

**Minutes of the 92nd Board Meeting of the English Chess Federation
Monday 16th February 2015 at the British Film Institute, 21 Stephen Street, London W1P 2LN**

Present: Phil Ehr (Chairman) (PE)
David Eustace (Director of Finance) (DE)
Alex Holowczak (Director of Home Chess) (AH)
David Openshaw (Director of International Chess, via Skype for item 9) (DO)
Traci Whitfield (Director of Junior Chess) (TW)
David Thomas (Director of Membership) (DT)
Bob Kane (Commercial Director) (BK)
Julian Clissold (Non-Executive Director, Chairman for item 9) (JC)
John Foley (Non-Executive Director) (JF)

Also in attendance:
John Philpott (Company Secretary) (JP)
Gary Willson (minutes) (GW)

Apologies: Dominic Lawson (President)
Chris Fegan (Strategic Advisor) (CF)
Malcolm Pein (FIDE Delegate)

1 Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved. DE requested that items 10 & 11 be taken together.

2 Approval of the Minutes of the 91st Board Meeting held on 7th November 2014

Following discussion on the level of detail, the minutes were approved.

3 Responsibility for Board and Council Meetings

The Company Secretary is to be responsible for the future organisation of meetings, including publication of agenda and minutes. GW to report to JP in this regard. It was requested that a suitable format be adopted that is based on actions and outcomes.

AP 92/1: DE to resend paper on minute format/structure to GW
AP 92/2: Regulations to be amended to reflect JP's Board Meeting responsibility

4 E-mail Votes taken since the last Board Meeting

None

5 Appointments made since the last Board Meeting

GW is to take up post as the office manager from 2nd March 2015. Duties will include IRO (currently undertaken by Andrew Walker)

Concern was expressed that we do not have a record of players who become delisted from FIDE.

AP 92/3: DT to liaise with other directors to investigate the de-listing of players.

TW informed the Board of a number of changes within the Junior Directorate, including Andrew Davies has become the Manager of Coaching, and a volunteer has been identified who is being trained to become the Manager of Girls' Chess.

AP 92/4: TW to update JP with details of changes within Junior Directorate, JP to then update webmaster

6 Future Meetings – dates and arrangements

Whilst accepting not all members would be able to attend due to prior engagements, the following were agreed as a best fit for dates of future Board Meetings, until the AGM:

20/3/15 1pm – 4pm	93 Daventry, principally to agree budget to go to Council
18/4/15 11am – 1 pm	94 IBIS Hotel, Birmingham, ahead of Council Meeting which begins 1.30pm
29/5/15 11am – 3pm	95 Birmingham, to coincide with the publication of the Pearce Commission Report
24/7/15 1pm – 5pm	96 Warwick University, to coincide with the start of the British Championships
18/9/15 11am – 3pm	97 Provisionally Birmingham/Daventry, to enable publication of papers for the AGM
17/10/15 11am – 1pm	98 London, ahead of the AGM

AP 92/5: JP to finalise venue etc for Board Meeting 93, possibly to coincide with 4NCL

The above dates were approved, subject to liaison with DO.

New Business

7 Appointments

GW will take over the role of Minutes Secretary

Angus French as representative on Council for Bronze Direct members

Suzanne Wood and Lara Barnes to become members of the Independent Constitutional Review Committee.

Following discussion, these appointments were approved without objection.

AP 92/6: JP to update Angus French on his appointment.

AP 92/7: PE to inform Gareth Pearce of the appointments.

8 Admission to membership of the Hull and District Chess Association

The Association already runs a graded congress, and is a possible venue for the 2017 British Championships. Their membership was agreed nom con.

9 Strategic Planning (chaired by JC)

Following the planning weekend in November 2014, two documents were authored and circulated by (1) JF, JC, CF, and PE; and (2) DO and DE, that reflect different aspects and outcomes of the weekend. A lengthy discussion was had on the origin, authority and purpose of the papers. The documents had caused confusion amongst members, especially concerning what was actually agreed at the weekend and what the next steps are to be.

It was generally agreed that neither paper was inclusive of the other, although the content of both appears to go some way to achieving a whole. It was therefore agreed, in the first instance, to pull the strategy into one working wholly inclusive document that could be agreed upon by members as a consensus. From this a wrap around document would be produced for more general consumption.

AP 92/8: JF and DE to produce a single Strategic Planning document ahead of the next Board Meeting, and to start a second document for general dissemination should time allow.

10 National Chess Library

Over the years the Federation has been bequeathed a number of items, mainly books. The bulk of this collection currently resides at the University of Brighton (in Hastings) but also in various others smaller storage sites. The University has now asked us to move it by April 2015, because it is rarely used and is taking up valuable space.

The library committee has recommended that it be relocated to the Battle Office despite the significant cost increase (one off costs in the region of £15000, followed by a rental increase of around £8000 pa.) as it will be all in one place and could be open to visitors.

Whilst the one off costs could be covered, it was thought that the Board could not easily justify the increased annual costs for a rarely used facility, a cost in excess of the amount spent by the federation on junior chess annually. It was agreed that further solutions be explored.

AP 92/9: TW & PE to look into possible space in University archives
AP 92/10: BK & PE to reconsider an original offer of "one copy only" by the British Library
AP 92/11: DE to continue to look at options for co-location of the collection in Battle
AP 92/12: PE to try to delay the evacuation until at least May 2015
AP 92/13: JF to organise an archiving posse, to sort through and box the collection in Hastings
AP 92/14: JF/BK/PE to advertise for solutions on the ECF Forum

11 Budget Preparation

At the meeting on 20th March, it will be necessary to agree a proposed budget to put to Council in April. Draft papers indicating forecast income and expenditure for each directorate until 2017/18 were distributed, with a view to finalising and sign off on 20th March.

Individual directors' budgets were discussed and explained. It was agreed that the FIDE delegate will be budgeted for £1000 pa, but placed in the Administrative budget.

Overall for the next 3 years the Federation will lose money year on year if all the current budget proposals are implemented, and membership rates remain unchanged, and it was agreed that in

order to reduce the shortfall, we need to look at increasing income as well as reducing costs. A number of different options were discussed, focussing on increased activity such as more FIDE rated tournaments. However, it was accepted that an increase in fees may be necessary, noting that they had remained static since the new system was implemented.

It was agreed to consider an increase of £2 pa for Bronze, £3 pa for Silver and £4 pa for Gold, Platinum to remain the same; this increase would not only cover the anticipated deficit but also allow for increased activity, such as within the Junior Directorate.

AP 92/15: PE to draw up revised figures for the relocation of the library, to feed into the financial plan ahead of the next meeting.

AP 92/16: DE to work with individual directors concerning funding requirements as part of the budget preparation for the Council meeting.

12 Other Matters relating to Finance Council

It was agreed that the Finance Council should be chaired by JC as a non-executive director. The board expressed its thanks to Mike Gunn for his previous hard work.

Papers need to be prepared, finalised and agreed ahead of submission to Council. Papers include:-

- Budget plan (item 11)
- Strategic Plan (item 9)
- Constitutional review paper (Pearce Commission)
- Procedure during elections (Governance Committee chair)
- Possible need for Financial Regulations paper, if time allows (DE).

These and any other papers should be prepared and ready for circulation to Board members by 13th March.

AP 92/17: PE to speak to Gareth Pearce concerning constitutional review paper ahead of Finance Council.

13 Approval of New Regulations

Regulation No. 4 Standards of Conduct for ECF Officials and Regulation No. 5 ECF Complaints Procedure were adopted nom con in the form in which they had been laid before the AGM.

14 Proposal to Discontinue the Yearbook after 2016

It was agreed to submit to Council a proposal to phase out the yearbook. The vast majority of the contents is now on-line, and traditional publication is taken up by less and less whilst relative costs increase. It was agreed that the proposal should be extended to the diary.

AP 92/18: PE to prepare a paper to submit to Council, proposing the phase out of the yearbook and the personal diary.

15 An Alternative to the ECF Forum

Due to lack of time it was agreed to defer the bulk of this item and any decision making to the next meeting. In particular, directors were asked to consider their own and their directorate's usage.

- AP 92/19: PE to discuss with TW the use of the ECF forum to promote junior activities
AP 92/20: BK to discuss ECF Forum categories with other directors

16 Board Working Group Assignments

PE is working with directors to encourage working groups to work together where there are crossed interests. This will continue, as will a general review of sub-groups.

17 Director Updates

- BK: Still trying to identify and recruit a publicity officer.
PE: The FIDE Online Arena is a new initiative which allows members' money to go straight to FIDE, with a potential impact on the ECF.
- AP 92/21: PE to discuss the detail of FIDE Online Arena with BK, to evaluate the resulting impact on the ECF.
- PE: Some arbiters' fees still remain un-paid by the organisers of the 2014 World Youth Chess Championship in South Africa, on-going.
PE: UK Chess Academy is looking to send a team to the World Schools Chess Championship in Thailand in May 2015. If they do, FIDE regulations may require the team to be registered through the ECF.
AH: Currently trying to organise an English Women's event and the British Championships.

18 AOB

- AH: Proposing to FIDE that the 4 hour time limit requirement for standard play games be relaxed, so that more tournaments can attract inclusion of FIDE rating.
- JF: An education committee in Spain has agreed to directly fund chess in schools, following a unanimous Parliamentary decision.