

Election Address for Finance Director

September 2016

**Name:** David Eustace

**Background:**

I refer to my election addresses since of October 2013 for your information. During the past eleven months there have been a number of important changes which have made an interesting year for the Finance Director.

**Progress**

By the end of the last financial end the financial targets set by the Board for establishing a more credible reserve were achieved within one year rather than the planned three. This is good news.

The Chess Trust is now open for business and has received its first donations. I am also pleased to see that much needed sponsorship and donations, largely from the efforts of the International Director and the support of Tradewise, have enhanced the funds available for developments of chess activities.

A pension scheme has been established for staff in line with legislation.

Since October the composition of the Board has changed and the new Board has decided to pursue a more "growth" orientated approach in its support of chess. The Strategic Plan articulates this and financial support is provided by utilising withdrawals from the trust funds to which it has access. The Board is now starting to create an integrated long term plan starting with its strategy, directors' operating plans and a financial plan. At the time writing two of three are now in place. This is quite consistent to the previous approach of building surplus funds for securing on-going operations and to develop chess activities.

The Finance Director's role is to manage the process of utilising our funds in the most optimal manner to support the Board in its plans and to maintain oversight of the long term sustainability of the organisation's finances. Low level withdrawals from the capital held within the trust funds together with modest replenishments should provide a sustainable future. Efforts will also be made to encourage further donations to our trust funds for the future. These plans are to be placed before Council for approval.

All sets of accounts are up to date, which is also a great improvement on the position in previous years.

Again I wish once to thank John Philpott for his sterling work as Financial Controller and Chris Mattos for his sound advice when called upon. The financial position has been greatly improved in the past three years and places the Board in a stronger position to further develop chess activities.

## **Next Year**

For the coming there will be a major change in how the finance team works. Unfortunately, John Philpott is retiring from all his ECF posts by April next year. After receiving no suitable response from its advert for a volunteer the Board have decided to replace the role of Financial Controller with professional, paid support as it regards the role as an important, basic service. In past years the bookkeeping functions etc were performed by the Office. This is a key task to give effect to this transfer of accountancy activities. I will also be pursuing a goal of computersing the accountancy functions once we have the new personnel arrangements established. This should also enable the delivery of management accounts in a less time intensive manner which is another of our objectives. The selection process has started.

Once again to prove consistency I confirm my three themes with slight amendments:

- i. Sound financial procedures and practices – good governance
- ii. Ensure the annual operating finances are on a robust footing – consistent with the ECF's strategy
- iii. Enhance the long term financial position – provide resources of the ECF and its associated trust funds to take advantage of future opportunities

My long term ambition continues to be to leave the Federation's financial position in a better place than when I started. However, it is not only about money; I will try constantly to contribute to the overall management of the Federation to make tomorrow better.

David Eustace