

**FINANCE COUNCIL MEETING 13 APRIL 2013**Statement from the Non-Executive Chairman on the ECF Complaints Procedure

Council adopted two documents “Code of Conduct for ECF Officials” and “ECF Complaints Procedure” at the AGM in October 2012.

Since then handful of complaints have been received under the procedure and each has been a complaint about a Board member (not all about the same Board member). The nature of each complaint has been that the Board member in question insulted or showed a lack of courtesy to the person who complained.

As the CEO position is vacant I considered the first complaint received and my findings were appealed against by both the Director complained about and the person who issued the original complaint. The matter was then considered by the whole Board (as laid down under the procedure) who also rejected my findings.

During the above process it became clear to Board members that the existing procedure is not for for purpose when it involves Board members considering complaints against other Board members.

The Board believes the current procedure should be suspended and should be replaced by a new procedure which embodies the following principles:

1. Complaints should be considered by a body or individuals which are independent of the current ECF Board. This body or individuals could be elected by Council or appointed by the Board (but would then act independently)
2. The procedure needs to be much more prescriptive about who is allowed to complain and the nature of the complaints which will be considered. I suggest that it should be made clear that the procedure is intended for serious cases of maladministration and not for situations where people perceive that they have been insulted. Probably most would agree that we should treat each other in a courteous fashion, but dealing cases of rudeness in the chess world using the sledgehammer of a complaints procedure is just a waste of time to all concerned.

The Board intends to bring forward a new draft procedure for discussion by Council at the AGM in October. Meanwhile the Non-Executive Chairman apologises to the small number of people who have made complaints since January to which he has not responded.

Mike Gunn, April 13<sup>th</sup> 2013