 15 minutes after the time at which a members' meeting was due to start - or if a quorum ceases to be present during a members' meeting - the meeting cannot proceed; and fresh notices of meeting will require to be sent out, to deal with the business (or remaining business) which was intended to be conducted.
- 48 The chair of the organisation should act as chairperson of each members' meeting.
- 49 If the chair of the organisation is not present within 15 minutes after the time at which the meeting was due to start (or is not willing to act as chairperson), the charity trustees present at the meeting must elect (from among themselves) the person who will act as chairperson of that meeting.

### **Voting at members' meetings**

- 50 Every member has one vote, which may be given either personally or by proxy. A member who wishes to appoint a proxy to vote on their behalf at any members' meeting:

- (a) must give to the SCIO a proxy form (in such terms as the board requires), signed by them.
- (b) must send by electronic means to the SCIO at the email address notified to the members for that purpose, a proxy form (in such terms as the board requires)

providing (in either case) the proxy form is received by the SCIO at the relevant address not less than 48 hours before the time for holding the members' meeting.

An instrument of proxy which does not comply with the provisions of clause 50, or which is not lodged or given in accordance with such provisions, shall be invalid.

- 51 A member shall not be entitled to appoint more than one proxy to attend on the same occasion.

- 52 Subject to clause 53, in relation to each resolution proposed at a members' meeting, an individual shall not be entitled to cast more than 2 votes as a proxy (in addition to any vote to which they are entitled personally if they are a member of the SCIO).
- 53 Where members have appointed the chair of a members' meeting to vote as their proxy and have directed the chair (through wording in the proxy form) on whether they should vote on their behalf in favour of, or against, each resolution, the provisions of clause 52 shall not apply in relation to the chair, in acting as proxy for those members.
- 54 A proxy appointed to attend and vote at any members' meeting instead of a member shall have the same right as the member who appointed them to speak at the meeting.
- 55 All decisions at members' meetings will be made by majority vote - with the exception of the types of resolution listed in clause 56
- 56 The following resolutions will be valid only if passed by not less than two thirds of those voting on the resolution at a members' meeting:
- (a) a resolution amending the constitution.
  - (b) a resolution directing the board to take any particular step (or directing the board not to take any particular step)
  - (c) a resolution approving the amalgamation of the organisation with another SCIO (or approving the constitution of the new SCIO to be constituted as the successor pursuant to that amalgamation);
  - (d) a resolution to the effect that all of the organisation's property, rights and liabilities should be transferred to another SCIO (or agreeing to the transfer from another SCIO of all of its property, rights and liabilities);
  - (e) a resolution for the winding up or dissolution of the organisation.
- 57 If there is an equal number of votes for and against any resolution, the chairperson of the meeting will be entitled to a second (casting) vote.
- 58 A resolution put to the vote at a members' meeting will be decided on a show of hands, unless the chairperson (or at least two other members present at the meeting and entitled to vote, whether as members or as proxies for members) ask for a secret ballot.
- 59 Where members are participating in a meeting via an audio or audio-visual link, they may cast their votes on any resolution orally, or by way of some form of visual indication, or by use of a voting button or similar, or by way of a message sent electronically - and providing the board have no reasonable grounds for suspicion as regards authenticity, any such action shall be deemed to be a vote cast personally via a show of hands.
- 60 The chairperson will decide how any secret ballot is to be conducted, and they will declare the result of the ballot at the meeting.
- 61 Where members are participating in a meeting via audio and/or audio-visual links, the chairperson's directions regarding how a secret ballot is to be conducted may allow those members to cast their votes on the secret ballot via any or all of the methods referred to in clause 59, providing reasonable steps are taken to preserve anonymity (while at the same time, addressing any risk of irregularities in the process).

62 The principles set out in clauses 59 and 61 shall also apply in relation to the casting of votes by an individual in their capacity as proxy for a member

### **Technical objections to remote participation in members' meetings**

63 This constitution imposes certain requirements regarding the use of audio and/or audio-visual links as a means of participation and voting at members' meetings; providing the arrangements made by the board in relation to a given members' meeting (and the manner in which the meeting is conducted) are consistent with those requirements:

- (a) a member cannot insist on participating in the members' meeting, or voting at the members' meeting, by any particular means.
- (b) the members' meeting need not be held in any particular place.
- (c) the members' meeting may be held without any particular number of those participating in the meeting being present in person at the same place (but, notwithstanding that, the quorum requirements - taking account of those participating via audio and/or audio-visual links - must still be met);
- (d) the members' meeting may be held by any means which permits those participating in the meeting to hear and contribute to discussions at the meeting.
- (e) a member will be able to exercise the right to vote at the members' meeting (including where a secret ballot is to be held) by such means as is determined by the chairperson of the meeting (consistent with the arrangements made by the board) and which permits that member's vote to be taken into account in determining whether or not a resolution is passed.

### **Minutes**

64 The board must ensure that proper minutes are kept in relation to all members' meetings.

65 Minutes of members' meetings must include the names of those present; and (so far as possible) should be signed by the chairperson of the meeting.

## **BOARD**

### **Number of charity trustees**

66 The maximum number of charity trustees is 9; out of that:

- (a) no more than 8 shall be charity trustees who were elected/appointed under clauses 71 and 72 (or deemed to have been appointed under clause 70); and
- (b) no more than 2 shall be charity trustees who were co-opted under the provisions of clauses 75 and 76.

67 The minimum number of charity trustees is 5

## **Eligibility**

- 68 A person shall not be eligible for election/appointment to the board under clauses 71-74 unless they are a member of the organisation; a person appointed to the board under clause 75 need not, however, be a member of the organisation.
- 69 A person will not be eligible for election or appointment to the board if they are: -
- (a) disqualified from being a charity trustee under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005; or
  - (b) an employee of the organisation.

## **Initial charity trustees**

- 70 The individuals who signed the charity trustee declaration forms which accompanied the application for incorporation of the organisation shall be deemed to have been appointed by the members as charity trustees with effect from the date of incorporation of the organisation.

## **Election, retirement, re-election**

- 71 At each AGM, the members may elect any member (unless they are debarred from membership under clause 69 to be a charity trustee) for a period of up to 3 years.
- 72 Trustees who complete their term of office are eligible for re-election as set out in clause 71 subject to their TOTAL continuous term not exceeding 6 years.
- 73 The board may at any time appoint any member (subject to clause 66, unless they are debarred from membership under clause 69) to be a charity trustee.

## **Appointment/re-appointment of co-opted charity trustees**

- 74 In addition to their powers under clause 73, the board may at any time appoint any non-member of the organisation to be a charity trustee (subject to clause 66, and providing they are not debarred from membership under clause 69) on the basis that they have specialist experience and/or skills which could be of assistance to the board.
- 75 At each AGM, any charity trustee appointed under clause 73 shall retire from office – but can then stand for election under clause 71.
- 76 At each AGM, any charity trustee appointed under clause 74 shall retire from office – but shall then be eligible for re-appointment under that clause

## **Termination of office**

- 77 A charity trustee will automatically cease to hold office if: -
- (a) they become disqualified from being a charity trustee under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005
  - (b) (in the case of a charity trustee elected/appointed under clauses 70 to 73 ) they cease to be a member of the organisation;
  - (c) they become an employee of the organisation

- (d) they give the organisation a notice of resignation, signed by them
- (e) they are absent (without good reason, in the opinion of the board) from more than three consecutive meetings of the board - but only if the board resolves to remove them from office
- (f) they are removed from office by resolution of the board on the grounds that they are considered to have committed a material breach of the code of conduct for charity trustees (as referred to in clause 94);
- (g) they are removed from office by resolution of the board on the grounds that they are considered to have been in serious or persistent breach of their duties under section 66(1) or (2) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005; or
- (h) they are removed from office by a resolution of the members passed at a members' meeting.
- (i) if a case of unacceptable behaviour is proven as referred to in clause 23

78 A resolution under paragraph f, g or h shall be valid only if: -

- (a) the charity trustee who is the subject of the resolution is given reasonable prior written notice of the grounds upon which the resolution for their removal is to be proposed.
- (b) the charity trustee concerned is given the opportunity to address the meeting at which the resolution is proposed, prior to the resolution being put to the vote; and
- (c) (in the case of a resolution under paragraph f or g) at least two thirds (to the nearest round number) of the charity trustees then in office vote in favour of the resolution.

### **Register of charity trustees**

79 The board must keep a register of charity trustees, setting out:

- (a) for each current charity trustee:
  - (i) their full name and address.
  - (ii) the date on which they were appointed as a charity trustee; and
  - (iii) any office held by them in the organisation.
- (b) for each former charity trustee - for at least 6 years from the date on which they ceased to be a charity trustee:
  - (i) the name of the charity trustee.
  - (ii) any office held by them in the organisation; and
  - (iii) the date on which they ceased to be a charity trustee.

- 80 The board must ensure that the register of charity trustees is updated within 28 days of any change:
- (a) which arises from a resolution of the board, or a resolution passed by the members of the organisation; or
  - (b) which is notified to the organisation.
- 81 If any person requests a copy of the register of charity trustees, the board must ensure that a copy is supplied to them within 28 days, providing the request is reasonable; if the request is made by a person who is not a charity trustee of the organisation, the board may provide a redacted copy- if the board is satisfied that including that information is likely to jeopardise the safety or security of any person or premises.

### **Office-bearers**

- 82 The charity trustees must elect (from among themselves) a chair.
- 83 In addition to the office-bearer required under clause 82, the charity trustees may elect further office-bearers if they consider that appropriate.
- 84 All charity trustees that are office-bearers will cease to hold office at the conclusion of each AGM but may then be re-elected under clause 82 or 83.
- 85 A charity trustee elected to any office will automatically cease to hold that office: -
- (a) if they cease to be a charity trustee; *or*
  - (b) if they give to the organisation a notice of resignation from that office, signed by them.

### **Powers of board**

- 86 Except where this constitution states otherwise, the organisation (and its assets and operations) will be managed by the board; and the board may exercise all the powers of the organisation.
- 87 A meeting of the board at which a quorum is present may exercise all powers exercisable by the board.
- 88 The members may, by way of a resolution passed in compliance with clause 56 (requirement for two-thirds majority), direct the board to take any particular step or direct the board not to take any particular step; and the board shall give effect to any such direction accordingly.

### **Charity trustees - general duties**

- 89 Each of the charity trustees has a duty, in exercising functions as a charity trustee, to act in the interests of the organisation; and, in particular, must:
- (a) seek, in good faith, to ensure that the organisation acts in a manner which is in accordance with its purposes
  - (b) act with the care and diligence which it is reasonable to expect of a person who is managing the affairs of another person

- (c) in circumstances giving rise to the possibility of a conflict of interest between the organisation and any other party:
  - (i) put the interests of the organisation before that of the other party; or
  - (ii) where any other duty prevents them from doing so, disclose the conflicting interest to the organisation and refrain from participating in any deliberation or decision of the other charity trustees with regard to the matter in question
- (d) ensure that the organisation complies with any direction, requirement, notice or duty imposed under or by virtue of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005.

90 In addition to the duties outlined in clause 89, all of the charity trustees must take such steps as are reasonably practicable for the purpose of ensuring: -

- (a) that any breach of any of those duties by a charity trustee is corrected by the charity trustee concerned and not repeated; and
- (b) that any trustee who has been in serious or persistent breach of those duties is removed as a trustee.

91 Provided they have declared their interest - and have not voted on the question of whether or not the organisation should enter into the arrangement - a charity trustee will not be debarred from entering into an arrangement with the organisation in which they have a personal interest; and (subject to clause 92 and to the provisions relating to remuneration for services contained in the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005), they may retain any personal benefit which arises from that arrangement.

92 No charity trustee may serve as an employee (full time or part time) of the organisation; and no charity trustee may be given any remuneration by the organisation for carrying out their duties as a charity trustee.

93 The charity trustees may be paid all travelling and other expenses reasonably incurred by them in connection with carrying out their duties; this may include expenses relating to their attendance at meetings.

#### **Code of conduct for charity trustees**

94 Each of the charity trustees shall comply with and regularly review the code of conduct (incorporating detailed rules on conflict of interest) prescribed by the board from time to time.

95 The code of conduct referred to in clause 94 shall be supplemental to the provisions relating to the conduct of charity trustees contained in this constitution and the duties imposed on charity trustees under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005; and all relevant provisions of this constitution shall be interpreted and applied in accordance with the provisions of the code of conduct in force from time to time

## **DECISION-MAKING BY THE CHARITY TRUSTEES**

### **Notice of board meetings**

- 96 Any charity trustee may call a meeting of the board *or* ask the secretary to call a meeting of the board.
- 97 At least 7 days' notice must be given of each board meeting, unless (in the opinion of the person calling the meeting) there is a degree of urgency which makes that inappropriate.
- 98 If charity trustees are to be permitted to participate in a board meeting by way of audio and/or audio-visual link(s), the charity trustees must, in advance of the meeting, be provided with details of how to connect and participate via that link or links; and (particularly for the benefit of those charity trustees who may have difficulties in using a computer or laptop for this purpose) the charity trustees' attention should be drawn to the following options:
- (a) participating in the meeting via an audio link accessed by phone, using dial-in details (if that forms part of the arrangements);
  - (b) (where attendance in person is to be permitted, either on an open basis or subject to a restriction on the total number who will be permitted to attend) the ability to attend the meeting in person.

### **Procedure at board meetings**

- 99 No valid decisions can be taken at a board meeting unless a quorum is present; the quorum for board meetings is more than 50% charity trustees, present in person.
- 100 An individual participating in a board meeting via an audio or audio-visual link which allows them to hear and contribute to discussions at the meeting will be deemed to be present in person (or, if they are not a charity trustee, will be deemed to be in attendance) at the meeting.
- 101 If at any time the number of charity trustees in office falls below the number stated as the quorum in clause 99, the remaining charity trustee(s) will have power to fill the vacancies or call a members' meeting - but will not be able to take any other valid decisions.
- 102 The chair of the organisation should act as chairperson of each board meeting.
- 103 If the chair is not present within 15 minutes after the time at which the meeting was due to start (or is not willing to act as chairperson), the charity trustees present at the meeting must elect (from among themselves) the person who will act as chairperson of that meeting.
- 104 Every charity trustee has one vote, which must be given personally (subject to clause 109).
- 105 All decisions at board meetings will be made by majority vote.
- 106 If there is an equal number of votes for and against any resolution, the chairperson of the meeting will be entitled to a second (casting) vote.

- 107 The board may if they consider appropriate (and must, if this is required under clause 108), allow charity trustees to participate in board meetings by way of an audio and/or audio-visual link or links which allow them to hear and contribute to discussions at the meeting, providing:
- (a) the means by which charity trustees can participate via that link or links are not subject to technical complexities, significant costs or other factors which are likely to represent - for all, or a significant proportion, of the charity trustees - a barrier to participation; and
  - (b) the manner in which the meeting is conducted ensures, so far as reasonably possible, that those charity trustees who participate via an audio or audio-visual link are not disadvantaged with regard to their ability to contribute to discussions at the meeting, as compared with those charity trustees (if any) who are attending in person (and vice versa).
- 108 If restrictions arising from public health legislation, directions or guidance are likely to mean that attendance in person at a proposed board meeting would not be possible or advisable for one or more of the charity trustees, the board must make arrangements for charity trustees to participate in that board meeting by way of audio and/or audio-visual link(s); and on the basis that:
- (a) the requirements set out in paragraphs (a) and (b) of clause 107 will apply; and
  - (b) the board must use all reasonable endeavours to ensure that all charity trustees have access to one or more means by which they may hear and contribute to discussions at the meeting.
- 109 A board meeting may involve two or more charity trustees participating via attendance in person while other charity trustees participate via audio and/or audio-visual links; or it may involve participation solely via audio and/or audio-visual links.
- 110 Where a charity trustee or charity trustees are participating in a board meeting via an audio or audio-visual link, they may cast their vote on any resolution orally, or by way of some form of visual indication, or by use of a voting button or similar, or by way of a message sent electronically.
- 111 The board may, at its discretion, allow any person to attend (whether in person or by way of an audio or audio-visual link) and speak at a board meeting notwithstanding that they are not a charity trustee - but on the basis that they must not participate in decision-making.
- 112 A charity trustee must not vote at a board meeting (or at a meeting of a sub-committee) on any resolution which relates to a matter in which they have a personal interest or duty which conflicts (or may conflict) with the interests of the organisation; they must withdraw from the meeting while an item of that nature is being dealt with.
- 113 For the purposes of clause 112: -
- (a) an interest held by an individual who is “connected” with the charity trustee under section 68(2) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (husband/wife, partner, child, parent, brother/sister etc) shall be deemed to be held by that charity trustee.

- (b) a charity trustee will be deemed to have a personal interest in relation to a particular matter if a body in relation to which they are an employee, director, member of the management committee, officer or elected representative has an interest in that matter.
- 114 The principles set out in clause 63 (technical objections to remote participation) shall apply in relation to remote participation and voting at board meetings, as if each reference in that clause to a member were a reference to a charity trustee and each reference in that clause to a members' meeting were a reference to a board meeting.
- 115 A resolution agreed to in writing (or by e-mail) by a majority of the charity trustees then in office shall (subject to clauses 116 and 117) be as valid as if duly passed at a board meeting.
- 116 A resolution under clause 115 shall not be valid unless a copy of the resolution was circulated to all the charity trustees, along with a cut-off time (which must be reasonable in the circumstances) for notifications under clause 117.
- 117 If a resolution is circulated to the charity trustees under clause 116 any one or more charity trustees may, following receipt of a copy of the resolution, notify the secretary that they consider that a board meeting should be held to discuss the matter which is the subject of the resolution; and if any such notification is received by the secretary prior to the cut-off time:
  - (a) the secretary must convene a board meeting accordingly, and on the basis that it will take place as soon as reasonably possible
  - (b) the resolution cannot be treated as valid under clause 115 unless and until that board meeting has taken place;
  - (c) the board may (if they consider appropriate, on the basis of the discussions at the meeting) resolve at that board meeting that the resolution should be treated as invalid, notwithstanding that it had previously been agreed to in writing (or by e-mail) by a majority of the charity trustees then in office.

## **Minutes**

- 118 The board must ensure that proper minutes are kept in relation to all board meetings and meetings of sub-committees.
- 119 The minutes to be kept under clause 118 must include the names of those present; and (so far as possible) should be signed by the chairperson of the meeting.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **Delegation to sub-committees**

- 120 The board may delegate any of their powers to committees; a committee must include at least one charity trustee, but other members of a committee need not be charity trustees.
- 121 When delegating powers under clause 120, the board must set out appropriate conditions (which must include an obligation to report regularly to the board).

- 122 Any delegation of powers under clause 120 may be revoked or altered by the board at any time.
- 123 The rules of procedure for each committee, and the provisions relating to membership of each committee, shall be set by the board.

### **Operation of accounts**

- 124 Subject to clause 125, the signatures of two out of three signatories appointed by the board will be required in relation to all operations (other than the lodging of funds) on the bank and building society accounts held by the organisation; at least one out of the two signatures must be the signature of a charity trustee.
- 125 Where the organisation uses electronic facilities for the operation of any bank or building society account, the authorisations required for operations on that account must be consistent with the approach reflected in clause 124.

### **Accounting records and annual accounts**

- 126 The board must ensure that proper accounting records are kept, in accordance with all applicable statutory requirements.
- 127 The board must prepare annual accounts, complying with all relevant statutory requirements; if an audit is required under any statutory provisions (or if the board consider that an audit would be appropriate for some other reason), the board should ensure that an audit of the accounts is carried out by a qualified auditor.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

### **Winding-up**

- 128 If the organisation is to be wound up or dissolved, the winding-up or dissolution process will be carried out in accordance with the procedures set out under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005.
- 129 Any surplus assets available to the organisation immediately preceding its winding up or dissolution must be used for purposes which are the same as - or which closely resemble - the purposes of the organisation as set out in this constitution.

### **Alterations to the constitution**

- 130 This constitution may (subject to clause 131) be altered by resolution of the members passed at a members' meeting (subject to achieving the two thirds majority referred to in clause 56) or by way of a written resolution of the members.
- 131 The Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 prohibits taking certain steps (e.g., change of name, an alteration to the purposes, amalgamation, winding-up) without the consent of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

## **Interpretation**

132 References in this constitution to the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 should be taken to include: -

- (a) any statutory provision which adds to, modifies, or replaces that Act; and
- (b) any statutory instrument issued in pursuance of that Act or in pursuance of any statutory provision falling under paragraph a above.

133 In this constitution: -

- (a) “charity” means a body which is either a “Scottish charity” within the meaning of section 13 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 or a “charity” within the meaning of section 1 of the Charities Act 2011, providing (in either case) that its objects are limited to charitable purposes

“Charitable purpose” means a charitable purpose under section 7 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 which is also regarded as a charitable purpose in relation to the application of the Taxes Acts.