

**Minutes of the 128th Board Meeting of the English Chess Federation
March 29th 2019
11.30a.m. – 5.00p.m.
Ibis Styles Hotel, Lionel Street, Birmingham**

Members:

President, Dominic Lawson	Apologies	DL
Chief Executive, Mike Truran		MT
Director of Finance, David Eustace		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 (Part time by phone)		CF

Invited: Observers and Guests

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

1. **Apologies for Absence** - Alex Holowczak 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
 - Mike Truran for Alex Holowczak
4. **Approval of the Agenda** - The agenda items were approved including the redaction of item 1.
5. **Minutes of 127th Board Meeting** - These were accepted unanimously.
6. **Matters Arising from Minutes not on the Agenda** - There were no matters arising.
7. **Preparations for April Finance Council Meeting (MG)**



It was agreed that MG would propose a motion to the Finance Council in relation to the charging of membership fees to County Associations with no games submitted for the year, including a straw poll to determine the view of Council.

It was proposed by the Board and agreed by MG that three organisations who had not paid their membership fees should have their voting rights suspended.

The board agreed the detailed timetable for Finance Council notifications and supporting papers including issue of the agenda and initial papers by Wednesday 3rd April in good time for the Council meeting on 27th April.

A number of actions from the previous Council meeting were discussed, including the production of KPIs for the various directorates. It was noted that these are now in place for International, with work in progress on the Home, Membership, Women's Chess and Junior Directorates.

MG presented his draft agenda for the Finance Council.

Individual members of the Board expressed disappointment in relation to the two motions submitted by requisitionists concerning membership fees and international spend, which it was felt were not in the spirit of the approval in principle of the budget that had been given by Council at the last Council meeting in October.

A number of updates were agreed to the agenda to cover the various financial papers to be discussed and agreed as part of the Finance Director's report including the 2017/2018 accounts and the budgets.

It was also noted that the agenda was to include a proposal from CF on Women's participation in the County Championships.

There was a further discussion about the BCF Council meeting which was to be held on the same day and to include presentation of the BCF and Chess Centre Accounts.

8. Financial Reports (DE)

a. Managements accounts for 2018/19 to 28th February

DE presented the ECF management accounts for 2018/2019. The Board approved the accounts nem con.

b. Approval of the accounts for 2017/18



DE presented the ECF financial accounts for the year ended 31 August 2018. The Board approved the accounts nem con.

An action was agreed for DE to encourage members to setup direct debit arrangements with suitable reference to be included in the newsletter.

DE also presented the BCF financial accounts for the year ended 31 August 2018. The Board approved the accounts nem con.

DE also presented the Chess Centre Accounts for noting.

c. Approval of the budgets for 2019/20 and 2020/21 to be presented to Finance Council

DE reminded the Board that the intention was to restore the ECF's reserves to a level of £100k, thereby providing for around six months' expenditure. The budgets were discussed and agreed subject to a number of minor amendments. The Board confirmed that two years' budgets should be presented to Council, the first year for approval by Council and the second year for approval in principle by Council.

Action – Executive Directors to provide any further comments to DE by 30th March for DE to update the budgets if required.

d. Draft finance paper for Finance Council meeting – DE presented a draft of his Finance Council paper and asked for comments from all Board members so that the document could be updated for publication during week commencing 1st April.

Action – Board members to review the Finance Council paper and provide comments to DE by 1st April.

e. Suggestions for changing how game fee and congress pay to play fees are collected – DE presented a short paper outlining changes to game fee and pay to play collection arrangements. DE explained that this was for information only at this stage and that he would be bringing a paper back to a future Board meeting for further discussion.

9. Transfer of the PIF: Report (DE)

DE outlined progress on the transfer of funds from the PIF to the Chess Trust. JC confirmed that he had written to the PIF trustees requesting an initial transfer of £70.5k over the next three years. These funds would be made available to support International Chess, Women's Chess and a Development Officer role. It was envisaged that the balance of the PIF funds would be transferred to the Chess Trust in due course once the success of the initial transfer had been evaluated.



Action – JC to distribute a copy of the letter to the Board.

DE noted that the PIF and Chess Trust Trustees would be meeting on 15th May and that discussion of JC's letter would be on the agenda.

It was noted that the Chess Trust meeting minutes and Accelerator report had been made available to the Secretary to the Board as requested at the previous Board meeting, and could be provided to individual Board members on request.

10. Women's Chess and the County Championship including follow up to the Tracey Barber presentation(CF)

CF explained the rationale for his proposed resolution on women's participation in the County Championship, namely to take positive action to increase the level of female participation in county chess.

The Board expressed concern that AH's similar proposal during his review of the County Championships in 2018 had not survived the initial consultation stage and so had not made it through to the recommendations to Council, that a commitment had been made (although not minuted) not to review the County Championships format again for the time being, and that there would be practical difficulties for counties in fielding women players.

MT also suggested that the County Championships could not necessarily be seen as a flagship event in their current form, and as such might not be a suitable area of focus for attracting more female participation in chess.

This was noted, and it was agreed that Board members would not comment on the proposal at the Council meeting and that CF's motion should be proposed as a motion from the Director of Women's chess and not as a Board motion to Council.

Action – CF to put forward a motion to Council on female participation in county chess.

CF noted that he had asked for suggestions on areas to cover in a follow-up to Tracey Barber's presentation but had received no responses to date.

An action was agreed for CF to resend his email request to the full Board for their attention and discussion at the Board meeting scheduled for May.

11. Marketing of Supporter Category Update (CF)

This item was not discussed due to time constraints.

12. Monthly Grading Update (DT)



DT confirmed the outcome of the monthly grading consultation which was very similar to the interim result and heavily in favour of monthly grades and of four figure grades. DT advised that he was now starting a separate consultation process with organisers and graders, with a further survey to be sent out by 12th April.

An action was agreed for DT to publicise details of the additional consultation process in the newsletter.

DT further advised that work was continuing on implementing the new grading system, which would probably be based on freely available software, with an expected implementation date of the end of 2019, with a go / no go decision in the next two months.

13. Anti-Cheating Regulations (AE)

AE presented the latest draft of his anti-cheating paper, which now included various suggestions made by Board members.

AE indicated that he would distribute the paper to organisers and arbiters for further comment before final approval and publication.

14. Membership Benefits from Chess Suppliers

MP presented an offer from Chess & Bridge to provide discounts on their products for ECF members and advised that he was not looking for an exclusive arrangement with the ECF and that he would want other providers to be given the opportunity to offer a similar arrangement

MP then recused himself from further discussions on this matter and left the room.

MT proposed and it was agreed that the ECF should take up the offer from Chess & Bridge and a further offer which had been received from Chess Direct, and would be open to similar offers from other providers.

15. Directors' Reports against Action Plans

- a. Membership (DT) - DT had nothing to add to his previous report.
- b. Home Chess (AE) – AE presented his report including updates on the County Championships, the British Championships (where the initial qualifiers have now been published online), and anti-cheating proposals (with details as above).
- c. Junior Chess (AH) – AH's report was noted and accepted by the Board.
- d. International (MP) – MP reported on the successful performance of the England team at the World Team Championship from 5th to 14th March 2019 in Kazakhstan.



The English team took the silver medal, with only one loss to China. David Howell won an individual silver on board 3, Gawain Jones an individual bronze on board 4 and Luke McShane won an individual gold on board 2. This was the best English team result for over 20 years.

MP noted that England now has three players with FIDE ratings at or around 2700 and two more in the world's top 100.

MP is creating new webpages for the International directorate on the ECF website which will include reports and KPIs.

The Board conveyed its thanks and congratulations to the whole English team for its performance at the event.

e. Women's Chess (CF) – There was no report from CF.

16. Gold Members representative nominations – NT explained that there were three nominees for the Gold member representative casual vacancy. The Board considered submissions from the nominees and agreed to appoint Lorin D'Costa to the position. The appointment was agreed by MG as Council Chair.

Action – JC to write to Lorin to confirm his appointment and also to notify unsuccessful candidates of the outcome.

17. Report on the success of the England Team (MP) – This was covered in the International Director's report.

18. Dates for the 2020 British Championships (AE) – AE explained that the currently planned date for the British 2020 Championships would clash with the Olympiad and moving forwards or backwards would clash with school term dates in different parts of Great Britain. AE proposed and it was agreed that the start of the British Championships for 2020 should be brought forward by a week and the event extended to run as a 14 day event from 18th July to 31st July. This would allow the main events to start in the first week and the junior sections in the second week.

19. A.O.B. advised to Chair:

a. ECF Board elections and Incumbent Transparency (RS)

It was agreed that Board members would be asked to give an indication as to their current thoughts about standing – eg yes/no/considering/minded to stand but still not certain etc - at the time nominations are solicited.

b. ECF and Bridge Overseas (CF)

This item was not covered due to time constraints.





- c.** JC advised the Board that Traci Whitfield was ill and in hospital.
It was agreed that JC should write to Traci to wish her as speedy recovery on behalf of the Board.
- d.** Date and time of next Board Meeting: Saturday 27th April 2019 in Birmingham prior to the Finance Council Meeting.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 4.20 pm.

