



**Minutes of the 125th Board Meeting of the English Chess Federation
Friday 23rd November 2018
11.30a.m. – 5.00p.m.**

National Education Union, Hamilton House, 4 Mabledon Place, City Of London WC1H 9BD

Members:

President, Dominic Lawson	Apologies	DL
Chief Executive, Mike Truran		MT
Director of Finance, David Eustace	Apologies	DE
Director of Junior Chess, Alex Holowczak	Apologies	AH
Director of International Chess, Malcolm Pein		MP
Director of Home Chess, Adrian Elwin		AE
Director of Membership, Dave Thomas		DT
Non-executive Chairman, Julian Clissold		JC
Non-executive Director, Julie Denning		JD
Non-Executive Director, Stephen Woodhouse		SW
Director of Women's Chess, Chris Fegan		CF

Invited: Observers and Guests

Chairman, Finance Committee, Tim Herring		TH
Chairman, Governance Committee, Robert Stern		RS
Office Manager, Gary Willson	Apologies	GW
Secretary to the Board, Nigel Towers		NT

1. Apologies for absence

David Eustace, Alex Holowczak and Gary Wilson were all unable to attend and sent their apologies.

2. Appointment of Chair

Julian Clissold was appointed as chair and Nigel Towers was appointed as Secretary to the Board reporting to Mike and Julian.

3. Approval of the Agenda

The Agenda was approved with Dave's items to be taken in the morning as he needed to leave the meeting early and Alex's items to be taken at 2-00 via dial in.

4. Minutes of 124th Board Meeting

These were accepted unanimously.



5. Matters Arising from Minutes not on the Agenda

Board directors

It was noted that following the AGM of the Company on 13 October 2018, Adrian Elwin had consented to act and been appointed as a director and Traci Whitfield had resigned as a director of the Company, both with effect from 13 October 2018.

6. General Action Point Update (*Refer to Outstanding Actions tab in Action Plan*)

Outstanding general action points were discussed and updated. Details can be found in the Action Point Spreadsheet of 23/11 general tab.

7. Matters Arising from Council (*Refer to Council Actions tab in Action Plan*)

Outstanding action points from Council were discussed and updated. Details can be found in the Action Point Spreadsheet of 23/11 Council tab. The following points were noted:

Council Meeting Actions 1018/03 - Ensure papers for ECF Council meetings are made available at least two weeks in advance. Target amended to three and a half weeks before Council so that the papers are available with the Agenda. Nigel to progress with Mike Gunn and Angus French in advance of next Council Meeting.

8. GDPR Update

Stephen explained the measures which were being taken to protect personal data on the ECF website including information security related changes, facility for certain member information to be removed from list on request, and planned changes to membership list accessibility.

Action agreed for note on membership list changes to go out to organisers in Nov/ Dec 2018 with explanatory notes to be added to web site.

9. Director of Membership Report

a) Monthly Grading – Dave presented his note on monthly grading which provided a summary of Brian Valentine's paper. Brian feels that it may be expensive to upgrade the system to cope with monthly grading and it would also be important to promote the idea with leagues and local graders.

It was agreed that timely grading of players was a core function of the ECF and there was a clear demand from many sections of the chess community for more frequent grading lists. The





Board's target was to provide monthly grading capability for the 2019/2020 season at the latest. Mike said that he hoped that the ECF would be able to work jointly with UKCC, who are thinking about developing a grading system, and that it would be regrettable if other organisations felt obliged to develop separate grading systems in the absence of a suitable service from the ECF.

Julie stressed the importance of ensuring that local graders were supported as part of any system changes.

The Board were concerned about the cost implications of building a system from scratch, and asked Dave to look at grading systems in use by other organisations – e.g. USCF, FIDE and the Correspondence Chess Organisation(s) - with a view to possibly purchasing off the shelf or licensing an existing system.

An action was agreed for David to review the various options including discussions with a USCF representative and discussions with Alex and Sarah from UKCC, and report back to the next board in January.

(b) Membership discussions

Dave presented the membership analysis report to the Board which now includes financial information, retention figures, and demographics analysis.

Mike proposed the creation of an 'English chess supporters' group for casual/ social chess players who would be offered the ECF newsletter and other resources TBC for a fee of £5 annually.

An action was agreed for Dave to implement the new group including: establishing the supporters' group and arranging for the offer with annual payments. Chris agreed to arrange for suitable publicity on the website, social media, and in the press. Mike asked that David be involved in the process before launch given the potential financial implications of introducing a new ECF supporters group.

10. Appointments Spreadsheet Review (MT) – The appointments spreadsheet was reviewed and agreed.

LUNCH 13.00

11. Directors' Reports against Action Plans

(a) CEO/ Strategy (MT)

Mike gave a brief verbal update.

(b) Membership (DT)

Covered under item 9.

(c) Finance (DE)

As David was not in attendance no report was made.

(d) Home Chess (AE) – Adrian reported that he was looking at the Kettering Conference Centre for the 2019 County Championship finals and it was agreed that he should go ahead with the booking after Stephen had reviewed the terms and conditions.

The board wished to thank Bridge Overseas for their ongoing support in finding venues.

(e) International (MP)

Olympiad - Malcolm described the sensational result at the Olympiad where the English team came 5th. He complimented John Nunn in particular on his outstanding team captaincy and highlighted the excellent performances of a number of the players in the team.

European Club Cup - There had been good participation from English clubs and many teams had done very well. Malcolm would like to enter more teams in the World Seniors Club Championship.

Malcolm expressed his thanks to the Board for providing an increase in the International budget as agreed at Council and there was full agreement that properly funded participation in international chess was a key part of the ECF's operation.

Sponsorship – Malcolm described his ongoing efforts in obtaining sponsorship for the ECF.

(f) Women's Chess (CF) – Chris explained that the ECF had organised a very successful English Women's Championships.

(g) Junior Chess (AH) – written report in advance. Alex's report and supporting papers were noted (see below for specific Junior items)..

12. 2019 Junior Selection Policy (AH)

Malcolm felt that the proposed policy was a considerable improvement over previous approaches. He was particularly pleased that we would be sending players to rapid and blitz events. He felt that the policy would also benefit from some fine tuning.



An action was agreed for MT, MP, AH to discuss and amend the policy as appropriate.

13.2019 ECF Academy Arrangements and International Trip Arrangements) (AH)

Board members asked whether support could be provided to families who need help with the fees. Mike said that the ECF was investigating whether a hardship fund to support the Academy could be established. Malcolm raised the possibility of approaching more parents and companies for financial support.

The Board agreed to waive regulation number 1 in relation to the first and second Academy weekends in 2019, and to ask UKCC to run the Academy weekends in January and April as a result of the short timescale. Subsequent weekends will be subject to the normal tender processes.

The Board expressed concern over some of the Academy expenditure at previous weekends; Mike said that he and Alex had discussed this and agreed that controls would be strengthened for the future.

Action Point – Alex to confirm with UKCC that they are willing to take over running the Academy for the next two weekends.

14. ECF-NYCA MoU proposal (if available) (AH) – This paper was not available.

15. Accredited Coaches scheme proposal (AH)

The Board confirmed that it supported this proposal which it thought was an excellent approach, and noted that it was helpful for the ECF to reference external coaching qualifications including CSC and ECU courses.

The Accredited Coaches proposal was agreed by the Board.

16. Anti-Cheating Guidelines Update (AE)

Adrian referred to his draft anti-cheating proposal and noted that the ECF's federated structure meant that a mandatory approach was unlikely to be welcomed or to work.

Adrian's view was that he was therefore likely to recommend:

- An advisory set of guidelines and best practice for organisers;
- Mandatory reporting to an anti-cheating / standards committee reporting in turn to the Home Chess Director

An action was agreed for Adrian to solicit more information on what other federations do in relation to anti-cheating.

There was some discussion as to whether the membership terms could be changed to include an agreement to be bound by the ECF anti-cheating guidelines and measures.

An action was agreed for Stephen and Robert to develop wording for the membership area of the website to accompany the anti-cheating policy once developed.

17. Role of an ECF Development Officer (MP - paper already circulated)

Malcolm outlined the key points from the paper and supporting note. Malcolm said that it was critical to reach out to the millions of casual players who do not currently engage with the ECF, and it would be important to make ECF membership more attractive as a basis for increasing membership take-up and to support the work of a Development Officer. There was some discussion of the remuneration for the role, with amendments suggested to the package to include a base fee, with a bonus opportunity based on achieved KPIs including membership revenue increases and sponsorship obtained.

Actions were agreed for Mike to produce a draft job advertisement and circulate it to the Board, and also to ensure that David was involved in finalising the remuneration arrangements before publication.

18. Library (DE)

Mike noted there has been an offer from De Montfort University to take the library on. Mike is investigating the proposed arrangements for this and will report back in due course.

19. Grants to promote Women's Chess (CF)

Chris said that he is already receiving applications for grants and generally needs more details on what the applicants will do and what the benefits will be. Chris is working on a prospectus which will be used as the basis for future grant applications. Chris confirmed that he would be putting in place robust procedures for reporting from organisations in receipt of grants.



20. Date and time of next Board Meeting Friday 11th January 2019, London

The Board agreed to move this to Birmingham to facilitate the presentation from Tracey Barber that has been arranged by Stephen..

There being no other business the meeting was closed at 16:34.