

**Minutes of the 127th Board Meeting of the English Chess Federation
Friday 15th February 2019
11.30a.m. – 5.00p.m.
Hamilton House, London**

Members:

President, Dominic Lawson	Apologies	DL
Chief Executive, Mike Truran	Apologies	MT
Director of Finance, David Eustace		DE
Director of Junior Chess, Alex Holowczak		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	Apologies	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** - Mike Truran, Julie Denning and Gary Wilson were unable to attend and sent their apologies.
2. **Appointment of Chair** - Julian Clissold was appointed as chair.
3. **Appointment of Alternate Directors** – The following were appointed as alternates:
 - Malcolm Pein for Dominic Lawson
 - Stephen Woodhouse for Julie Denning
 - David Eustace for Mike Truran and David Thomas (after David Thomas had to leave the meeting during the course of the afternoon)
4. **Approval of the Agenda** - The agenda items were approved.
5. **Minutes of 126th Board Meeting** - These were accepted unanimously.
6. **[Item 6 Redacted]**



7. Matters Arising from Minutes not on the Agenda - There were no matters arising.

8. Action List Review – Outstanding actions were reviewed with updates as per the Actions Spreadsheet.

9. Membership Matters

9.1 Update on grading consultation process (DT)

DT summarised the results from the grading consultation to date. There had been 418 responses in the first week, which was about 5% of the membership and 10% of those opening the newsletter. It was noted that more than two thirds of respondents are in favour of monthly grading and a 4 digit grade. DT also presented various chi-square analyses which indicated that those playing on line were more likely to be in favour of a 4 digit grade and that players over 65 were more likely to be against monthly grading and 4 digit grades. The board expressed its thanks to DT for his work on the consultation to date. The deadline for completion of responses is 15th March at which point the full set of responses will be reviewed and a way forward agreed.

9.2. Update on consultations with other UK chess associations (DT))

The ICU have responded to DT's request for information, and have indicated that their system is based on public domain software and that an implementation would require 3 roles:

- a. Ruby on Rails Programmer
- b. Unix Sysadmin
- c. Requirements/ product manager

We can identify volunteers for roles a and b. DT is planning to contact UKCC to identify volunteers with Ruby on Rails experience.

9.3. Progress with regard to monthly grading

As above the proposed approach is to implement a version of the ICU system based on the MIT public domain software and with an implementation team as above.

10. Finance Report (DE)

Management Accounts for 2017/18 - DE summarised his report and asked for detailed comments on the FY 2017/18 accounts prior to finalisation of the accounts with the auditor (as per existing Finance Actions).



Management Accounts for 18/19 to date - DE noted that the increase in the FY18/19 forecast loss was due to late processing of a FIDE invoice.

DE requested forecasts from Executive Directors for FY 18/19 up to 31st August (as per the existing Finance Actions).

Preparation for April Finance Council - DE requested forecasts for the 21/22 budget by 15th March, with the budgets for 19/20, 20/21 and 21/22 to be tabled for agreement at the board meeting in March, ready for distribution in good time for the Council meeting in April.

DE also noted that membership fee increases will need formal approval by Council in April following the approval in principle at the October Council.

Feedback from the Chess Trust – There had been a meeting of the Chess trust at the end of January at which Peter Wells had reported on the Accelerator Programme progress, and it was agreed to continue at the same level of funding from the Trust.

CF requested provision of the Accelerator programme report to the board.

Action DE to provide the Accelerator programme report.

DE advised that the Bloodworth/Glorney and BCET trusts were going to donate all of their funds to the Chess Trust which would continue to meet the two trusts' objectives.

11. Funding of Junior Bursaries (AH) - AH indicated that he planned to transfer funds allocated to the creation of a Junior database and sponsorship, to the Junior ECF Bursary Fund. The proposed transfers to the Bursary fund were:

- £10,000 (previously allocated for development of a website and tracking software for players in the ECF Academy);
- £2,500 (received from sponsorship of the National Schools Championship).

This would take the total assets of the Junior Bursary fund to in excess of £13,500.

AH put the following proposals to the meeting:

- Proposal 2a: Transfer the above pots of money into the ECF Bursary Fund
- Proposal 2b: Appoint the Chief Executive, Finance Director and Director of Junior Chess & Education to be the people responsible for disbursing the ECF Bursary Fund money, and invite applications for bursaries from this fund.

Both proposals were approved nem con.



AH will send a note to the Office to advertise the fund and CF agreed to publicise the bursary opportunity to female chess players on his mailing list.

12. Tender process for the Junior Academy (AH)

AH had distributed the draft tender document and supporting papers, and had received comments on the evaluation criteria and weightings. He also indicated that there was a preference for a single provider across the three regions. It was noted that the members of the bid committee to determine the successful applicant (s) would be decided by the Finance Director as per the Bid Regulations.

There was some discussion of the proposed profit share arrangements and potential alternatives.

13. Arrangements for International Junior Events (AH)

AH summarised the current arrangements for International Trips and noted that in future travel arrangements will be organised through Bridge Overseas who will be charging £50 Travel Agency fee per player.

14. English Youth Championships

AH indicated that he was looking at establishing an English Youth Championships to be held over Easter with 7 rounds at 1 game per day. He was planning to organise this for 2020.

15. English County Championship Participation (CF)

CF tabled a proposal to mandate a female player in each of the Open County first teams in the National Stages of the County Championships. AH pointed out that previous consultations had indicated that there was a majority against this proposal and that Council had specifically rejected it.

There was general support for this recommendation to be considered again and CF agreed to draft a resolution for consideration at the April Council.

Action – CF to prepare a resolution on mandating female players in the County first teams at the National Stages of the County Championships, and to present the resolution to Council.

16. New Member Applications - NT

The board was asked to consider a membership application from Maidenhead Junior Chess Club. The application was accepted nem con.

Action - NT to write to Nigel Dennis with the outcome of the Maidenhead Junior Chess Club application.



17. PIF Chess Trust Funds Transfer

SW summarised the paper he had written on the proposed funds transfer and recommended that the transfer be made on the basis that:

1. The Trustees would consult with the ECF on the appointment of non-ECF appointees (but with trustees having the final appointment right).
2. The ECF would consult with the Trustees on the appointment of ECF appointees (but with the ECF having final appointment right).
3. There is agreement that the PIF funds should be used for the benefit of English chess (i.e. consistently with the ECF's objectives) in support of strategic/developmental initiatives (such as the Development Officer role, social and women's chess outreach and the move to monthly grading); and (ii) as an emergency fund should the ECF's financial position require it.

SW also described his proposal for a MOU between the ECF and Chess Trust to ensure that the Trust would take due account of the ECF's wishes without fettering the Trustees discretion.

MP requested that a copy of the Chess Trust Minutes be provided to the board.

Action DE to request provision of minutes.

MP put forward an alternative proposal for the transfer of funds from the PIF.as follows:

1. Any funds henceforth sent to the Chess Trust from the ECF should be sent on a 'restricted funds' basis in which the ECF Board specifies the purpose for which the funds transferred should be spent.
2. The ECF Board should request the BCF Council to hand responsibility for the PIF to the ECF and not the Chess Trust. This will facilitate the winding up of the BCF.
3. The ECF Board request of the PIF Trustees that they make available to the ECF the funds specified by the ECF Council, £18.5K.
4. The ECF Board request of the PIF Trustees that they instruct Smith and Williamson to evaluate the tax liability that would result in the redemption of part or the entire investment portfolio and make this information available to the ECF Board.



There was some discussion of the merits of the two alternative proposals.

It was noted that transfer of the PIF funds to the ECF (as suggested in MP's proposal), would result in a significant tax charge, and that this would not be the case with transfer to a charitable organisation such as the Chess Trust

JC proposed that the Board should recommend a PIF transfer to a Charitable Trust for both tax and governance reasons.

The following proposal was established and tabled after some discussion.

PIF funds should be transferred to the Chess Trust as currently constituted. The transfer should be made in phases as follows:

- An immediate transfer of £70k (including £20k for the Development Officer) to be made as soon as possible;
- A review of the transfer after a year, and no later than June 2020, to determine the timing of the future payments

The proposal was agreed unanimously.

18. Board Reports

Membership (DT)

The Membership report had been covered under the Membership matters item.

Home Chess (AE)

Adrian presented his updated Anti-Cheating paper including updates to reflect comments. It was agreed that the definitive version of the paper should be tabled at the March board for approval.

Adrian indicated that the entry forms for the British Championships would be published during the next week.

Junior Chess (AH)

The Junior Chess report had been covered under earlier agenda items

International (MP)

MP indicated that England had qualified for the World team championships for the first time since 1997. This will be one of the toughest tournaments for the England team in the last 20 years with only two teams (Egypt and Khazakstan) having a lower rating. MP indicated that he



had not budgeted for England's qualification in this competition but had managed to arrange sponsorship from chess.com so that the International Budget would only be impacted by around £2k.

Womens Chess (CF)

CF indicated that the English Womens' Championships is now scheduled to be held in Hull and that grants were now being made including a grant to Adam Raof to offer free entries to women players, and to Hammersmith Chess Club. Grants for other organisations were also being discussed.

Finance

Finance matters had been mostly covered under previous items.

TH offered his thanks to DE on behalf of the Finance Committee for the time which DE spent with them last month. They were expecting to meet again before the Finance Council in April.

19. Date and time of next Board Meeting

The next board meeting will be in Birmingham on 29th March.

There being no other business the meeting was closed at 17:00.

