

APPEALS COMMITTEE
Connaire McGreevy v IFA Board
John Greer (Chair), Ciara McReynolds, Ian Beggs

The Appeals Board would firstly wish to place on record its thanks to all parties in the appeal for their co-operation. In line with the procedures adopted since the Covid-19 pandemic, this matter was considered by the Appeals Board on written submission provided by the parties.

The matter in front of the Appeals Board was as follows. Following the announcement of a vacancy on the IFA Board and a call for nominations of Council members to stand for election to fill the vacancy, Connaire McGreevy, a member of the IFA Council, nominated Stephen Henderson (Chairman of Glentoran FC). The nomination was seconded by Brian Adams and sent in writing on 9 February as was instructed to Rebekah Shearer, Company Secretary. The nomination was sent in the requisite time.

Ms Shearer contacted Mr Henderson seeking further information from him quoting Article 10(11)a of the IFA Articles of Association which states –

‘No member of the Board may be linked (either directly or indirectly) to more than one club during service on the Board; nor may more than one member be linked (either directly or indirectly) with any one club.’

Ms Shearer noted that Cheryl Lamont (IFA Board member) was a representative of Glentoran Women. Mr Henderson submitted his observations to Ms Shearer on 22 February.

On 8 March Ms Shearer informed Mr McGreevy that they considered the nomination of Mr Henderson invalid due to Article 10(11)a, a decision which led to this appeal.

Mr McGreevy sought to state that Glentoran and Glentoran Women were indeed two separate entities and therefore their representatives sat outside the remit of Article 10(11)a, he also argued that Ms Lamont had not been nominated by the Board of Glentoran to the position she currently held and that Mr Henderson was the only true recognised representative of Glentoran. In this instance, again, the article did not apply as Ms Lamont was not a sanctioned representative of the club.

In response the IFA Board stated a number of reasons why they had reached the conclusion they had, these included the fact that in the Club Licensing application both Glentoran’s men’s and women’s teams fell under Glentoran Recreation Company (R000263), Mr Henderson as Chairman of Glentoran has historically signed player registration documentation relating to Glentoran Women, and Glentoran Women play in the same colours and style of kit as the men’s teams and wear the same badge. They also submitted correspondence from Mr Clarke, General Manager of Glentoran Women, confirming Ms Lamont’s position on the Committee of Glentoran Women and her position as representative of Glentoran Women at the County Antrim FA.

It is not for the Appeals Board to try to disentangle the labyrinthine and complex relationships within the Glentoran club structure however it is clear that both Mr Henderson, as Chairman, and Ms Lamont, as a member of the Women’s Committee and representative to the County Antrim FA, are both directly or indirectly linked to Glentoran. As such the Appeals Board are satisfied that Mr Henderson’s nomination cannot succeed without being in contravention of Article 10(11)a. Accordingly the appeal should be dismissed.