

PROPOSED NEW CONSTITUTION AND STANDING ORDERS OF THE INTER-VARSITY FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL

Version 4.1.

This document presents the proposed constitution as discussed and amended in the Sheffield constitution meeting. It is hopefully fairly close to the proposal that will be made to IVFDF 2004 in Exeter. It has its roots in the recommendations made by IVFDF 2003 in Sheffield and in the Braceborough meeting.

SUMMARY

This summary is clearly not comprehensive or authoritative—for that you will have to read the small print.

1. The old constitution is replaced in its entirety with a new constitution and standing orders. The new constitution is changed in much the same way as the last one (with three months notice of the preliminary proposal and a two-thirds majority vote at an Annual Reps Meeting), while the standing orders can be changed at any time by an ordinary majority vote. The standing orders are essentially a statement of current IVFDF policy, which was not previously captured well.
2. The new constitution and standing orders are for a central organising body (often referred to as IVFDF-central), rather than the old model constitution for individual festivals.
3. There are (hopefully uncontentious) statements on aims, objectives, and discrimination.
4. IVFDF is still ultimately controlled by representatives of university societies which attend IVFDF, 2 from each at any given time. The rules for what defines a member society are tightened up, and require student attendance from that society every two years.
5. The main decision-making meeting is the Annual Reps Meeting (ARM, renamed from the Reps Meeting), held once a year at each IVFDF. Member societies can call additional Emergency Reps Meetings (ERMs) if required with one month's notice. There is now also provision for Electronic Voting, so that decisions can be made by e-mail if required (I advise due to read the details if you are interested in this). ivfdf-news@ivfdf.org is specified in the standing orders as the list to which formal notices will go out on and people with formal roles are required to be on this list.
6. The officers, all of whom may delegate, are:
 - The Treasurer, who looks after central funds and may not vote.
 - The Archivist, who stores and makes available IVFDF records and runs electronic services. The Treasurer and Archivist roles were previously held by Information Point, and are now elected for 3 year terms up to a maximum of 9 consecutive years.
 - The Development Officer (a new post defined only in the standing orders), who promotes general university folk interests. There are keen people at Sheffield that feel they could do this role better with the official backing of a national body such as IVFDF. The Development Officer is elected annually.
7. Each festival is required to return at least half of any profits to central funds, in return for use of the "IVFDF brand" (which brings with it several hundred people to a festival).
8. External advisers (1 lead, who must have been on an IVFDF committee in the last 10 years, and 2 assistants) are appointed to report back to the reps on the progress of the festival. Their sole sanction is to "blow the whistle" to the reps. Festival committees must report back to their lead external adviser every four months.
9. An initial loan is paid 2 years in advance following submission of a balanced budget. Additional grants and loans are provisionally promised 2 years in advance but paid 1 year in advance based

- upon the advice of the lead external adviser. Underwriting is granted 1 year in advance, also based upon the advice of the lead external adviser.
10. The formal link with Friends of IVFDF is abolished, since it no longer provides underwriting functions. Whether or not it chooses to continue as a general focus for goodwill is left as a decision for Friends.
 11. The venue and organising body (festival committee) for an IVFDF is preliminary chosen two years in advance, and confirmed one year in advance. In exceptional circumstances and with a two-thirds majority the reps can change their mind on or before the one-year point.
 12. The list of obligations of a festival committee is listed in the standing orders, including:
 - Constitutional requirements excluding liability of IVFDF-central, and requiring compatible aims and discrimination clauses.
 - Adequate public liability insurance. The requirement to be a member society of EFDSS is removed in favour of this broader requirement.
 - Reporting obligations at the end of the festival.
 13. IVFDF-central is constitutionally prevented from entering into debt by foreseeable circumstances.
 14. The ARM is the responsibility of the festival it is held at, but they can now nominate others to be chair and secretary. A minimum agenda is specified in the standing orders (although it can of course be changed at the ARM if necessary, so it is really a guide). It includes:
 - Reports from active festival committees, officers and external advisers (described below).
 - The decision on where to hold IVFDF in two years time.
 - Offers/decisions on loans, grants and underwriting.
 - Election/appointment of officers and external advisers.
 - Setting of budgets.

BRIEF HISTORY AND MOTIVATION

This process began with the observation that while IVFDF central funds are prepared to take any profits made by individual festivals (and in times gone by used to expect it), a festival which makes a loss is not guaranteed to be bailed out (loss-making festivals often have been, but this has always been as a result of pleading festival committees asking for money after the loss has already been made). Given that there are not that many groups capable of hosting IVFDF these days, and these people to a heck of a lot of work for free, it's pretty unreasonable to expect them to take this risk. One committee in recent times certainly thought so and an IVFDF nearly failed as a result.

Efforts to try to fix this started with a meeting in Braceborough in 2000, and amongst other outcomes "Friends of IVFDF" was born to provide a framework for underwriting support. Without going into the details I can tell you as treasurer that this organisation currently has 7 members and I think it's fair to say that the general view is now that it is an overly complicated solution to the problem. Some other amendments to the constitution were made following this meeting.

Sheffield made another stab at reform at the last IVFDF in 2003, which they hosted. They tried to formalise the underwriting provision and associated controls, split Information Point (the sole central officer of IVFDF who looks after central funds and records) into several posts with expanded roles, and add aims and objectives. It was essentially rejected in its entirety, not due to its content, but because the existing constitution was very badly worded, confusing and inconsistent, and the amendments made it worse. Essentially, it started life as a model constitution for each festival, gradually tried to morph into a constitution for a central body, but never quite made it. The decision was that there should be a follow-up meeting to write a new constitution incorporating these proposals.

I ended up drafting a new constitution, it was discussed and amended a lot on e-mail, the meeting was held, a load more amendments were made and the result is this document.

EXTERNAL ADVISORS AND FESTIVAL INDEPENDENCE

This needs clearer explanation to ensure the constitution is interpreted as intended. The role of external advisers is a fine balancing act:

- It is commonly agreed that one of the strengths of IVFDF is the constant input of new ideas that comes as a result of having a new committee each time. Festival committees must be free to try out new ideas, and these will often carry a small risk.
- It is necessary for IVFDF-central to provide financial guarantees to enable festival committees with often limited personal resources to run a festival.
- It is necessary for IVFDF-central to know that its money, and therefore the future of IVFDF, is not subject to unreasonable risk due to any one festival.

Once IVFDF-central, at a reps meeting, has provisionally appointed a festival committee to run a festival, there is a very little power it has over that festival. It cannot insist upon any aspects of the running of the festival that have not been previously laid down in the constitution and standing orders, so for example it cannot make demands that a particular band is booked. However, as a safeguard there are several sanctions it can impose at the "one year in advance" point:

- It may withdraw support for the festival, as long as it has another festival to transfer support to.
- It may decide not to pay grants and loans provisionally offered in the previous year.
- It may decide not to offer underwriting.

This is as it always has been, except that in the past underwriting has never been offered anyway, and it has been normal to give the entirety of any expected grant two years in advance.

Withdrawing support is a "nuke" option requiring a two-thirds majority, and requires no confidence in a committee's ability to run "a successful festival", as opposed to a festival they approve of. I consider a successful festival to be the one which upholds the aims of IVFDF and breaks even. This option is designed for the festival committee that appears to disappear from the face of the planet, or whose budget is so unrealistic that the festival is in serious danger of not happening. Before using this option the following must be considered:

- It requires an alternative bid to be in place, which will suffer from reduced organisation time.
- It might seriously affect the ability of the nuked festival to repay any loan already given (depending on circumstances—this should not be interpreted as implying that IVFDF-central does not still expect to be repaid).
- Unnecessary use, or even threatened use, of this option might seriously affect the ability of IVFDF to attract future bids to run the festival.

Other than this, the sanctions involve withholding financial support. For example, if a festival budget appears unrealistic, the reps may decide to withhold underwriting support.

The external advisor and assistants have a general advisory role which they will agree with the festival committee. The actual power of the external adviser however is very simple: to advise an IVFDF reps meeting on the state of a festival, and if necessary whether the above sanctions should be imposed, or whether any additional financial support should be given. A festival committee may choose to ignore any or all of the advice given by their external adviser, and the external adviser may advise the reps meeting that the festival is a bad risk, although it is hoped that problems are solved before this is necessary. In turn the IVFDF reps meeting may choose to ignore the external adviser and take the associated risk.

In this way the independence of individual festivals is hopefully preserved while limiting the risk to IVFDF central funds and leaving festival committees less isolated than they have been in the past.

REQUEST FOR COMMENTS

The aim is to get this constitution approved by the Reps Meeting (the IVFDF equivalent of an AGM) at IVFDF 2004. A lot of people have put a lot of hard work to get to this point, everyone has hopefully been given the chance to have a say, and lots of people have. However, the nature of IVFDF is that society representatives change constantly so this may well be the first you have ever heard of it. **If you have feedback please give it to ivfdf-constitution@ivfdf.org before IVFDF 2004** (and get yourself subscribed to this list at www.ivfdf.org). If you are reading this at IVFDF 2004, please give it before the Reps Meeting. Obviously you are welcome to make whatever representation you like at the meeting itself, especially if you don't feel your concerns have been addressed, but it will be much easier to fix things before the meeting than on the spur of the moment at the meeting, and will allow the meeting to concentrate on future festivals instead.

Needless to say, if you know someone who is likely to have opinions on the subject, make sure they see this document and are subscribed to ivfdf-constitution@ivfdf.org.

Clearly it is possible that the proposal will change before IVFDF 2004 due to feedback, but it is hoped that due to the large amount of review to date there should not be a need for major changes.

To ensure that potentially contentious sections do not prevent the rest of it being approved, the votes are currently expected to be as follows:

1. The constitution and standing orders except where stated below.
2. The Development Officer (sections 1.1.6 and 5.2 of the standing orders).
3. Electronic Voting (section 8, and modifications to sections 4.1, 6.4.2, and 10.1.3 of the constitution).
4. Return of half profits (section 3.7 of the standing orders).
5. External Advisers and underwriting (sections 1.1.7.2, 1.1.8.2, and 4, and modifications to sections 1.1.8.3, 1.1.9, 3.6.2, and 5.1.3 of the standing orders).

Additional notes are at the end.

CONSTITUTION

1. NAME

- 1.1. The name of the association shall be "The Inter Varsity Folk Dance Festival", also known as IVFDF.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1. IVFDF exists to promote knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of the traditions of the folk dance and music of the British Isles and beyond, especially to students and young people.
- 2.2. This shall be achieved by supporting Festivals running events such as dances, workshops and displays, targeted at but not limited to university students.
- 2.3. The association shall not discriminate on the grounds of race, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion or political views.

3. MEMBER SOCIETIES

- 3.1. A group shall become Member Society of the association if:
 - 3.1.1. It is a folk group which is recognised and supported by a British University.

- 3.1.2. At least two members of the society which are students at a British University are in attendance at a Festival. Each student can only count for one Member Society for this purpose.
- 3.1.3. It registers its intention to join at the Festival, giving electronic mail contact details for the list specified in section 10.2.6, university affiliation and the names of the two students specified in section 3.1.2.
- 3.2. Each Member Society shall have the option to renew its membership at each Annual Representatives Meeting (ARM) with the secretary of the ARM, providing that the conditions in section 3.1 still hold.
- 3.3. Member Societies must notify the Archivist as soon as practically possible of any change in contact details.
- 3.4. Membership shall be withdrawn from a Member Society if:
 - 3.4.1. It fails to renew its membership for two consecutive ARMs.
 - 3.4.2. It notifies the Archivist that it wishes to revoke its membership.
 - 3.4.3. It ceases to meet the criteria in section 3.1.1.
 - 3.4.4. It cannot be contacted due to failing to adhere to section 3.3.

4. AUTHORITY

- 4.1. Decisions for the association shall be made by a vote in a Representatives Meeting (RM) as specified in section 5, or an Electronic Vote (EV) as specified in section 8. Such decisions are hereafter referred to as decisions of the Representatives.
- 4.2. Where specified, a quorum shall require:
 - 4.2.1. If the association has 9 or more Member Societies, representatives from one third of all Member Societies, rounding up; otherwise if the association has 3 or more Member Societies, representatives from 3 Member Societies; otherwise representatives from all Member Societies.
 - 4.2.2. Representatives from Member Societies from three different universities where such Member Societies exist; otherwise representatives from a Member Society from each university with a Member Society.
- 4.3. The Representatives may make or modify the Standing Orders of the association by an ordinary vote, where they are not in conflict with the constitution.

5. REPRESENTATIVES MEETINGS

- 5.1. An RM is defined as either an Annual Representatives Meeting (ARM) or an Extraordinary Representatives Meeting (ERM), run in accordance with the Standing Orders.
- 5.2. Each Member Society may choose up to two of its members present at the RM to have voting rights at the RM, hereafter referred to as Voting Members. The RM Chair may not be a Voting Member.
- 5.3. Decisions may only be taken if the Voting Members form a quorum as defined in section 4.2.
- 5.4. Voting Members, the RM Chair, the RM Secretary, Officers, up to two members of each active Festival Committee and any others specified in the Standing Orders shall have right of attendance. Others may be permitted to attend the RM at the discretion of the RM Chair.
- 5.5. Votes shall be cast by simple majority of an open show of hands of the Voting Members. In the event of a tie, the chair shall have a casting vote.
- 5.6. The RM Secretary shall record minutes of the meeting and compile a list of Member Societies present, and make them available to all members of the electronic mail list specified in section

10.2.6 within one calendar month of the meeting. The Archivist shall store these records on behalf of IVFDF.

6. ANNUAL REPRESENTATIVES MEETING

- 6.1. An Annual Representatives Meeting (ARM) shall be held at each Festival.
- 6.2. The current Festival Committee shall take all reasonable steps to make all Member Societies present at the Festival, and all societies eligible to be Member Societies, aware of the ARM and their right of attendance.
- 6.3. The current Festival Committee shall appoint the RM Chair and RM Secretary, who need not otherwise have right of attendance as defined in section 5.4.
- 6.4. The ARM shall as a minimum:
 - 6.4.1. Provisionally appoint, from one or more bids from potential Festival Committees, a Festival Committee to run a Festival in two years time. If no bids are received then the ARM shall take all necessary steps to ensure a Festival Committee is appointed as soon as possible, and in any case before the next ARM.
 - 6.4.2. Confirm, subject to section 9.4, the previously appointed Festival Committee to run the next Festival. If otherwise support for the previously appointed Festival Committee is withdrawn and a new Festival Committee chosen, confirmation shall be given immediately or as soon as is possible, the current Festival Committee calling an ERM or EV if required to achieve this.
 - 6.4.3. Elect the Officers as required in section 10.
- 6.5. If an ARM has not been held for 14 months the Treasurer shall call an ARM as soon as practically possible, giving at least one calendar month's notice to the electronic mailing list specified in section 10.2.6 of the time, venue and provisional agenda of the ARM.
 - 6.5.1. The Treasurer shall appoint the RM Chair and RM Secretary, who need not otherwise have right of attendance as defined in section 5.4.
 - 6.5.2. The Treasurer may use IVFDF funds to cover reasonable costs for holding the meeting, subject to section 11.1.

7. EXTRAORDINARY REPRESENTATIVES MEETING

- 7.1. An Extraordinary Representatives Meeting (ERM) may be called by either:
 - 7.1.1. Five Member Societies from at least three different universities.
 - 7.1.2. Sufficient Member Societies to form a quorum as defined in section 4.2.
- 7.2. The ERM shall be hosted by one of the Member Societies which called the ERM.
- 7.3. At least one calendar month's notice must be given by the host of the ERM to the electronic mailing list specified in section 10.2.6 of the time, venue, and provisional agenda of the ERM, as decided by the host of the ERM.
- 7.4. The host of the ERM shall appoint a chair and secretary for the meeting, who need not otherwise have right of attendance as defined in section 5.4.

8. ELECTRONIC VOTING

- 8.1. Any Member Society may call an EV with the support required for calling an ERM as specified in section 7.1 by notifying the electronic mailing list specified in section 10.2.6.
- 8.2. Each Member Society may choose up to two of its members to have voting rights in an EV, hereafter referred to as Voting Members.

- 8.3. The EV shall be conducted in accordance with the Standing Orders by a Returning Officer.
 - 8.3.1. The returning Officer shall be one of the following, in order of preference, depending on availability: the Archivist, the Treasurer, other officers defined by the Standing Orders in order of definition. Anyone serving on an active Festival Committee or with a conflict of interest shall be deemed unavailable for this purpose if another Officer is available.
- 8.4. The Returning Officer shall give notice of the proposal(s) to the electronic mailing list specified in section 10.2.6, appending the entirety of section 8 of the constitution and any Standing Orders governing the conduct of EVs.
- 8.5. At least three weeks shall be allowed following notification of the proposal(s) to allow discussion of the proposal(s) to take place.
 - 8.5.1. Member Societies must inform the Returning Officer of its Voting Members during the discussion period.
 - 8.5.2. Proposals may be altered during the discussion period in whole or in part by the Member Society which called the EV at the discretion of the Returning Officer.
 - 8.5.3. Proposals may be withdrawn by the Member Society which called the EV by notifying the Returning Officer during the discussion period.
- 8.6. Once the discussion period is over the Return Officer shall then send an e-mail to the list indicating the opening of voting and confirming the proposal(s), listing the Voting Members and the duration of the vote, which shall be not less than one week.
 - 8.6.1. Each Voting Member may vote by sending an e-mail with their vote to the Returning Officer.
 - 8.6.2. The Returning Officer may not vote.
 - 8.6.3. Votes, once cast, cannot be changed.
- 8.7. Once voting is closed, the Returning Officer shall send an e-mail to the list indicating the result of the vote, and listing the people who voted, the way they voted and their affiliation. The e-mail shall also indicate the duration of a period to allow the validity of the votes cast to be disputed, which shall be not less than one week.
 - 8.7.1. The vote shall be void unless those from whom valid votes are received form a quorum as defined in section 4.2.
 - 8.7.2. In the event of a tie, the vote shall be declared not carried.
 - 8.7.3. If the Returning Officer believes that the outcome of the vote has been jeopardised by procedures not being properly followed, he/she shall declare the vote void. The Returning Officer's decision in this is final.
- 8.8. Once the dispute period is over, the Returning Officer shall send a final e-mail to the list announcing the validity of the vote and/or the result.
- 8.9. The Returning Officer shall keep all relevant correspondence, including votes cast, until the end of the dispute period.
- 8.10. The Archivist shall record the proposal(s), summary of votes and result.

9. FESTIVAL

- 9.1. Each Festival Committee is subject to the obligations stated in the Standing Orders.
- 9.2. Each Festival Committee must provide the Archivist with up to date contact details for at least two of its members, including electronic mail contact details for the list specified in section 10.2.6.
- 9.3. A Festival Committee may change its officers or membership without the approval of the Representatives subject to section 9.2.

- 9.4. Appointment of a Festival Committee to run a Festival is provisional until confirmed by the Representatives, on or after the ARM of the preceding Festival. In the event that the Representatives do not have confidence in the ability of an unconfirmed Festival Committee to run a successful Festival, or a Festival Committee indicates it is unable to host its Festival, the Representatives may, with a two-thirds majority, withdraw support for that Festival Committee and provisionally appoint a new Festival Committee to run the Festival instead.
- 9.5. A Festival Committee shall be deemed to be active from being first appointed to run a Festival, and cease to be active following the closure of all accounts and fulfillment of all obligations to the association, or immediately if support is withdrawn under section 9.4.

10. OFFICERS

10.1. The Treasurer:

- 10.1.1. Shall be elected for a three-year term at the ARM, renewable every three years.
- 10.1.2. Shall not be a member of any active Festival Committee while he/she holds the post.
- 10.1.3. May not be a Voting Member in an RM or EV.
- 10.1.4. Shall hold central IVFDF funds in one or more bank accounts distinct from any Festival Committee.
- 10.1.5. Shall make and receive payments to/from Festival Committees and other organisations as directed by the Representatives.
- 10.1.6. Shall prepare and present a financial report at each ARM.
- 10.1.7. Shall represent IVFDF when required.
- 10.1.8. Shall not hold the post for a total of more than 9 consecutive years.

10.2. The Archivist:

- 10.2.1. Shall be elected for a three-year term at the ARM, renewable every three years.
- 10.2.2. Shall maintain the constitution.
- 10.2.3. Shall maintain the list of Member Societies as collected by the secretary of each ARM.
- 10.2.4. Shall store relevant records on behalf of IVFDF as required.
- 10.2.5. Shall make records held on behalf of IVFDF available to Member Societies and active Festival Committees on request.
- 10.2.6. Shall maintain an electronic mailing list for distributing information, to include contacts for each Member Society, active Festival Committee, and Officers. Other interested parties may be included at the discretion of the Archivist.
- 10.2.7. Shall not hold the post for a total of more than 9 consecutive years.

- 10.3. The Standing Orders of the association may specify additional Officers and additional responsibilities for the Officers named in this section.
- 10.4. Officers may delegate duties at their discretion unless otherwise directed by the Representatives, but maintain responsibility for ensuring that they are adequately performed.
- 10.5. In the event that an Officer's post becomes vacant, the remaining Officers shall nominate a replacement to serve until the next ARM. The replacement must be promptly announced on the electronic mailing list specified in section 10.2.6.
- 10.6. The Representatives may, with a two-thirds majority, remove any Officer from office by a vote of no confidence and elect a replacement.
- 10.7. Officers must provide the Archivist with up to date contact details, including electronic mail contact details for the list specified in section 10.2.6.

11. FINANCES

- 11.1. The Representatives shall not make such obligations that could cause it to come into debt, for example by offering a greater sum in underwriting than its total assets.
- 11.2. Withdrawals from central funds shall require two signatures. Signatories shall include: the Treasurer and two persons nominated by the Representatives for this purpose. Except in exceptional circumstances, the Treasurer will be expected to provide one of the signatures.

12. DISSOLUTION

- 12.1. If a Festival does not take place in any period of twenty-eight consecutive calendar months, then IVFDF shall be said to be dissolved, when the following shall be enacted:
 - 12.1.1. All property and assets of IVFDF, including debts owed by Festival Committees, shall be converted into money and collected together.
 - 12.1.2. All debts and liabilities of IVFDF shall be settled immediately with this money.
 - 12.1.3. The remaining sum, being credit or debit, shall be shared equally between all groups that were Member Societies at the end of the last Festival.

13. CONSTITUTION

- 13.1. This constitution may be altered in whole or in part by the assenting vote of at least two-thirds of the Voting Members present at a properly constituted RM.
- 13.2. Proposals for alterations to the arm goodness constitution must be raised for discussion to the electronic mailing list specified in 10.2.6, giving at least three calendar months notice. Final changes must be made available in the same way at least one calendar month before the RM.
- 13.3. Proposals may be made by any group qualified to call an ERM as defined in section 7.1.
- 13.4. Proposals which have been properly notified shall form part of the agenda of the next properly constituted RM that takes place. If the constitution is successfully modified, a copy of the updated constitution shall be presented to the Archivist by the secretary of the RM within one calendar month of the RM.
- 13.5. Proposals may be altered in whole or part as a result of discussion at an RM, but only matters raised with due notice may be discussed. The RM shall also have the power to make any other changes to the constitution which may be required as a knock-on effect of proposals for alterations.

STANDING ORDERS

1. ANNUAL REPRESENTATIVES MEETING

- 1.1. The agenda for the ARM shall include:
 - 1.1.1. Reports from any Festival Committees still active at the last ARM not covered elsewhere.
 - 1.1.2. Outgoing report by the Festival Committee which ran the last Festival.
 - 1.1.3. Report by the current Festival Committee.
 - 1.1.4. Treasurer's Report.
 - 1.1.5. Archivist's Report.
 - 1.1.6. Development Officer's Report.
 - 1.1.7. Next Festival:
 - 1.1.7.1. Report by the Festival Committee appointed to run the next Festival, including budget, status of venues, publicity and schedule.

- 1.1.7.2. Report by the Lead External Adviser for the next Festival.
 - 1.1.7.3. Confirmation or otherwise of the next Festival as specified in section 6.4.2 of the constitution.
 - 1.1.7.4. Decisions on provisional offers of grants and loans to the next Festival.
 - 1.1.7.5. Offers of underwriting to the next Festival.
 - 1.1.8. The Festival in two years time:
 - 1.1.8.1. Provisional appointment of a Festival Committee to run a Festival in two years time as specified in section 5.3.1 of the constitution.
 - 1.1.8.2. Appointment of a Lead External Adviser and two Assistant External Advisers to oversee the appointed Festival Committee.
 - 1.1.8.3. Immediate offers of loans to be paid as soon as a balanced budget and request for payment is submitted to both the Treasurer and Lead External Adviser. Any such payment is automatic and not subject to budgetary approval.
 - 1.1.8.4. Provisional offers of grants and loans subject to confirmation at the following ARM.
 - 1.1.9. Setting of budgets required for Officers and External Advisers to carry out their duties.
 - 1.1.10. Election of Officers as specified in section 5 of these Standing Orders and in section 6.4.3 of the constitution.
- 1.2. All documents for the ARM must be available on request from the start of the festival, and where possible at least one calendar month before the festival.
 - 1.3. When registering membership with the secretary, Member Societies shall, where possible, indicate:
 - 1.3.1. Changes to contact details.
 - 1.3.2. Approximate number of members, student and non-student, attending the Festival and in total.
 - 1.3.3. Principal activities undertaken by the society.
 - 1.4. The ARM shall be held so as to give time for it to be reconvened later in the Festival should no bids be received for the Festival in two years time.
 - 1.5. It is requested but not required that Member Societies nominate students to represent them as Voting Members where possible.

2. EXTRAORDINARY REPRESENTATIVES MEETING

- 2.1. The costs of an ERM shall be borne equally by the Member Societies attending.

3. FESTIVAL COMMITTEE OBLIGATIONS

- 3.1. The Festival shall be run in a weekend during February and the first two weeks of March.
- 3.2. The constitution of the Festival Committee shall state that IVFDF is not liable for any debt or other obligations arising from the Festival except where agreed by the Representatives.
- 3.3. All property and assets of each Festival shall be vested in the Festival Committee, in whose names all transactions of the Festival shall be carried out. They shall hold themselves liable, on behalf of the Festival, for all proceedings undertaken for or against the Festival in any Court of Law, and shall indemnify themselves against the assets of the Festival for any liabilities incurred therein.
- 3.4. The Festival Committee shall take out public liability insurance of at least 1 million pounds liability appropriate to cover the Festival.
- 3.5. The constitution of the Festival Committee shall include statements on aims and discrimination compatible with section 2 of the constitution.
- 3.6. The Festival Committee shall compile a report following the Festival, and present this report to the Archivist within three calendar months of the end of the Festival. The report shall include:

- 3.6.1. A list of Member Societies with at least two student members who attended the Festival.
 - 3.6.2. Current accounts, audited by the Lead the External Adviser.
 - 3.6.3. Attendance figures.
 - 3.6.4. Details of applications for funding or sponsorship, and the outcomes of those applications.
 - 3.6.5. Constitution of the Festival Committee.
 - 3.6.6. Contact details for individuals and organisations that may be useful for future Festival Committees.
 - 3.6.7. Advice and lessons learned that may be useful for future Festival Committees.
- 3.7. The Festival Committee shall return at least half of any profits they make to central funds.

4. EXTERNAL ADVISERS

- 4.1. A Lead External Adviser and two Assistant External Advisers shall be appointed to oversee each Festival Committee, as described in section 1.1.8.2. The External Advisers are appointed for their experience in running a Festival and the Lead External Adviser must have sat on an IVFDF Festival Committee within the last 10 years on appointment.
- 4.2. External Advisers shall have right of attendance at RMs.
- 4.3. Each Festival Committee shall report to their Lead External Adviser at least once every four calendar months, indicating progress on budget, venues, publicity, action plans and anything else that may be requested. This requirement continues until the Festival Committee ceases to be active according to section 9.5 of the constitution.
- 4.4. The External Advisers shall give such advice and assistance as is necessary, welcome and practical to ensure the successful running of the Festival, and alert the Member Societies if he/she believes that the Festival is at risk of failure via the electronic mailing list specified in section 10.2.6 of the constitution.
- 4.5. The Lead External Adviser shall report to the ARM, and ERMs as requested, on the progress of the Festival Committee and highlight any concerns that he/she may have. The RM shall consider this information when deciding whether to confirm the Festival Committee and to confirm underwriting support.
- 4.6. The External Advisers for a Festival Committee can be changed in the same way as any Officer as specified in section 10.6 of the constitution.
- 4.7. External Advisers shall not be liable for any financial debt or other obligation of the Festival.
- 4.8. External Advisers must provide the Archivist with up to date contact details, including electronic mail contact details for the list specified in section 10.2.6 of the constitution.
- 4.9. External Advisers must respect the confidentiality wishes of the Festival Committee where this does not conflict with alerting Member Societies of the risk of failure of the Festival as specified in section 4.4.

5. OFFICERS

- 5.1. The Archivist in addition to his duties specified in section 10.2 of the constitution:
 - 5.1.1. Shall maintain a web site at www.ivfdf.org, which shall as a minimum:
 - 5.1.1.1. Link to the web pages of forthcoming Festivals where available.
 - 5.1.1.2. Advertise IVFDF in general.
 - 5.1.1.3. Make records held on behalf of IVFDF available as far as is practical. Section 10.2.4 of the constitution shall be deemed to be satisfied for such records.

- 5.1.2. Shall make adequate provision for the recovery of copies of key records in the event of theft, computer failure, fire, flood or other similar event, such records to include the contents of www.ivfdf.org, the membership of ivfdf-news@ivfdf.org, the current constitution, the list of Member Societies, all contact details held and any other electronic records.
- 5.1.3. Shall maintain an e-mail list called ivfdf-news@ivfdf.org, for the purposes specified in section 10.2.6 of the constitution. All External Advisers must be included in this list.
- 5.1.4. Shall administer and maintain registration of the internet domains ivfdf.org and ivfdf.org.uk on behalf of IVFDF. Approval is granted to use IVFDF funds to pay registration fees required for this purpose.
- 5.1.5. Shall prepare and present a report at each ARM.
- 5.1.6. Shall nominate at at least one person as a deputy, deposit the contact details of the deputy/deputies with the Treasurer, and ensure that the deputy/deputies have the full the rights and knowledge to maintain the web site, e-mail list, domain registration and any other electronic services provided on behalf of IVFDF, in case such maintenance is required and the Archivist is unavailable.
- 5.2. The Development Officer:
 - 5.2.1. Shall be elected annually at the ARM.
 - 5.2.2. Shall coordinate the long-term advertising policy between festivals.
 - 5.2.3. Shall promote student folk activities, maintaining a list of known groups and individuals.
 - 5.2.4. Shall encourage said groups and individuals who do not normally attended IVFDF to attend, or attend in greater numbers.
 - 5.2.5. Shall prepare and present a report at each ARM.

NOTES ON THE CONSTITUTION

- 2.1. Aims originate from IVFDF 2000.
- 2.2. Method of achieving aims modified from Sheffield's proposal, to make it clear that IVFDF is supporting festivals rather than running them, crucial to maintain independence of liability.
- 2.3. A discrimination statement is also sometimes required for funding.
- 3. Based on Sheffield's proposal to formalise membership. Other details, such as number of members, are not crucial to the process and are left to the standing orders.

Note that if you don't have two student members at the festival for two years running, you are no longer considered a Member Society. One "lean" year does not result in instant dismissal. This allays the concern that, if you want to take over IVFDF, the way to do it is to find a friendly university with little society regulation and create a large number of empty societies. This way it is a little bit harder, since you need a lot of students to help you. It also allays the concern I have heard expressed regarding people at reps meetings claiming to represent a society with no proof that it (still) exists. While I think it unfair to criticise such people (they are merely representing the interests of the society according to the constitution) I think it would be more appropriate for such people to attend the meeting (so they can say why no one from their society is turning up) but not vote.

They have to register at the ARM, rather than just at the Festival, for reasons of accountability.

- 4.1. An attempt to cut down on later verbiage—when we say "the Representatives may...", this is what we mean.
- 4.2. After several suggestions, I've proposed this quorum formula which is slightly complicated but always ensures that a quorum is possible. This way we are covered for all eventualities, although if we get down to 2 Member Societies then there are probably more pressing things to worry about than whether a meeting is quorate! The formula also adds a "three universities" clause to make it

harder for example for Cambridge and Exeter to stitch the whole thing up between them (speaking as one from Cambridge :-).

- 5.4. It seems only fair that active festival committees have right of attendance. I've put two members only so the chair can keep a reasonable control over numbers—member societies aren't permitted to send their whole committee by right either.
- 6.2. Based on Sheffield's proposal to make explicit the duty of the current festival committee to properly advertise the ARM.
- 6.3. Removed the requirement that the chairman of the current festival also chairs the ARM. This is mainly because I've removed all specification of officers required for a festival committee so it's hard to refer to a chairman, but also because I don't see it as a necessary requirement. For example, the chairman might have strong views on things to be discussed in the meeting, and might want to appoint someone more neutral to chair it instead.
- 6.4.1. Note that this is no more specific than appointing a "Festival Committee". It does not say it must be a member society, or based at a university. It is not the intention that the ARM appoints every person on that committee, merely that a committee comes forward and is appointed.
- 6.4.2. Made more explicit a "confirmation" stage beyond which support for a festival cannot be withdrawn.
- 6.5.2. Central funds may be used in this instance to make sure that this meeting really happens.
- 7.1. I've complicated the rules here slightly to make sure that it is always possible to call an ERM, even if we are down to very few member societies. We agreed that it should never been necessary for more than 5 societies to agree to call an ERM.
- 7.2. The current constitution requires the outgoing festival committee to host an ERM—but they might not want to. We agreed instead that one of the societies which called it should chair it.
8. This mechanism has been subject to a fair bit of discussion in the Sheffield meeting. It permits any business other than constitutional change (which explicitly requires an RM) to be carried out electronically. I was originally going to limit it to certain predefined classes of decision, but this complicates things somewhat, and is another diversion for us to spend lots of time discussing instead of "important business". We agreed that electronic voting is at least as fair as an ERM, since at least all societies get to see everything that is voted upon this way—not everyone can make an ERM.

Note that, in the absence of an obvious arbitration mechanism, if there are any disputes as to the validity of an electronic vote it is declared void, presumably forcing an ERM instead.
9. The current constitution requires a festival to invite all member societies. This seems superfluous, and festivals must have an ultimate right to deny entry to anyone should they see it necessary (subject to the discrimination statement). I've therefore removed this requirement.
- 9.2. Providing the Archivist with the Festival Committee mailing list should suffice here in most cases.
- 9.3. Explicit permission for a festival committee to change its officers and membership is given since IVFDF appoints the committee to run a festival, not a university.
- 9.4. More explicit text surrounding withdrawal of support for a festival. The wording is slightly different from that agreed in Sheffield to permit a new Festival Committee to be appointed if one pulls out after it has been confirmed.
10. The role of Information Point is explicitly split into Treasurer and Archivist. I've taken the middle-ground option of making them re-electable three year terms. The original reason for making Information Point a long-term post was so that people could contact him to find the next festival—since no one has done this for years and there is also now an effective means to find out from www.ivfdf.org, I believe this argument no longer holds.

I deliberately haven't made the officers into any form of committee capable of making decisions by itself—authority is delegated to individual officers only. If we expect IVFDF central to be an

active organisation working with lots of universities, an executive committee may be useful. This has a largish impact on the constitution, and we should ask what decisions such a committee needs to be able to make before forming it. My personal view is that, to keep bureaucracy to a minimum, we should continue without one initially until we find we need one. The electronic voting mechanism should reduce the need for a bit anyway.

- 10.1.7. Without this we have a group without a nominal leader, which could be important in some situations.
- 10.2. Note that the Archivist is not barred from voting or sitting on a festival committee. I don't see how they could be any conflict of interest here, and I want to avoid leaving us with the situation that a good and competent Archivist is forced to stand down so they can run a festival—there aren't that many people to go round!
- 10.3. Additional officers are specified in the standing orders, such as the development officer.
- 10.5. If a post becomes vacant, the most important thing is that someone else picks it up as quickly as possible, rather than spending ages in an election procedure. I haven't specified what happens in the remaining officers (there are probably only two of them) disagree since this makes things far too complicated. I am instead relying on those in charge to Do The Right Thing, which given past experience is fairly certain.
- 11.1. I think it is a good constitutional safeguard to prohibit IVFDF going into debt. If IVFDF goes into debt, this debt can be transferred to the Member Societies, and this is not something most societies would be happy about.
- 11.2. This has to be worded such that the Treasurer doesn't need to send cheques halfway across the country for signing each time he needs to make a payment. It is essentially the same as the wording in the current constitution, although I don't know who these people are at present.
12. The section on dissolution is essentially unchanged, although I've made it harder for societies to jump ship if there are any debts to be shared. Not that there should be any debts due to section 11.1, but it is theoretically possible for the Treasurer to screw up or some similar mishap to cause an unintentional debt. The dissolution period is increased from 25 to 28 months following the Sheffield meeting.
13. Final constitutional amendments need only be given with 1 calendar month's notice, as recommended in Sheffield's proposal. A quorum is required to propose changes.

NOTES ON THE STANDING ORDERS

The standing orders can be changed at any RM or by EV, and can therefore be viewed as statements of policy in most cases. These try to capture the essence of "how IVFDF really works".

- 1.1. The ARM agenda is roughly how they currently work, with the addition of provision for external advisers (see below) and underwriting.
- 1.2. A requirement for ARM documents to be available in advance.
- 1.3. Additional information to be gathered from each member society.
- 1.4. We've spent a long time discussing whether it is best to hold the ARM on the Saturday or the Sunday so we can cajole people into running a festival and reconvene if necessary—following feedback I've proposed that provision must be made for this without prescribing one day or the other.

- 1.5. Some people feel quite strongly that students should make the decisions, but this is quite hard to legislate on, and it is ultimately not really our business, so it is left as a recommendation.
- 2.1. I've left alone the requirement for an ERM to be paid for by the member societies attending, but put it in the standing orders so that for example an RM can decide to subsidise travel to an ERM.
3. The obligations on a given festival from the current constitution are carried over here to make them easier to change.
- 3.2. A statement in the festival constitution separating its liability from IVFDF should help keep the central funds separate.
- 3.4. It is (hopefully) almost inconceivable that a festival would be run without public liability insurance, but worth making explicit, again to limit liability for IVFDF. This used to be covered by requiring EFDSS membership, but the EFDSS insurance is no longer sufficient. I assume there is no need for IVFDF itself to be covered.

Should there be a requirement for festivals to be an associated club of EFDSS, or should IVFDF itself be? The current constitution requires the former, but since public liability insurance is now explicitly required, on request I've removed the EFDSS affiliation. EFDSS membership doesn't automatically give public liability insurance for events over 50 people any more anyway. I don't believe we should mandate more than is absolutely necessary on each festival, but we might decide to make IVFDF itself support EFDSS, and EFDSS from time to time supports IVFDF! Left as a topic for further discussion.
- 3.5. A requirement for compatible aims should help with funding.
- 3.6. A requirement to write up notes from running the festival in addition to the accounts, as recommended in Sheffield's proposal. Should there be a deadline for the return of this report? The current constitution just says "as soon as possible" and it sometimes takes a while to wrap everything up, but some things, such as the list of member societies attending, may benefit from a stricter time limit.
- 3.7. A requirement to return half of all profits, regardless of whether underwriting is given. In Sheffield we agreed that even if underwriting is not given the Festival still benefits from being awarded the IVFDF "franchise"—they agree to return profits in return for a pretty large guaranteed audience.
4. Ever since Braceborough we have been trying to work out how to assign external advisers to festivals. At present the constitution of FoIVFDF allows it to do this, although there are few people in Friends with recent experience of running a festival; Sheffield's proposal recommended a team appointed by the RM and this is closer to that proposal. I'm recommending putting a single person in charge although others may be assigned to help, to limit the "hassle factor" applied to any festival committee. It must be someone with recent experience of a festival committee and that person is deliberately not excluded from sitting on another festival committee, since this should be viewed as a positive thing.
- 4.3. Hopefully the hassle factor for festivals which haven't wound up yet is considered a good thing here...
- 4.4. A requirement for the external adviser to give all "necessary, welcome and practical" assistance to ensure success. This is carefully worded to indicate that the external adviser is expected to be proactive if necessary, but that assistance can be refused if requested. Ultimately the external adviser's final sanction is to alert the member societies of his or her concerns. The autonomy of festival committees is therefore hopefully protected. See the notes on external advisers on page 3.
- 5.1.2. The Archivist is made explicitly responsible for Internet services and data backup. The Archivist would therefore normally be the web site administrator. He/she must also ensure others can administer the services. A separate document exists defining the management structure at present and proposing how access should be given to others and to whom. It's probably easier to leave that level of decision to the Archivist.

- 5.2. Provision is made for a development officer as agreed in Sheffield. The responsibilities are subject to change based upon the recommendations from the first holders of this post.

ENDS