



Minutes of the 83<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the English Chess Federation Board  
on  
Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2014  
at  
The Euston Square Hotel, North Gower Street, London

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The meeting opened at 11:08

**Present:**

|                |                                 |            |
|----------------|---------------------------------|------------|
| Phil Ehr       | Chief Executive                 | Chair      |
| Alex Holowczak | Director of Home Chess          |            |
| David Eustace  | Director of Finance             |            |
| David Thomas   | Director of Membership          |            |
| David Openshaw | Director of International Chess | from 11:15 |

**By teleconferencing**

|                 |  |            |
|-----------------|--|------------|
| Lawrence Cooper | Director of Junior Chess and Education | from 11:13 |
|-----------------|--|------------|

**In Attendance**

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Nigel Short   | FIDE Delegate  |
| Chris Majer   | Chairman, Governance Committee                         |
| John Philpott | Company Secretary                                      |
| Mike Gunn     | Member, Governance Committee & Past<br>Chairman of ECF |
| Julie Denning | Minutes Secretary                                      |

Before turning to the formal agenda, Phil Ehr reported that Julie Denning had agreed to act as Minutes Secretary on a 1-off basis and that she was intending to audio record the meeting solely for the purpose of producing the Minutes. She had signed a Board confidentiality agreement. All present were content with this arrangement.

1. **Apologies.** Julian Clissold – out of the country taking Manchester junior team to Irish Republic.
2. **Amendments to agenda.** None
3. **Minutes of 82<sup>nd</sup> Board meeting.** Deferred
4. **E-mail votes.** A vote to approve the budgets to go to Council was approved with 3 abstentions. A proposal to withdraw the paper on the ECU General Assembly *[document*

C20.17] received 4 votes in favour and 4 against, Sean Hewitt having still been a member of the Board at the time. John Philpott advised that such a vote required an absolute majority of the Board to be passed. Consequently, the proposal failed and the paper would be put to Council.

5. **Written resolutions proposed since the previous Board meeting.** The proposal concerning the ECU paper is addressed above as having been voted on by e-mail.

6. **Future Board meetings:**

|  |       |                          |
|--|-------|--------------------------|
| Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup> April 2014    | 19:30 | Skype                    |
| Sunday 11 <sup>th</sup> May 2014       | 20:00 | Skype                    |
| Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2014    | 19:30 | Skype                    |
| Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup> July 2014      | 09:00 | at British Championships |
| Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2014    | 20:00 | Skype                    |
| Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2014 | 11:00 | prior to Council AGM     |

*[Minutes Sec's note: the above are the intended regular Board meetings until October, but note also the proposed Strategy meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> May, as addressed in item 8]*

7. **Approval of ECF Accounts for 16 months ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2013.** David Eustace summarised the accounts. They had been submitted to the auditors, but no response had been received yet. David Eustace did not envisage the auditors having significant issues. The accounts showed a surplus of £11k, but this was with the benefit of a bequest of £12k. The reserves had improved but were still "not that good". David Openshaw queried the additional £4k that had been agreed for the international budget. It was pointed out that this was for the current year and would be in the 13 / 14 accounts; it was not relevant to the accounts now being considered.

**Proposal: that the Board approves the accounts for the 16 months period ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2013.**

**Agreed nem con**

**Proposal: that David Eustace be authorised to sign the accounts on behalf of the Board, once approved by the auditors.**

**Agreed nem con**

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The ECF Board meeting adjourned at 11:30 and reconvened as the BCF Board until 12:10. The BCF Board Minutes are reported separately.

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8. **Process for the Strategy / Strategic Plan and Business Plan.** Phil Ehr had an outstanding task from the Board to produce Strategic and Business Plans. He referred to the paper he had produced so far and is on the agenda for the Council meeting. [Document C20.9] The paper proposed 4 objectives, but this was to be reduced to 3 following e-mail discussions. Phil Ehr emphasised this was still a proposed strategy, not a strategic plan. Chris Majer believed the Board needed to set aside a full day for a face-to-face meeting to focus on ECF objectives, such as what to do if more funding became available, and use that as a basis for establishing Plans. He recalled that the Board had not undertaken any strategic planning since about 2003. David Thomas liked the Ehr paper and supported the need for a dedicated Board meeting, but noted that the immediate need was to decide what the Board were going to present to Council. David Openshaw queried the need to raise the matter at all at Council at this stage, as there was no Strategic Plan available yet. Mike Gunn (assuming that Council agreed the Board's proposal that he chair the Council meeting) stated that it was his intention to adjust the agenda so that the Strategy and Transformation papers (Council agenda items 9 and 16) be considered consecutively, and that not more than 15 minutes be allocated to these items combined. As the papers had been published, he believed they should remain on the Council agenda to seek comments. At this stage, Council were only being asked to note these papers. The idea of a 1-day face-to-face Board meeting dedicated to strategy was agreed and was set for Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2014, in London, at 11:00 (time TBC). David Openshaw noted he would only be available until about 4pm. Phil Ehr will find a venue.

**Action 83.1 Find a London venue for Board strategy meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> May. Phil Ehr.**

9. **Approve three strategic objectives in the Strategy Paper.** No specific discussion beyond that covered in item 8. The Board approved three strategic initiatives in [Document C20.9], specifically numbers 2, 3 and 4, as objectives.
10. **Note the Transformation paper.** No discussion beyond that covered in item 8, including adjusting the Council agenda to cover this item consecutively with the Strategy paper.
11. **Review papers and proceedings relating to the Council agenda.** Mike Gunn had reviewed the agenda and allocated time limits for each item that he wished to stick to in order to complete the agenda by 6pm. This included 45 minutes set aside for the BCF Council meeting. His outline was agreed. In addition to delaying item 9 (Strategy paper) to be taken consecutively with the Transformation paper, Mike Gunn proposed moving the ECU item up the agenda, to be taken immediately after Matters Arising. This was agreed so long as the chairman kept a firm control on time to ensure that financial matters, that are the primary focus of this Council meeting, had sufficient time. David Openshaw queried the Board's stance on item 8, his proposal for Council to agree to a sum up to £5,500 from the expected surplus for 2013 / 14 to be applied to the International budget, to make good the shortfall in Olympiad funding. David Eustace pointed out that £4k from past surplus' had already been agreed to be added to the International funding. This new request would take the additional funding to £9,500. The extra £5,500 was a significant proportion (about 25%) of the anticipated surplus for 2013 / 14, which was largely due to the 1-off factor of not currently paying an office manager's salary. In conclusion, the Board reiterated the position it had taken at the 80<sup>th</sup> meeting in January 2014 that they agreed to the proposal being put to Council, but as a proposal of the International Director, not a Board proposal.

Phil Ehr sought assurance that the Board remained committed to the agreement reached with Andrew Paulson, as set out in his paper C20.17. David Openshaw queried the Board's view on his position. Phil Ehr confirmed that as he (David Openshaw) had abstained in the

vote on that agreement, he was free to vote in Council as he saw fit. All other current and present Board members confirmed their commitment to the agreement and intention to vote accordingly in their capacity as a Board member. It was agreed that when introducing this item, Mike Gunn would refer to paper C20.17 and that Phil Ehr would speak for it on behalf of the Board. It was understood that Andrew Paulson would wish to speak last in the ensuing discussion and the Board agreed this would be appropriate. Chris Majer asked what should be done if Andrew Paulson requested to see the card votes of the Directors on this item. It was agreed that he should be permitted to see them.

Appointment of Tellers was discussed.

**Proposal: that Mike Truran and Chris Majer be proposed to Council as Tellers.**

**Agreed nem con**

This was in accordance with normal practice to nominate the Chairs of the Finance and Governance Committees, but it was noted that Mike Truran often delegated this task to someone else. *[Minute Sec's note: this did happen. John Wickham acted in lieu of Mike Truran for the Council meeting]*

12. **Vacant posts.** Deferred

13. **Update on Chess Trust.** Refer to discussion in BCF Board meeting.

14. **Applications for Membership and Amendments to the Voting Register.** John Philpott had received 3 applications for membership. Sean Hewitt had applied on behalf of the English Rapidplay Championships, but as this was played after the cut-off date for this meeting, it would not receive a vote until after the AGM. He proposed accepting applications from this and from the UK Chess Academy and the Delancey UK Schools Chess Challenge. He also proposed increasing the voting rights in respect of Witney by 1. Various other applications for membership had been rumoured, but had not materialised. An application for the Staunton Society to join as an "Other Organisation" could be made, but as such applications need to be approved by Council and there was nothing on the agenda, this could not be dealt with at the present meeting.

Alex Holowczak queried the treatment of various events or congresses, citing the examples of e2e4, which were treated as only qualifying for a single membership, whilst various events organised by Adam Raof qualified for separate memberships. John Philpott responded that there was a rather loose interpretation based on whether congresses were viewed as a series of inter-related events, which e2e4 events were, or were distinct. The Hampstead and Golders Green events were seen as being of different character. However, he envisaged this coming up again for debate as he now expected Adam Raof to apply for separate membership for events being organised in Bexhill.

**Proposal: that the changes proposed by John Philpott be agreed.**

**Agreed nem con**

15. **Sussex Archives.** Mike Gunn reported that he had accompanied representatives from Sussex to visit the Battle office and a Hastings Council storage facility, but had failed to find the Sussex Archives. It had to be concluded that they had been thrown away. As the Sussex County delegate to Council, Julie Denning was invited to speak to this item. She stated that she had an agreed statement that she wished to submit under Matters Arising. It was critical

of the ECF for their carelessness in losing these archives, but that no useful purpose was seen in pursuing the matter further.

16. **ECU and FIDE Elections.** Phil Ehr reported that meetings had taken place with the 2 ECU candidates. He accepted a need to write up his perspective of those 2 meetings to submit to the next Board meeting.

**Action 83.2 Provide reports on meetings with candidates for ECU Presidency. Phil Ehr**

With respect to the FIDE election, Phil Ehr had met with Kasparov in Dublin, who delivered his familiar pitch. He needed to provide a report on this meeting as well. Kasparov had asked whether Phil Ehr would be prepared to support his candidature. Given the history of Board members supporting other candidates, Phil Ehr wished to know whether the Board would support him writing an article or visiting other Federations seeking their support for Kasparov. There would be no ECF or Ehr money involved. Any costs would be met by the Kasparov campaign. Given that this matter had not been put explicitly on the agenda, and its sensitivity due to similarity with discussion on other Board member's activities, other members stated they needed 7 days to consider this. If Board approval was not given, Phil Ehr might still proceed, but would make it clear he was not acting in an ECF capacity.

**Action 83.3 Provide report on meeting with Kasparov regarding FIDE Presidency. Phil Ehr**

**Action 83.4 Notify Board Members of approach to Phil Ehr to support Kasparov's candidature for FIDE President. Phil Ehr**

**Action 83.5 Respond to Phil Ehr with regard to Action 83.4 within 7 days. All Board Members except Ehr**

David Openshaw queried whether the Board had voted to support Kasparov. Phil Ehr clarified that the current position was that the Board had stated their intention to do so and would instruct Nigel Short accordingly after nominations have closed. David Openshaw also asked whether there had been a reply to the letter to Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, asking him to withdraw his claim that the ECF supported his candidature to be re-elected as FIDE President. Phil Ehr responded that no reply had been received and that he would follow this up.

**Action 83.6 Pursue a response from Kirsan Ilyumzhinov to the ECF letter of 6 February 2014. Phil Ehr**

17. **Proposal to establish the Keith Arkell Trophy.** Deferred.
18. **Proposal to recognise UK Team Challenge as an ECF event.** Lawrence Cooper asked whether this event had yet been recognised as an ECF event. It had not, but the Board supported it becoming so.

**Proposal: that the UK Team Challenge be recognised as an ECF event.**

**Agreed nem con**

19. **Endorse the Gibraltar Junior International Festival.** Deferred.
20. **Proposal to investigate claims of past CRB certification malpractice.** Deferred.

21. **Routine questions for the Junior Director.** Deferred.
22. **Discuss FIDE Academy application from UKCA.** Deferred.
23. **Discuss Principles of Conflict of interest.** Deferred.
24. **Discuss BICC topics and procedures.** Deferred.
25. **Discuss British Championships 2015.** Options were discussed.
26. **Action 83.7 Pursue a contract with Warwick University to stage the 2015 British Championships, acceptable to the finance team, ahead of the Board meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> May.**

**Alex Holowczak**

27. **Meet with Ulrike Vogel.** Due to lack of time, Board members had an informal and unminuted discussion with Ulrike Vogel, who had applied for the post of Commercial Director, outside of the Board meeting.

28. **Any other business.** Nil.

The chairman declared the meeting closed at 13:10.

**Summary of Actions:**

| Ref. | Action Required   | Responsible Person           |
|------|---|------------------------------|
| 83.1 | Find a London venue for Board strategy meeting on 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2014.  | Phil Ehr                     |
| 83.2 | Provide reports on meetings with ECU candidates   | Phil Ehr                     |
| 83.3 | Provide report on meeting with Kasparov regarding FIDE Presidency   | Phil Ehr                     |
| 83.4 | Notify Board members of approach to Phil Ehr to support Kasparov's candidature for FIDE President   | Phil Ehr                     |
| 83.5 | Respond to Phil Ehr with regard to Action 83.4 within 7 days  | All Board members except Ehr |
| 83.6 | Pursue a response from Kirsan Ilyumzhinov to the ECF letter of 6 February 2014  | Phil Ehr                     |
| 83.7 | Pursue a contract with Warwick University to stage the 2015 British Championships, acceptable to the finance team, ahead of the Board meeting on 11 <sup>th</sup> May | Alex Holowczak               |

Signed as an accurate record: Phil Ehr

Approved: 15 July 2014