



**Minutes of the 113<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting of the English Chess Federation  
11.30 to 17.30 Thursday 18th May 2017  
Hamilton House, London**

**Present:**

Chief Executive, Mike Truran	MT
Director of Finance, David Eustace	DE
Director of International Chess, Malcolm Pein	MP
Director of Junior Chess and Education, Traci Whitfield	TW
Director of Membership, David Thomas	DT
Non-executive Chairman, Julian Clissold	JC
Non-executive Director, Julie Denning	JD
Non-Executive Director, Stephen Woodhouse	SW
Chairman, Governance Committee, Robert Stern	RS
Junior Directorate Finance Manager, Christelle Hafstad	CH
Office Manager and Minutes Secretary, Gary Willson	GW

**Absent with Apologies:**

President, Dominic Lawson	DL
Director of Home Chess, Alex Holowczak	AH
Director of Women's Chess, Sarah Longson	SL
Chair Finance Committee, Tim Herring	TH

1. Apologies for absence

Absences were noted as above.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The chairman noted items of AOB.

The agenda was approved.

3. Approval of the minutes of the 111<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting of the ECF 14<sup>th</sup> March 2017

Draft minutes of Board meeting 111 were amended and approved.

Matters arising: it was noted that Angus French had resigned as the Voting Register Officer.

Approval of the minutes of the 112<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting of the ECF 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2017

AP 113/01 JC to discuss with GW a first draft of the minutes of meeting 112.

4. Consideration of E-mail votes taken since the last Board meeting

No email votes have been taken since the last Board meeting.

5. Appointments

The Board confirmed nem con the appointment of Michael Farthing as a member of the Governance Committee, as recommended by the Chair of Governance and seconded by MT.

6. Update on action points (copy on owncloud)

AP 106/4 The task is being reassigned to the Governance Committee. Superseded.

AP 106/6 The Board does not believe there is any mileage in looking at the matter further. Cleared.

AP 111/05 RS is to produce a paper for the next meeting. Cleared.

AP 111/06 On-going

AP 111/07 Cleared.

AP 111/08 Unable to obtain information from website. Cleared.

7. Governance matters:

1 Alteration of Regulation 2 (Draft version RS)

A new draft incorporating suggested amendments had been circulated. The document as published was approved, subject to final comments received by Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May.

2 Voting reform – the future (RS)

Following the decision made at Finance Council, it was agreed the Governance Committee should discuss any future proposals at a meeting in June. Members of the Board would be invited to enable those with a keen interest to participate. Issues to discuss include voting rights of junior members, potential overall ratio of members reps' votes, and low attendance rates of council delegates.

AP 113/02 RS to issue an invitation to the Board to attend the next meeting of the Governance Committee, due to take place in June.

3 Transparency – a discussion. (RS)

The Board discussed the matter, in order to suggest to the Governance Committee a

possible direction of travel. Specific issues discussed included method of voting (card/show of hands), accountability to constituency, and electronic voting. It was agreed that these and other matters would be discussed at the June Governance Committee meeting.

## 8. Matters arising from the Council Meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2017

### 1 JRYT: next steps (SW)

SW confirmed he had written to the Chair of the JRYT, informing him of the outcome of the BCF Council meeting.

AP 113/03 DE to contact Gerry Walsh informally to discuss the BCF decision concerning the JRYT and funding.

### 2 Voting register processes and controls (MG)

The Board was concerned that the resignation of the Voting Register Officer in the lead up to Council had left the process significantly vulnerable to error. Whilst this was avoided to a large extent, it was agreed that the role should be resourced properly. It was agreed to advertise the function for four weeks, but also to explore other ways of filling the post, including being included within the duties of the grading administrator.

AP 113/04 DT/GW to draw up an advert for the voting register officer and publish on the website.

AP 113/05 DT to contact Matt Carr concerning the post of the voting register officer.

The production of the minutes of the ECF and BCF Council meetings was also discussed.

AP 113/06 DE & JD to produce a draft set of Council minutes.

AP 113/07 JC to discuss Council start times with MG.

## 9. Finance

### 1 2015/2016 accounts

BCF accounts are going through audit; accounts for Chess Centre Ltd are nearly completed, and the main ECF accounts are still being worked on. It may be that we will have to submit draft accounts to Companies House by the deadline (the Board noted that this was permitted under existing legislation).

DE confirmed that the new accounting system will vastly improve both the timeliness of accounts production and the management information available to directors next year.

AP 113/08 DE to write to SW, RS and TH concerning the retaining of funds within the BCF accounts.

## 2 Game fee billing catch-up exercise

We are now reasonably up to date with the invoicing of game fee for congresses, and looking to start the process for league and club invoicing over the summer.

## 3 Chess Trust update

Funds currently in Chess Centre Ltd and the second PIF account are being transferred to the Chess Trust. With the money to be received from the Richard Haddrell bequest this would give the Chess Trust around £550K. The Board noted that most of this money is bequeathed for junior chess activity.

It will be for the Trustees to allocate funds, based on the applications received. Application forms will be available in due course from the Chess Trust.

## 10. Directors' costed action plans (All)

This item would be fully discussed at the next Board meeting.

AP 113/09 GW to complete action plan consolidation and formatting and issue ahead of the next meeting.

## 11. Reports from Directors

1 AH's written report was noted.

2 TW talked through her report in detail. ECF juniors has achieved a fourth place at the World Schools; school's chess has expanded, and now includes a very popular and successful blitz tournament; we are working closely with the UKCC to develop a learning platform.

The Academy has met its targets so far, and more players are achieving titles. Students taking part in the programme had an average grading increase higher than the national average for their various age bands.

Matt Bridgeman has had to resign from his post as Manager of Girls' Chess due to other personal commitments. It was noted that getting volunteers for roles that might require a bigger commitment is proving difficult. Part of the Academy programme is to involve parents much more closely in junior chess, and this is proving beneficial in attracting some volunteers.

CH gave an update on junior finances. The biggest draw on finances is from the Elite programme, which is considered the most crucial part of the Academy for giving

us titled players.

It was felt that there might be a benefit in coordinating junior events to avoid clashes between important junior and other events.

AP 113/10 JC to convene discussions/meeting with major junior organisations, with a view to coordinating an annual chess calendar.

3 MP gave an update on the International Directorate. Nigel Short had nearly reached 2700 (MP has a KPI of two players reaching 2700). At the last minute we had been invited to attend the World Team Championship as FIDE had not handed out the usual wildcard invitation. At such short notice we were unable to accept given the players and funding available.

An apparent lack of organisers was noted, especially for strong FIDE rated events. Strong junior tournaments should also aim to avoid clashes with strong adult events.

## 12. Mindsports - the way forward.

John Foley had produced a paper requesting £5K to fund a further study to see if a rental model rather than a capital purchase model would be viable. It was agreed not to fund any work towards a rental model given that the success of such a model in London would probably be low. Although the Board remained supportive of a capital purchase model, it has a number of reservations about this as well.

AP 113/11 MT to write to the British Go Association to update them on the Board's discussions.

## 13. Office relocation progress report. (MT)

The move to the new room in the Watch Oak was due to take place from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> May. Following that, we would be in a position to move the library stock over from storage in Eastbourne.

DE noted that funding from the Trust should be available to assist in the move and relocation.

## 14. Interim report on the developments in the role of Company Secretary (JC)

Given the costs and the relative work involved, the Board agreed to ask Bruce Wallace to act as Company Secretary for the ECF only, costing £850 + VAT.

AP 113/12 JC to write to Bruce Wallace concerning commencement of Company Secretary role for ECF only. JC to pass copy of letter of engagement to CEO for signature *See above*.

15. AOB as reported to the chair before the meeting.

1 Demographics of membership

Discussion centred on the drop-off of juniors playing chess for which MP had provided some management information.

It was agreed that experiences across the country were varied, but key to successful recruitment and retention was an adequate number of volunteers. Clubs that run successful junior sections have an earlier time for the juniors to meet, and a number of committed volunteers. It was noted that a number of opportunities could be explored, such as use of local libraries to run junior clubs. It was agreed that we should consider running pilots, to help and support the growth and development of junior clubs.

The reintroduction of junior development officers was discussed. It was thought they might be more successful if the role description was fully developed, and the right person was fully supported. Time would be set aside at the next meeting to discuss in more detail.

AP 113/13 MP to provide more detail on how the ECF might support clubs in encouraging clubs to reach out to juniors more effectively and what the role of a junior development officer might look like.

2 Junior game fees

Following discussion, the Board agreed to reduce the amount of game fee in junior only events to £3.75 (half the amount for an adult event), and to allow two such events to count for an upgrade for a junior bronze member.

3 Sports summit

JD informed the Board she would be attending a summit on equality in sport on behalf of the ECF, and would report back.

4 John Philpott

It was agreed that we should consider renaming an existing event at the British Championships in John's memory.

AP 113/14 AH to consider which event at the British Championships might be suitable to commemorate John Philpott.

5 Publicity

The Board felt that the ECF should consider the publicity manager as a core function, given the importance of the role within the ECF. For example, the victory of our team over China at the Olympiad had had massive potential for attracting some excellent publicity.

MP had identified an individual who might help be able to help the ECF with this, and agreed to obtain some costed proposals.

AP 113/15 MP to obtain some costed proposals for publicity for the ECF and report back to the Board.

Next Meeting: Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June in Birmingham. Meeting closed 17:21.