



**Minutes of the 114th Board Meeting of the English Chess Federation
12.00 to 17.00 Friday 30th June 2017
Ibis Hotel, Birmingham**

Present:

Chief Executive, Mike Truran	MT
Director of Finance, David Eustace (via Skype most of the time)	DE
Director of International Chess, Malcolm Pein (Skype intermittently)	MP
Non-executive Chairman, Julian Clissold	JC
Non-executive Director, Julie Denning	JD
Non-Executive Director, Stephen Woodhouse	SW
Chairman, Governance Committee, Robert Stern	RS
Office Manager and Minutes Secretary, Gary Willson	GW
Chair of Council, Mike Gunn	MG

Absent with Apologies:

President, Dominic Lawson	DL
Chairman, Finance Committee, Tim Herring	TH
Junior Directorate Finance Manager, Christelle Hafstad	CH
Director of Home Chess, Alex Holowczak	AH
Director of Junior Chess, Traci Whitfield	TW
Director of Women's Chess, Sarah Longson	SL
Director of Membership, David Thomas	DT

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were noted.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved. It was agreed that item order should be adjusted to allow MP and DE to contribute on key areas via Skype. It was noted that whilst the meeting had a quorum, decisions would not necessarily be taken if enough interested directors were not present.

3. Approval of the minutes of the 112th Board Meeting of the ECF 22nd April 2017
Approval of the minutes of the 113th Board Meeting of the ECF 18th May 2017

The minutes as published were approved.

There were no matters arising.

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

No email votes had been taken since the last meeting.

5. Appointments

No appointments had been made since the last meeting.

6. Update on action points (Copy on Owncloud)

Action points cleared were noted. Outstanding action points are: 106/13, 111/05, 113/03-05, 113/07-08, 113/10-15.

7. Governance matters:

- I. Voting Reform (Paper to follow) (RS)

The Governance Committee recommended two options on voting reform that could be put for Council's consideration: 1) increase total DM votes to 40 (Bronze, Silver and Gold with 12 votes each, Platinum with 4), giving around 12% of the Council vote; 2) double (1), giving about 21% of Council total votes. The Committee asked the Board for a steer on which option(s) to progress.

The Board recommended progressing option 1 only. In addition, the Board agreed that junior members would continue to be entitled to a vote.

- II. Review of Pearce Report Outcomes: Unfinished Business (RS)

The Board reviewed the paper prepared by RS and confirmed that it was content with the status of the few remaining outstanding items.

AP 114/01 GW and AW to develop a single webpage giving easy access to the more important and commonly used ECF documents.

- III. Draft Standing Orders for Committees for approval (RS)

The draft Standing Orders, previously circulated, were agreed nem con.

- IV. Governance Committee Retirement Schedule (RS)

The Board approved the proposed election cycle: AL this year, RS the following

year, MF the next.

8. Consideration of the BCF Accounts for 2015/16

The meeting convened as the BCF Management Board for the consideration of the BCF Accounts for 2015/16. The accounts were approved nem con by the meeting.

AP 114/02 DE to sign off BCF accounts for 2015/16 and submit to Companies House.

9. Finance (DE)

Work has progressed on the ECF accounts, and draft accounts have been submitted in accordance with the agreement with Companies House. The final accounts will be submitted later.

10. Report from Directors include Update on Action Plans

The written report from AH was noted. The Board commended AH for the layout and quality of the report.

It was agreed that in the absence of so many directors it would not be sensible to review action plans in any detail.

11. Consideration of the Opinion of the Advocate General on the EBU case regarding the status of Bridge as a sport (Guardian reported 16/06/2017)(MT)

DE informed the Board that the Opinion of the Advocate General (that Bridge is a sport for VAT purposes) is non-binding, with the ECJ due to consider the matter in the autumn. Whilst pleased with the news, the EBU are being cautious.

AP 114/03 DE to progress the back-claim of VAT, in anticipation of a favourable ECJ decision.

12. Office Relocation Progress Report. (DE/GW)

GW informed the Board that the entire library stock is now located in the new office space at the Watch Oak. GW thanked Julie Denning, Mark Bryant, Ollie Willson and Paul Kelly for their hard work.

Next steps will be to project manage the installation of a library. The favoured option is to do the majority of work over a planned week in September, requiring the completion of boarding in the loft and the procurement of suitable shelving units beforehand. We will look to seek expressions of interest from members to attend the office for a week, expenses paid. The Board confirmed this approach. A record of costs will be maintained and a request for funding will be made to the Chess Trust in due course.

13. Chess Trust and JRYT Update (DE)

The Board were informed that the Chess Trust had received a payment of £450K as part of the bequest from Richard Haddrell, with a further £50K potentially due in future. £420K had been passed to Smith & Williamson to invest on a balanced portfolio.

The Board will consider a suitable candidate as another trustee for the JRYT, in place of the late John Philpott.

AP 113/04 The Board to make a nomination to the BCF Council AGM for a new trustee of the JRYT – SW to lead the work on this.

14. E-Newsletter Production Proposal (MT)

Mark Jordan has stood down as Manager of Publicity for personal reasons. The Board thanked Mark for his hard work and enthusiasm during his tenure.

MT informed the Board that Mark Rivlin had agreed to put the newsletter together for £150 per issue. The Board confirmed that the production of the newsletter plays a key role in the Federation's communication strategy, and agreed that future newsletters should be produced on a similar basis to the June issue, with the funds coming from the publicity budget.

15. AOB.

i) Junior Membership Fees (JD)

The paper submitted by JD was discussed. Consideration was given to the effectiveness of the current free Junior Silver membership and the patchy take up across the country.

The Board noted there was anecdotal evidence that costs were a factor in a number of junior events not being submitted for grading. The potential increase in costs next season (e.g. from 30p per rapidplay half-result to £3.75 pay-to-play fee in a congress or £9.50 Junior Bronze Membership Fee in a league) may exacerbate this.

A number of alternatives to the current structure were discussed, including promoting the one year free membership much more intensively in partnership with junior chess organisations across England and replacing the current junior structure with a reduced flat fee. The Board's attention was drawn to an article written by Richard James on how to effectively teach and retain juniors.

It was agreed that the matter be given further consideration with options including broad costings being presented for further discussion at the next Board meeting. Any changes to the current structure would be put to Council before being implemented.

AP 114/05 DT, JD and GW to consider alternatives to the present junior membership arrangements, liaising with DE and TW as necessary on the financial and junior implications respectively, and make proposals for consideration at the next Board meeting.

ii) Direct Debits

DE stated we are looking to put in place the ability to pay for membership by direct debit. For this to be operational for 2018/19, it needs to be in place by June 2018 at the latest.

iii) Redacted

iv) Yearbook

On-going consideration of production of further editions of the Yearbook was noted. MG informed the Board that he had a volunteer in mind who might be willing to take on the work of collating and proofreading the Yearbook. The Board agreed that MG should take this further.

v) Next Board meeting

JC informed the Board that he wanted to identify the best days of the week for members to normally attend meetings.

AP 114/07 JC and GW to pull together a Board meeting schedule for the next and future Board meetings.

vi) Hull & District chess Association

The Board welcomed the decision taken at the recent AGM of the Hull & District Chess Association to make their league ECF graded.

Meeting closed: 15:20