

27th August 2020

**RE: APPEAL OF MUNSTER BRANCH HOCKEY IRELAND AGAINST
THE DECISION OF
THE BOARD OF HOCKEY IRELAND
NOT TO ISSUE AN INVITATION TO
CORK HARLEQUINS HOCKEY CLUB TO PARTICIPATE IN EYHL2
FOR THE SEASON 2020 - 2021**

Following the hearing of the appeal by Munster Hockey on the 26th August 2020 and, having heard the submissions offered and the evidence advanced, both before and during the course of the appeal, the appeal panel has concluded that the Board of Hockey Ireland should issue an invitation to Cork Harlequins Hockey Club and a determination has been made in this respect in the separate appeal brought by Cork Harlequins Hockey Club.

The panel concludes that the competition working group of Hockey Ireland failed to respect the autonomy of Munster in the selection of the teams who are to go forward; intervened in the decision by Munster Branch which led to the substitution of Cork Harlequins by Bandon; led Munster Branch to the belief that an additional team would be admitted which played a role in the decision to substitute Harlequins and, in doing so, a specific unfairness and injustice was visited upon Cork Harlequins.

The finding made however in relation to Cork Harlequins takes account of the specific circumstances of that club and the particular injustice caused to them by these events. While Hockey Ireland must be responsible for any mis-communications by its sub-group, the panel does not support the appeal of Munster Branch Hockey Ireland in respect of the requirement that Hockey Ireland accept the recommendations of the commission committee working group which is a matter of executive decision for Hockey Ireland and, outside the powers of the relevant committee. While there may have been a general expectation that these recommendations will be followed, the circumstances outlined by Mr. Brady on behalf of Hockey Ireland identified the complexity of the situation and, no finding is made against Hockey Ireland in respect of the decision not to proceed with the recommendations in general. The finding in favour of Cork Harlequins is specific to the circumstances of that club but takes fully into account, the miscommunications and delays which arose in consequence of the larger issues.

In conclusion therefore, the panel upholds the appeal insofar it relates to the non-issue of an invitation to Cork Harlequin Hockey Club to participate in EYHL2 for the season 2020 – 2021.

Signed:

Aisling Keogh (Chairperson – Appeal Panel)

Paul Fogarty (Member of Appeal Panel)

Dermot Judge (Member of Appeal Panel).

Dated the 27th August 2020.