

**LAWS OF THE IRISH RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION**  
**(Revised November 2021)**

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## Definitions

1. (a) In these Laws:-

“Annual Meeting” means the annual meeting of the Council;

“Auditors” mean the auditors appointed under Law 14;

“Amateur Game” means the Game in Ireland at every level other than the Professional Game. This may also be referred to as the Domestic Game;

“Branch” means a Branch of the Union referred to in Law 6;

“Bye-Laws” mean the Bye-Laws for the time being adopted by World Rugby and in force;

“Chairperson of the Management Committee” means the person nominated by the Committee and whose nomination as Chairperson of the Management Committee is received by the Council pursuant to Law 14(vi);

“Chief Executive” means the Chief Executive of the Union appointed by the Committee;

“Club “means an Affiliated Club;

“Affiliated Club” means a Members Club which is a member of a Branch and a club elected by the Committee to be part of the Union. Club will also include Schools and third level educational institutions affiliated to the Union;

“Club Member” means any individual who has been elected to membership and has discharged the annual subscription to an Affiliated Club or is an honorary or life member or registered adult Player thereof;

“Members Club” means a club whose business affairs, assets and liabilities are under the management and control of a committee or governing body, a majority of whom are elected annually for not less than one year by the Club Members;

“Commercial and Marketing Committee” means the Standing Committee responsible for the Union’s commercial and marketing activities, as provided for in Law 20;

“Committee” means the Committee of the Union provided for in Law 15;

“Council” means the Council of the Union provided for in Law 12;

“Exile” means a member of the association of players and administrators beyond the shores of Ireland and specifically in England, Scotland and Wales, known as the Exiles, governed by Regulations made by the Committee;

“Finance Committee” means the Standing Committee responsible for managing the Union’s finances and assets, as provided for in Law 17;

“Game” means rugby football played in accordance with the Laws of the Game;

“Governance, Audit and Risk Committee” means the Standing Committee responsible for providing assurance and advice on governance, audit and risk arrangements, as provided for in Law 21;

“Honorary Treasurer” means the person elected as such by the Council pursuant to Law 14(a) (iv);

“International Affairs Committee” means the Standing Committee responsible for advising the Committee on matters relating to the governance of the Game by its governing bodies and competition authorities, provided for in Law 22;

“International Squad” means the players selected to form the squad for senior and other international matches;

“Laws of the Game” mean the Laws of the Game as laid down by World Rugby from time to time;

“Laws of the Union” means all these Laws and each of them, and includes all Union Regulations;

“Management Committee” means the Management Committee provided for in Law 16 (a); whose role is to oversee the operation and implementation of Union policy and to deal with matters arising from time to time within the guidelines, directions, delegated authority and parameters set for it by the Committee and provided for in Law 16;

“National Professional Game Board (NPGB)” means the Standing Committee responsible for the Professional Game provided for in Law 18;

“Nominations Committee” is the Standing Committee responsible for recommending persons for specified positions in the Union, provided for in Law 23;

“Officer(s) of the Union” means the President, the two Vice -Presidents, the immediate Past President, the Honorary Treasurer and the Chairperson of the Management Committee;

“Official of the Union” means any Person appointed, nominated, delegated, designated elected or employed by the Union to perform or undertake any duty, function or office for or on behalf of the Union including for the avoidance of doubt members of Council;

“Past President” means a person who has previously served as the President of the Union;

“Person” means a player, referee or other match official, coach, manager, Official of the Union, medical officer, member of staff of the Union or a Branch, or any individual who is or has been involved in the Game, or in the organisation, administration or promotion of the Game;

“Player” means a player of the Game, in all its formats, whether of the Professional Game or the Amateur Game;

“Player Contract” means the applicable senior, academy or national sevens contract entered into by a Player with the Union for the provision of playing services;

“President” means the person elected annually by Council as honorary president of the Union pursuant to law 14(a)(iv);

“Professional Game” means the game played at national or provincial level by players contracted by the Union, or with the authority of the Union, under a Player Contract and who are assigned to and play for one of the provincial teams or national sevens teams;

“Representative” means any Person nominated or appointed by the Committee to represent the Union;

“Rugby Committee” means the Standing Committee responsible for the Amateur Game provided for in Law 19;

“Special Meeting” means any meeting of the Council other than the Annual Meeting convened in accordance with to Law 13(b);

“Standing Committee” means a committee established under Law 15(f)(iii);

“Sub-Committee” means such sub-committee advisory group and working group of the Committee, not being a Standing Committee as may be established by the Committee as provided for in Law 15 (f)(iv);

“Trustees” mean those persons appointed as Trustees of the Union by the Council pursuant to Law 27 to formally hold, administer, acquire, dispose of or otherwise deal with property and other assets for the benefit of the Union as instructed by the Union Committee.

“Union” means the Irish Rugby Football Union membership of which comprises the Branches (and the members thereof), the Affiliated Clubs (and the Club Members thereof) and the Exiles;

“Union Regulations” or “Regulations” means regulations respectively made by the Council and the Committee pursuant to their powers in Laws 14(b)(ii) and 15(c);

“Vice President” means the Senior Vice President (SVP) or Junior Vice President (JVP) elected by Council annually, pursuant to Law 14 (a)(iv);

“World Rugby” means the world governing body of the Game, of which the Union is a member;

“World Rugby Regulations” means the regulations relating to the Game laid down by World Rugby from time to time;

“World Rugby Representatives” means such persons who are nominated to, and approved by, Council to represent the Union on World Rugby.

- (b) Unless the context otherwise requires in these Laws the masculine gender shall include the feminine gender and the singular shall include the plural and vice versa.
- (c) Application of the Laws: These Laws shall apply to all persons involved in the Game on the island of Ireland and, where relevant, beyond, of either or neither sex or, in circumstances of legal disability, save as regards membership of, or other personal entitlements hereunder, their care providers, parents or legal guardians.

2. The name of the Union shall be the “Irish Rugby Football Union”.

## **Objects**

3. The objects of the Union shall be:-
  - (a) To administer the Game, as its governing body, in accordance with the Union’s core values, recognising diversity, inclusivity, gender, race and a multicultural society, and to promote, foster, develop and sustain the Game in all its forms within Ireland and beyond the shores of Ireland if it is considered in the interests of the Game nationally to do so;
  - (b) To assist and further the efforts of the Branches and Clubs of the Union as far as possible in the promotion and development of the Game and the provision of playing fields, supporting facilities and accommodation;
  - (c) To arrange international, interprovincial, representative, trial and other matches;
  - (d) To take all steps that may be necessary or advisable to prevent infringements of the Byelaws, the World Rugby Regulations, or the Laws of the Game, to prevent other improper methods or practices in the Game and to protect it from abuses.

## **Jurisdiction**

4. The Council is the supreme authority to adjudicate on all matters concerned with the Game in Ireland.

## **Membership of World Rugby**

5. The Union shall be a member of World Rugby, and the Bye-Laws, the World Rugby Regulations and the Laws of the Game as promulgated from time to time shall be the Bye-Laws, World Rugby Regulations and Laws of the Game recognised and enforced by the Union, and shall be deemed incorporated into these Laws.

## **Branches, Affiliated Clubs and Exiles**

6. There shall be a Branch of the Union in each of the Provinces of Connacht, Leinster, Munster and Ulster and each Branch shall be subject to the Laws of the Union.
7.
  - (a) Each Branch shall have a committee to manage the affairs of the Branch.
  - (b) Each Branch shall have power to make, alter or amend bye-laws for the management of the Branch, but only in so far as such bye-laws shall not be inconsistent or at variance with these Laws. Such bye-laws and any alterations or amendments thereto, shall be subject to the approval of the Committee.

- (c) Should the Committee withhold its approval in respect of the bye-laws of a Branch, or any alterations thereto, the Branch shall have a right to appeal to the Council.
  - (d) In the event of any conflict or inconsistency between the Laws of the Union and the bye-laws of any Branch, the Laws of the Union shall prevail.
  - (e) The Committee may allow a Club to be affiliated to the Branch of a Province other than that in which the club is located, provided that both Branches consent.
- 8.
- (a) Any club playing the Game and willing to conform to the Laws of the Union may apply to become a Club of the Branch of the Union in the Province in which it is located.
  - (b) Before a club becomes a Club of a Branch, the Branch shall make such inquiries of it as are necessary or appropriate in relation to its grounds, accommodation and dressing facilities or otherwise. The Branch may direct that such grounds, accommodation and facilities meet with its approval before affiliating the Club to the Branch. The Branch shall also ensure that the club has acceptable bye-laws and governance and management structures in place.
  - (c) Any club that is refused affiliation by a Branch shall have the right to appeal to the Committee.
  - (d) Each Club, its Club Members, employees, volunteers and invitees shall be bound by the Laws and Regulations of the Union and the bye-laws of their Branch.
  - (e) A Club, upon being admitted to a Branch of this Union, shall be furnished with a copy of the Laws of the Union and a copy of the bye-laws of the Branch.
  - (f) The Committee may admit as a Club, a Club which is not located in Ireland.
- 9.
- (a) The annual subscription of each Club to the Union shall be such sum as the Committee may decide upon which shall be paid before 1<sup>st</sup> October in each year to the Branch to which the club is affiliated.
  - (b) A Club whose subscription to the Union is unpaid on 1<sup>st</sup> October in any year shall receive notice from the Branch that in the event of its subscription remaining unpaid Thirty Days after the date of such notice the name of the Club will be struck off the list of Clubs; and a Club whose name has been so struck off shall not be eligible for membership of the Union until all moneys due by it to the Union shall have been paid.
- 10.
- (a) Every Club, save in the case of third level educational institutions and Schools, shall, before 31<sup>st</sup> October each year, send to the Union and the honorary secretary of the Branch to which such club is affiliated, the names of its honorary secretary and honorary treasurer together with the number of Club Members during the preceding season, and a statement of its accounts for that year which have been prepared and reviewed by an appropriately qualified independent third party.
  - (b) A Club shall not be entitled to send delegates to any meeting of the Branch or take any part in the management of such Branch unless the number of Club Members during the preceding season shall have exceeded thirty, and unless a statement of its accounts for that year shall have been furnished in accordance with Law 10 (a).
  - (c) Any Branch or Club must at any time produce their books for inspection on being requested to do so by the Committee.

- (d) Every Branch shall endeavour to submit to the Committee 21 days before the Annual Meeting accounts showing the receipts and expenditures during the preceding year but shall in any event submit such accounts to the Committee within 14 days of their being approved by the Branch Committee.
  - (e) No Club or Club Member shall take part in a league or cup match or in any other Rugby Football competition, not under the jurisdiction of a Branch, or of the Council, without the prior consent of the Committee.
  - (f) League and Cup and other matches under the jurisdiction of any Branch and league and cup matches under the jurisdiction of the Union shall be played under such Regulations as the appropriate Branch and the Union respectively shall determine.
11. The Committee may make Regulations governing the administration, presentation and conduct of the Exiles.

## **Council**

- 12 (a) The supreme authority over the affairs of the Union shall be vested in the Council, the membership of which shall consist of the President, Senior Vice-President, Junior Vice President, Honorary Treasurer, Chairperson of the Management Committee of the Union, eleven Past Presidents, the Trustees of the Union, the President of each Branch, ten delegates appointed by each Branch, and one delegate appointed by the Exiles. With regard to the eleven Past Presidents entitled to vote at Council, these will be the eleven most recent Past Presidents (not including the Trustees). Should one or more of these eleven be unable to attend, the next most recent Past President(s) will be invited to attend as a voting member of Council. All other Past Presidents will be invited to attend and participate in any Council meeting but will not be entitled to vote thereat. For the avoidance of doubt, the President at the commencement of the Annual Meeting shall remain an additional voting member of Council for the duration of the meeting or any adjournment thereof notwithstanding the vacation of all offices during the course of the meeting.
- (b) Any member of the Committee who is not a person mentioned in Law 12(a) above may be entitled to attend a meeting of the Council but shall not be entitled to vote thereat.
  - (c) The Auditors appointed to audit the accounts of the Union shall be invited to attend a meeting of the Council, but they shall not be entitled to vote thereat.
  - (d) The Secretary of each Branch, and of the Exiles, respectively, shall send to the Chief Executive at least 14 days before the date of any meeting of the Council the names and addresses of the delegates appointed to attend that meeting and of any substitute who may be called upon to attend if a delegate originally appointed cannot be present at the meeting.
  - (e) No delegate, save the Exiles' delegate, shall be entitled to attend a meeting of the Council, unless all subscriptions due by the Club of which the delegate is a member shall have been paid to the Union and the appropriate Branch.
  - (f) No Branch shall be entitled to send delegates to a meeting of the Council unless the Union shall have received from it the payments required by Law 9.

13. (a) The Annual Meeting shall be held on the third Friday in July in each year or on such other day as the Committee shall decide.
- (b) A Special Meeting shall be convened by the Chief Executive on being instructed to do so by the Committee, or on the Chief Executive receiving a requisition to do so signed by the honorary secretary of any Branch or by the honorary secretaries of not less than twenty Clubs, (the requisition stating the said twenty Clubs have in annual or special meetings of each such Club resolved to request a special meeting of the Council), accompanied by a fee of €5000 and a statement of the reason for which such special meeting is desired; provided that the said fee may be returned if the Council so directs in its absolute discretion.
- (c) The date and place of a Special Meeting shall be determined by the Committee.
- (d) Notice of the Annual Meeting, and of any Special Meeting, shall be sent by the Chief Executive at least fourteen days before the date on which such a meeting is to be held to the members of the Council, and to the respective secretaries of each Branch, and of the Exiles.
- (e) The accounts of the Union shall be audited, and abstracts thereof printed and sent with the notice of the Annual Meeting to all the persons entitled to receive such notice.
- (f) The quorum for an Annual or Special Meeting shall be thirty and all such Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the prevailing Standing Orders of the Council as adopted by Council from time to time.
- (g) A Meeting of the Council may be adjourned to such date and place as the Meeting shall direct.
- (h) Where it is provided in these Laws that any office shall be filled by election the mode of election shall be by secret ballot in respect of candidates duly proposed and seconded at the meeting. The Chairperson of the meeting shall appoint tellers and scrutineers as necessary. The Chairperson of the meeting shall declare the result of the ballot and after any necessary recount which has been called for, the candidate or candidates receiving the most votes to be elected. In a ballot any voting paper which purports to cast votes for a greater or a lesser number of candidates than the number of offices to be filled shall be deemed to be a spoiled vote.
14. (a) The Council shall at each Annual Meeting or at any adjournment thereof transact the following business: -
- (i) Consider and approve, with or without amendment, the minutes of the previous meeting;
- (ii) Receive a report from the Committee, and adopt or make any order or amendment that may be appropriate in regard to same;
- (iii) Receive the accounts and balance sheet of the Union for the preceding financial period and the auditor's report thereon and adopt or make any order that may be appropriate in regard to same;
- (iv) Elect a President, two Vice Presidents and an Honorary Treasurer. In the event there is more than one candidate for any such office or offices, provided not less than 14 days' notice of such candidacy has been served on the Chief Executive, an election will be held in accordance with Law 13(h);



- (v) Receive nominations from the Committee of 3 persons, at least one of whom must be a female, to represent the Union on World Rugby pursuant to Law 15 (f)(xiii);
  - (vi) Receive the nomination from the Committee of a person to be Chairperson of the Management Committee;
  - (vii) Receive four nominations of persons from each Branch to represent that Branch for the coming year on the Committee of the Union. All Branches shall exercise their best endeavours to ensure that at least one female shall represent their province on the Union Committee as soon as possible. From the Annual Council meeting of summer 2023 forward, each Branch shall exercise its best endeavours to ensure that at least one nominated female is included within the provincial list submitted. In the event of a Branch failing to provide such a female nominee the Council shall have discretion to restrict the number of nominees from that Branch to three for the coming year save in extraordinary and unique circumstances. In the event that any such appointment becomes permanently vacant for any reason prior to the next Annual Meeting, it shall be for the Branch affected to appoint a substitute representative to fill any such vacancy.
  - (viii) Appoint a firm of auditors to audit and report upon the accounts;
  - (ix) Adjudicate on all matters submitted by any Branch or Club or by the Exiles;
  - (x) Consider, with or without amendment, accept or reject any amendment or alteration to the Laws of the Union duly proposed and of which due notice shall have been given, or dispensed with, in accordance with Law 28.
- (b) The Council may at any Annual or Special Meeting or adjournment thereof transact in accordance with these Laws any business relating to the affairs of the Union and in particular (without prejudice to the generality of this paragraph) may:-
- (i) Set aside or amend any regulation, adjudication, interpretation, or decision made by the Committee;
  - (ii) Make any such regulation or regulations, as it shall think fit, for the administration, management and control of the Union;
  - (iii) Make any interpretation of the Laws of the Union or the bye-laws of any of the Branches as it shall consider appropriate;
  - (iv) Hear and decide any appeal by a Branch, or Club against expulsion or suspension determined by the Committee pursuant to Law 15(f)(v) provided that a majority of two to one of those present and voting at the Council shall be necessary to carry a resolution to expel or to confirm a decision to the Committee to expel any Branch or Club.
- (c) Notwithstanding the provisions of any other Law herein contained, the Council shall not have power to consider, hear, adjudicate on, set aside, amend or to decide any matter referred to it by any Branch, Club or Club Member or by the Exiles relating to ethics, discipline or any drug or doping related offence, or to vary, affect or breach any undertaking or contractual obligation entered into by the Union while such undertaking or contractual obligation remains to be fulfilled. The decision of the Committee as to whether any matter relates to ethics, discipline or any drug or doping related offence or vary affect or breach an

undertaking or contractual obligation entered into by the Union shall be final and binding on all parties.

## **The Committee**

15. (a) The Committee shall consist of the President, Senior Vice-President, Junior Vice-President, Honorary Treasurer, Chairperson of the Management Committee, the 16 persons nominated pursuant to Law 14(a)(vii), and the persons (if any) appointed pursuant to paragraph 15(b) or co-opted pursuant to paragraph 15(f)(xi) of this Law.
- (b) If the Chairperson of the International Affairs Committee is not a member of the Committee pursuant to Law 15(a), either the Chairperson or another representative of the International Affairs Committee, agreed by the Committee, will be appointed to be a member of the Committee.
- (c) Subject to the supreme authority of Council the affairs of the Union shall be administered and managed by and under the control of the Committee in accordance with these Laws. The Committee shall have power to make such Regulations and decisions as it thinks fit for the well-being of the Union and the Game that are not inconsistent with these Laws and the Bye-Laws.
- (d) The Committee shall have the same powers of administration, management and control of the property of the Union for the objects of the Union as if they were absolute owners beneficially entitled thereto.
- (e) All Regulations and decisions of the Committee shall be binding upon the Branches, the Clubs, the members thereof and where applicable, the Exiles.
- (f) Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, and subject to any direction of the Council, the Committee shall have the following powers and duties:-
  - (i) (a) To control and apply the finances of the Union subject to any direction of the Council and to incur any expenses it may consider desirable to further the interests of the Union and of the Game and to make donations out of the income of the Union to the Irish Rugby Football Union Charitable Trust as it may from time to time determine;
  - (b) To authorise the purchase, or taking on lease, licence or otherwise any property (real or personal) and to authorise the sale, exchange, disposal, lease, licence, charge, mortgage, or other disposition or dealing with any such property;
  - (c) To borrow or raise money or money's worth or any sums of money with or without security for any purpose which it considers necessary to further the objects of the Union and to secure the repayment of same on behalf of the Union and its Trustees by mortgage, charge, guarantee, negotiable instrument or otherwise whether over the property of the Union or otherwise;
  - (d) To enter into any commercial partnership, alliance or joint venture with other Unions or other commercial entities for the purposes of profiting out those arrangements for the benefit of the Game in Ireland.

- (ii) To appoint and remove a Chief Executive and such other employees upon such terms and such remuneration as it may deem necessary and think fit;
- (iii) To establish the eight Standing Committees referred to in Laws 16-23 and to establish and/or remove from time to time such Sub-Committees as it deems necessary upon such terms of reference as it may determine from time to time;
- (iv) At its first meeting following upon the Annual Meeting in each year or at such other times as it thinks fit, to receive and consider any proposed new names from the Nominations Committee for chairpersons of the Standing Committees, (excluding the Chairperson of the Management Committee who is appointed pursuant to Law 14(a)(vi), the Chairperson of the Finance Committee who shall be the Honorary Treasurer of the Union and the Chairperson of the Nominations Committee who will be elected by the Committee) and if thought fit to appoint the chairpersons of the Standing Committees and to delegate to such Standing Committees and to any Sub-Committees such of its powers as it deems appropriate and necessary subject always to the following:-
  - 1. The Committee shall specify such of its powers, consistent with the policy of the Union to be delegated to each Standing Committee and Sub-Committee and the Terms of Reference of each Standing Committee and Sub Committee shall specify the delegated authority they have been granted by the Committee and shall be kept updated;
  - 2. The Committee shall appoint the members of the Standing Committees with the exception of the Management Committee whose membership is stipulated in Law 16(a);
  - 3. The Committee shall determine the reporting relationship of any Standing Committee and Sub Committee to it;
  - 4. Each Standing Committee (save for the Management Committee which remains subject to Law 16(e)) and Sub Committee shall have power to co-opt persons who are not members of the Committee, subject to the approval of the Committee;
  - 5. Each Standing Committee and Sub-Committee shall decide its own quorum and procedures;
  - 6. The chairperson of each Sub-Committee shall be appointed by the Committee;
  - 7. The chairperson of each Standing Committee or Sub-Committee shall have authority to act on behalf of the Standing Committee or Sub-Committee of which they are chair in dealing with day to day matters within the competence and powers of their Standing Committee or Sub-Committee;
  - 8. The Chief Executive may convene a meeting of any Standing Committee or Sub-Committee. The chairperson of each Standing Committee or Sub-Committee shall also, subject to notifying the Chief Executive as necessary, be entitled to convene a meeting of the Standing Committee or Sub-Committee of which they are chair.

- (v) To investigate and where appropriate to hear any allegation of an infringement, by a Branch, a Club or member thereof or any player of the Laws of the Union, the World Rugby Regulations, the Laws of the Game, or any alleged conduct by any of the foregoing, alleged to be detrimental to the best interests of the Union or of the Game, and depending on the outcome of the hearing, to expel or suspend from the Union, the Branch or Club, as the case may be, or otherwise to punish by such sanction or otherwise as it deems appropriate, the Branch, Club or member thereof or any player or to otherwise decide in such manner as it may deem fit. Where a Branch or club is expelled or suspended such Branch or Club shall have the right to appeal to the Council within thirty days of the notification of the decision of such expulsion or suspension to it;
- (vi) To investigate and where appropriate to hear any allegation of an infringement of the Laws of the Union, the World Rugby Regulations, the Laws of the Game or any alleged conduct alleged to be detrimental to the best interests of the Union or of the Game by any player or administrator of the Exiles and to deal with same in such manner as it deems proper and appropriate;
- (vii) To make Regulations and to repeal, amend or change such Regulations for dealing with players sent off the field-of-play by a referee or cited under the World Rugby Regulations and such Regulations shall be binding on each Branch, Club, Club Member, and so far as possible the Exiles;
- (viii) To direct, order and empower each Branch to set up a disciplinary committee and a committee of appeal;
- (ix) To hear any appeal by a player or other person or club or Branch affected by a decision of the Committee or any of its Sub Committees and to make such ruling or rulings as may seem fit;
- (x) To adjudicate on any dispute save where in its absolute discretion in its opinion the matter is such that the decision of a Branch ought to be final. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any issue concerning an alleged failure to observe fair procedures, or the principles of natural justice can be entertained by the Union by way of appeal at its discretion.
- (xi) To co-opt not more than two persons to be members of the Committee, and in its absolute discretion, (save as provided in Law 14(a)(vii)), by co-option to fill any vacancy on the Committee howsoever arising; such co-option shall take place only if three-quarters of the members of the Committee support the proposed co-option and provided that 14 days notice of the proposal to co-opt has been given to the members of the Committee;
- (xii) To nominate for the acceptance by the Council, in accordance with Law 14(a)(vi), one person to be the Chairperson of the Management Committee;
- (xiii) To nominate for acceptance by the Council in accordance with Law 14(a)(v) three Representatives on World Rugby one of whom shall be female;
- (xiv) Generally, to appoint Representatives at any conference or meeting including substitutes for such Representatives;
- (xv) To interpret the Bye-Laws, the Laws of the Game, the World Rugby Regulations, the Laws of the Union and the bye-laws of the Branches and, where appropriate, to

submit to World Rugby proposals for alterations to the Laws of the Game and the World Rugby Regulations;

- (xvi) From time to time to make or assist in the making of Regulations governing the participation by Branches or Clubs or Club Members thereof in matches against teams from other Unions in membership of World Rugby;
  - (xvii) To present an international cap to any player who has represented Ireland in a senior international match against any Union in membership with World Rugby;
  - (xviii) To control and distribute admission tickets to international and representative matches under the auspices of the Union;
  - (xix) To appoint one or more of its members or any other person or persons, whether a body corporate or otherwise, as it may decide to act in legal proceedings in the name of and on behalf of the Union on such terms if any, as it may decide;
  - (xx) To appoint the team manager and coach or coaches for all the International teams and squads and in whatever manner and on whatever terms and conditions are most advantageous to the administration and promotion of the Game in Ireland;
  - (xxi) To determine the procedure for, and nominate, persons charged with and deemed responsible for the selection of all International teams and squads;
  - (xxii) To decide on the criteria for determining the qualifications which shall govern the eligibility of players for selection on a national or provincial (Ulster, Munster, Leinster and Connacht) squad or team. Any issues arising on the matter of eligibility shall be decided and determined by the Committee in its absolute discretion;
  - (xxiii) The game shall not be played in Ireland between 1<sup>st</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> September unless with the prior consent of the Committee.
- (g) The quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be twelve.

### **The Management Committee**

16. (a) The Management Committee shall be a Standing Committee of the Committee consisting of a Chairperson appointed under Law 14(a) (vi), the President, the Chairperson of the NPGb, the Rugby Committee and the Commercial and Marketing Committees, the Honorary Treasurer of the Union, who shall be Chairperson of the Finance Committee, and the Chief Executive Officer of the Union.
- (b) The function of the Management Committee shall be to oversee the operation and implementation of the policy of the Union and to deal with matters arising from time to time within the guidelines, directions, delegated authority and parameters set for it by the Committee.
- (c) The Chairperson 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 chairperson from office at

any time. No person may be Chairperson of the Management Committee for more than six consecutive years.

- (d) No person may be President of the Union and Chair of the Management Committee or any other Standing Committee at the same time.
- (e) The Management Committee may co-opt, with the approval of the Committee, two additional persons to be members of the Management Committee.

### **The Finance Committee**

- 17. (a) The Finance Committee shall be a Standing Committee of the Committee whose Chairperson will be the Honorary Treasurer of the Union. No person may be Honorary Treasurer for more than 9 consecutive years.
- (b) The function of the Finance Committee will be to consider and implement all financial matters connected with the administration and development of the Professional Game and the Amateur Game in Ireland. It will also give prior authority for contracts, commercial arrangements and other obligations entered into by, or on behalf of, the Union.
- (c) The Finance Committee shall report on its activities and the financial affairs of the Union at each meeting of the Committee and of the Management Committee.
- (d) The Finance Committee will approve the annual budget of the Union for submission to the Committee.
- (e) The Finance Committee will approve the Annual Accounts of the Union for submission to the Committee.
- (f)
- (g) The membership of the Finance Committee will be appointed by the Committee. The Finance Committee may co-opt, with the approval of the Committee, such additional persons to be members of the Finance Committee as it deems necessary and appropriate.

### **The National Professional Game Board (NPGB)**

- 18. (a) The NPGB shall be a Standing Committee of the Committee.
- (b) The Chairperson of the NPGB shall be appointed by the Committee for a three year term, subject to annual review and approval by the Committee, and the entitlement of the Committee to remove the Chairperson from office at any time. No person may be Chairperson of the NPGB for more than six consecutive years.
- (c) The NPGB is responsible for overseeing the management of the Professional Game and for advising the Committee on policy and strategy in relation to the Professional Game. Policy and strategy in relation to the Professional game in Ireland requires approval from the Committee. The NPGB is responsible for advising the Committee on policy and strategy in relation to the women's senior national team. It is also the role of the NPGB to monitor and review the implementation of said policy and strategy for both the Professional Game and the women's senior national team by the Performance Director and staff and keep the Union Committee advised. The NPGB is also responsible for overseeing and monitoring the elite player development pathways and the national age grade teams.
- (d) The membership of the NPGB will be appointed by the Committee. The NPGB may co-opt

an additional person with high performance expertise onto the NPGB with the approval of the Committee.

### **The Rugby Committee**

19. (a) The Rugby Committee shall be a Standing Committee of the Committee.
- (b) The Chairperson of the Rugby Committee shall be appointed by the Committee for a three year term, subject to annual review and approval by the Committee, and the entitlement of the Committee to remove the Chairperson from office at any time. No person may be Chairperson of the Rugby Committee for more than six consecutive years.
- (c) The Rugby Committee is responsible for considering and agreeing strategy for the development of the club game, the school game and the general amateur game in all its formats in Ireland, and the Exiles. It will also agree KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) for each national sub-committee and Provincial Rugby Committee. It is also responsible for agreeing policy for the Exiles and the operation of the club, school, third level and amateur game in Ireland, as well as agreeing operational plans and annual budgets for the delivery of the club and school game strategy at national level. The Rugby Committee will also monitor the fulfilment of strategy and KPIs through the receipt of periodic reports from its sub-committees and the Provincial Rugby Committees. It will also identify and manage risks associated with the fulfilment of strategy and KPIs.
- (d) The membership of the Rugby Committee will be appointed by the Committee and shall include a representative of the Exiles. The Rugby Committee may co-opt, with the approval of the Committee, two additional persons to be members of the Rugby Committee. Chairs of Provincial Rugby Committees will be invited to attend meetings as agreed by the Rugby Committee.
- (d) Appointment of Sub-Committees: Chairpersons of the Rugby Committee ‘sub-committees’ are appointed from the membership of the Rugby Committee and will be annually approved by the Committee. The membership of a sub-committee will be appointed by the Rugby Committee. Specific expertise and members of provincial committees may be co-opted to the sub-committees subjected to the approval of both the Rugby Committee and the Committee.

### **The Commercial and Marketing Committee**

20. (a) The Commercial and Marketing Committee shall be a Standing Committee of the Committee.
- (b) The Chairperson of the Commercial and Marketing Committee shall be appointed by the Committee for a three year term, subject to annual review and approval by the Committee, and the entitlement of the Committee to remove the Chairperson from office at any time. No person may be Chairperson of the Commercial and Marketing Committee for more than six consecutive years.
- (c) The Commercial & Marketing Committee will oversee the implementation of IRFU policy, with regard to commercial and marketing issues in accordance with policies approved by the Committee. It will work within parameters and operational guidelines agreed with the Management Committee. It will be responsible for the planning and

implementation of commercial and marketing strategies and activities to ensure the successful delivery of IRFU policy. It will also ensure the Committee and the Management Committee are kept informed of commercial and marketing strategies and activities being adopted by the Commercial & Marketing Committee.

- (d) The membership of the Commercial and Marketing Committee will be appointed by the Committee. The Commercial and Marketing Committee may co-opt, with the approval of the Committee, such additional persons to be members of the Commercial and Marketing Committee as it deems necessary and appropriate.

### **The Governance, Audit and Risk Committee**

- 21. (a) The Governance, Audit and Risk Committee shall be a Standing Committee of the Committee.
- (b) The Chairperson of the Governance, Audit and Risk Committee shall be appointed by the Committee for a three year term, subject to annual review and approval by the Committee, and the entitlement of the Committee to remove the Chairperson from office at any time. No person may be Chairperson of the Governance, Audit and Risk Committee for more than six consecutive years.
- (c) The Chairperson of the Governance, Audit and Risk Committee cannot be a member of the Management Committee.
- (d) No person may be a member of the Finance Committee, and a member of the Governance, Audit and Risk Committee at the same time.
- (e) The Governance, Audit and Risk Committee will be responsible for overseeing audit arrangements on behalf of the Union. It is to satisfy itself, through the use of internal and external auditors, that:-
  - (i) the systems of internal control employed by the Union are adequate and are operating effectively; and
  - (ii) the Union is operating with due financial and commercial probity, and in accordance with the Laws of the Republic of Ireland.
- (f) The Governance, Audit and Risk Committee will ensure that the IRFU Risk Register is kept up to date and reviewed regularly.
- (g) The Governance, Audit and Risk Committee shall be responsible for the regular monitoring and review of the governance arrangements of the Union and shall report on any issues arising to the Committee.
- (h) The Governance, Audit and Risk Committee shall report on its activities, as necessary, to the Committee.
- (i) Membership of the Governance, Audit and Risk Committee shall be 4 persons, at least two of whom shall be members of the Committee.

### **The International Affairs Committee**

- 22. (a) The International Affairs Committee shall be a Standing Committee of the Committee.



- (b) The Chairperson of the International Affairs Committee shall be appointed by the Committee for a three year term, subject to annual review and approval by the Committee, and the entitlement of the Committee to remove the Chairperson from office at any time. No person may be Chairperson of the International Affairs Committee for more than six consecutive years.
- (c) The International Affairs Committee is responsible for keeping the Committee and Management Committee informed on issues and decisions from World Rugby, Six Nations, EPCR, Celtic Rugby, British and Irish Lions and Rugby Europe.
- (d) Membership of the International Affairs Committee shall be the IRFU representatives to the bodies listed in Law 22 (c) along with the Chairperson appointed by the Committee. The Chairperson may or may not be one of the representatives to the bodies listed in Law 22 (c).

### **The Nominations Committee**

- 23. (a) The Nominations Committee shall be a Standing Committee of the Committee.
- (b) The Chairperson of the Nominations Committee shall be the President of the Union.
- (c) The Nominations Committee is responsible for bringing forward proposed nominations for volunteer roles and positions within the Union, as and when required, to the Committee. The Committee will determine which roles and positions the Nominations Committee are to consider.
- (d) The Nominations Committee is also responsible for ensuring that there are succession plans in place should posts become vacant. This will require the Nominations Committee to produce a list of potential replacements for all specified posts and keep this under review and up to date.
- (e) Membership of the Nominations Committee shall be the President, Senior Vice-President, Junior Vice-President, Chairperson of the Management Committee, the Honorary Treasurer and the Immediate Past President. .

### **Branch Disciplinary Committee and Committee of Appeal**

- 24. Each Branch, or any Disciplinary Committee or other committee set up by a Branch, shall have power to hear any matters that may be referred to, or reported to, the said Branch, and to make such decision or decisions as it thinks fit. Each Branch, Club and any member thereof, whether it be the player or person affected by any such decision, shall be bound thereby.
- 25. (a) Any player, club or other person affected by a decision of a Branch or its Disciplinary Committee or other committees may appeal that decision to the Committee of Appeal of the Branch, within seven days of the date of the decision of the said Branch or its disciplinary

or other committee. Save as provided for in Law 25(b) the decision of the Committee of Appeal of the Branch shall be final.

- (b) A right of appeal may apply from a Branch Appeals Committee determination to the Appeals Committee of the Union where issues concerning the observance of fair procedures or where breach of the principles of Natural Justice are pleaded. In such cases the Appeals Committee of the Union shall first satisfy itself that there has been a breach of such principles or of such fair procedures (and its decision in this regard shall be final) before proceeding to re-hear the substantive case under appeal. On re-hearing, the determination of the Appeals Committee of the Union shall be binding and final.

### **Honorary Vice Presidents**

- 26. The Committee may recommend to the Council the appointment of any person who, in its opinion has rendered outstanding service to the Union to be an Honorary Vice President of the Union 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 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.

### **Property and Trustees**

- 27.
  - (a) All property, real and personal, of whatever nature and kind, of the Union shall be vested in the Trustees or vested in a company, to be formed by the Trustees on the instructions of the Committee, to act as a property holding company (the "Property Company"). The Trustees and such Property Company shall, in relation to property vested in them, obey the lawful instructions of the Committee, and shall not in relation to that property act otherwise than with the sanction of a resolution of the Committee, which shall be voted on by not less than twelve members of the Committee and such resolution shall only be deemed to have been passed provided a majority of at least three fourths of those voting have cast a vote in favour thereof.
  - (b) There shall be not less than four Trustees, to be appointed by the Council, and who may be removed by the Council. The Trustees shall remain in office until death, resignation or removal. The surviving or continuing Trustees, being not less than two, shall have power to act notwithstanding the vacancy in the number of Trustees. The Committee is responsible for nominating at its discretion a proposed Trustee to Council following the recommendation of the Officers of the Union who will consult with the existing Trustees and take into consideration their views before making its recommendation to the Committee.
  - (c) The Committee may authorise any two or more of the Trustees or any such Property Company to give a valid receipt on behalf of the Union for any property.
  - (d) No Trustee or member of the Committee shall be liable for any loss or diminution in value of the property of the Union unless that person dishonestly participated in a wrongful act which was a contributory cause of such loss or diminution.
  - (e) The Officers of the Union and the Trustees shall be at liberty to consult one another on matters pertaining to the wellbeing of the Union, from time to time.

### **Amendments and Alterations to the Laws of the Union**

28. (a) No amendment or alteration to the Laws of the Union shall be considered by the Council unless it shall have been proposed by either (i) the Committee, or (ii) a Branch, or (iii) any twelve Clubs, and unless notice thereof shall except in the case of amendment or alteration proposed by the Committee, have been sent in writing to the Chief Executive at least 21 days before the meeting of the Council at which such amendment or alteration is intended to be proposed. Notice of every such amendment or alteration shall be sent by the Chief Executive to the several persons entitled to receive notice of the Annual Meeting under Law 13, at least 14 days before the said meeting of the Council No amendment or alteration shall be considered by the Council unless 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.
- (b) No Law of the Union shall be altered, rescinded or added to without the consent of at least two-thirds of the members of the Council present and voting at a meeting of the Council.
- (c) The Laws of the Union may be amended under the foregoing procedure to enable the Union to be converted from its present form as an unincorporated association into an industrial and provident society under the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts 1893-2018. Any such amendment shall authorise the Chief Executive and any seven members of the Committee to be designated by the Committee to apply on behalf of the Union to the Registrar of Friendly Societies for the registration of the Union as such a society pursuant to the said Acts. The amendment shall approve the Rules with which the Union proposes to be registered, and shall authorise the Committee to do all things necessary to bring about its registration, including the making of any amendment of the proposed Rules to accommodate any requisition or objection thereto raised by the Registrar.
- (d) The Laws of the Union may be amended under the foregoing procedure to enable the Union to be converted from its present form as any unincorporated association into a company registered under the Companies Act 2014. Any such amendment shall authorise any seven members of the Committee to be designated by the Committee to subscribe to the memorandum of association of such a company. The amendment shall approve the memorandum of association and the articles of association of the proposed company, and shall authorise the Committee to do all things necessary to bring about its registration, including the making of any amendment of the proposed memorandum and articles of association to accommodate any requisition or objection thereto raised by the Registrar of Companies, and including the making of an application under Section 971/1180 of the Companies Act 2014 for a licence to omit the words “limited” from the name of the company. The amendment shall state the names of the first directors of the company so formed. The amendment shall authorise the transfer of all property of the Union to the said company free of the trusts and agreements presently affecting the same, imposed by the Laws of the Union or arising out of its present unincorporated association.

### **Fiscal Provisions**

29. (a) All the assets, funds and income of the Union including profits and surpluses 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.
- (b) In the event of the dissolution of the Union for any cause or purpose, all funds and assets remaining after due settlement of all liabilities and claims shall be apportioned and distributed amongst the Branches and Clubs in such proportions as the Committee may

determine but subject to the express condition that such funds and assets may only be applied in the manner specified in paragraph (a) above.

### **Indemnity**

30. All Officials of the Union for the time being and their executors and administrators shall be entitled to be indemnified out of the assets of the Union from and against all actions, claims, demands, costs, losses, damages and expenses which they shall or may incur or sustain by reason or on account of any act undertaken or omission by them on behalf of the Union in his capacity as such official or by reason or on account of any liability incurred by them in their capacity as such officials, provided always in the case of liability incurred in their capacity as such official that such liability was not incurred through their own fraud.

### **Interpretation**

31. (a) In the event of a doubt arising at any time on any matter not provided for herein, or as to the meaning or construction of these Laws, the Committee shall determine same and its decision shall be final.
- (b) These Laws and any Regulations made thereunder shall in all respects be governed by and construed in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Ireland and any dispute arising thereunder shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of the Republic of Ireland.