

## ECF Council Meeting April 2019 Decisions

The ECF Council met on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April at the Ibis Hotel, Ladywell Walk, Birmingham. A full agenda and all associated paperwork can be found [here](#). The meeting commenced at 1.30pm, and was closed at 6.11 pm.

The following is a list of key outcomes/ decisions.

**Item 3 - Notices / Appointment of Tellers** – Paul Shepherd (Surrey) and Mark Murrell (Southern Counties) were appointed as tellers.

**Item 4 - Approval/ Correction of the Minutes of the AGM** – The AGM minutes can be found [here](#) and were approved subject to three minor amendments .

**Item 6 – To receive the report to Council from the Chair of the Finance Committee Tim Herring (TH)** – The report was received with commentary from TH and noted by Council.

**Item 7 – Part (i) - To receive the report to Council from the Finance Director David Eustace (DE)** – The report was received with commentary from DE and noted by Council.

The accounts for 2017/2018 were tabled for consideration. DE indicated that there had been an actual loss of £14.8k for the year which was slightly better than the budgeted loss of £18.1k, with the ECF's reserves as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2018 standing at £99.3k.

*The accounts for 2017/2018 were approved unanimously.*

The financial position and forecasts for 2018/2019 were tabled for consideration. DE indicated that there was a forecast loss of £52.1k for the year which was close to the budgeted loss of £50.4k.

*The financial position and forecasts for 2018/2019 were noted.*

The Budgets and proposed membership fee increases for 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 were presented for approval (in the case of 2019/2020) and approval in principle (in the case of 2020/2021).

DE indicated that the October Council Meeting had already agreed a 2019/2020 budget in principle subject to approval at the April Finance Council (this meeting) and that he was presenting the same budget for 2019/2020 as in October with some minor amendments to the membership fee amounts but no significant difference to the overall figures. DE also indicated that the budget was dependent on the projected membership growth being achieved and the new membership rates being agreed. This was to be supported by a use of reserves in 2019/20. The expectation was that the ECF would return to making a surplus by the end of financial year 2020/2021 which would start to restore the ECF's reserves to a level at which they would cover six months expenditure.

There was an extended discussion of the various areas of the budget with a number of questions and contributions from Council members.

The Chair elected to consider Items 8 and 9 (these being counter motions to the Board's proposals) before voting on the Board's budget proposals and proposed fee increases.

**Item 8 – Motion to limit membership fee increases to CPI** - Council is asked to consider, and if thought fit, approve the following resolution from Bill O'Rourke (NCCU)("BO'R"):

- a) That increases in ECF membership fees for the 2019/20 season should be limited at maximum to a rise in line with CPI inflation rate, and preferably to no increase.
- b) That the ECF investigate with great haste the best and quickest way to release trust fund monies to support their proposed youth development plan, and to publish these facts for membership's awareness as soon as possible.

Tim Wall (Northumbria) (TW) presented the motion on BO'R's behalf. He indicated that the motion was reflective of what in his view was a general grass roots resistance to the ongoing increases in membership fees, which it was felt might put people off joining the ECF and playing competitive chess.

Following some discussion it was proposed and agreed that only part (a) of the motion should be voted on, given the recognition by Council that part (b) was already covered by the ECF's ongoing activities in relation to releasing trust fund monies.

*The motion to limit membership fee increases to CPI was voted on by show of hands with those in favour being 11 and those against 19.*

*A card vote was requested and the motion was rejected by card vote with voting as follows:*

<i>Those for</i>	<i>93</i>
<i>Those against</i>	<i>190</i>
<i>Abstentions</i>	<i>8</i>

**Item 9 – Motion to cap the spend on International Chess** - Council is asked to consider, and if thought fit, approve the following resolution from Angus French and Gareth Ellis (Bronze Member Reps), John Reyes and Michael Farthing (Silver Member Reps):

That the contribution to International Chess from the ECF's own funds is capped at £30,000 per annum for 2019/20 through to 2021/2022 (for three years) after which it should be subject to review.

Angus French (AF) presented the motion. AF indicated that the motion had come about as a result of repeated concerns expressed by some bronze members in relation to increases in ECF fees and spend on International. He also questioned where the projected increase in membership numbers would come from to fund the budget proposals. He indicated that the proposed cap on International spend should reduce the need for fee increases and the risk of further depleting reserves. Michael Farthing (MF) indicated that his consultations had indicated support from Silver members for the motion and that he felt it was an important motion to consider.

In response International Director Malcolm Pein (MP) presented the KPIs for his directorate, achievements against targets including the English teams' outstanding performance at recent events, the amounts which had been raised in sponsorship outside of the ECF's budget, details of the spend on International events, and the likely consequences of the cuts in budget being proposed by AF.

*The motion to cap the spend on International Chess was voted on by show of hands with those in favour being 10 and those against being 18.*

*A card vote was requested and the motion was rejected by card vote with voting as follows:*

<i>Those for:</i>	<i>65</i>
<i>Those against:</i>	<i>230</i>
<i>Abstentions:</i>	<i>5</i>

**Item 7 – Part (ii) - Voting on the Budget and Membership Fee Increases**

DE put forward his finance motion to approve:

- The proposed budget for 2019/2020 and 2020/2021
- New membership rates for direct members, game fees and pay to play fees for 2019/20 and 2020/21

with figures as detailed in his report.

The figures for 2019/2020 were to be approved and the figures for 2020/2021 for approval in principle only.

The proposed membership fees were discussed and three apparent anomalies were raised as follows:

- The junior game fee at £7.50 was higher than the silver and bronze joining fees at £6 for 2019/2020
- The second year silver membership fee increase was £1 more than the gold membership fee increase
- The FIDE rated events fee was £11 for both years which was not in line with the difference between silver and gold membership.

*DE responded to these comments by agreeing that the non-member junior game fee should be reduced to £6 for both years before considering the motion further and that that he would review the second year's Silver membership fee to bring it more in line with other membership fee rates. He indicated that he intended to leave the FIDE rated events fee at £11 to avoid the fee being set to £12 in 2019/2020 and reducing to £11 in 2020/2021. DE's statement was accepted as an amendment to the motion with respect to the table of proposed membership fee increases.*

Robert Richmond (Notts and proxy for the Platinum Members) proposed a further amendment that the Gold membership rates should be increased from £39 to £41 and the Platinum rates from £75 to £80 with associated changes to the relevant junior rates. The amendment was seconded by AF.

*This further amendment to increase Gold and Platinum rates was voted on by show of hands and defeated by a large majority.*

Roger Emerson (Gold Members) (RE) proposed that the vote on the Board's motion should be limited to formal approval of the budget and membership fees for 2019/ 2020 only, recognising that Council had already given in principle approval for the 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 figures.

*RE's amendment to consider only the 2019/2020 figures was voted on by show of hands and agreed with 17 in favour and 13 against.*

Votes were therefore taken on the 2019/2020 membership rates and budgets (with agreed amendments to the membership rates for 2019/2020 as proposed by DE above).

*The proposed 2019/2020 membership rates were voted on by show of hands and approved with 26 in favour and 6 against.*

*The proposed 2019/2020 budget was voted on by show of hands and approved with 27 in favour and 2 against.*

## **Item 10 – County Championships**

Director of Women's Chess Chris Fegan (CF) proposed a motion that all teams in the ECF stage of the County Championship Open section from the 2019/20 competition onwards must include at least one female player. That female player shall be deemed to satisfy the qualification requirements for playing in that team.

CF explained that the motion was intended to increase female participation in the County Championships which he saw as one of the ECF's flagship events and that his proposals were in line with the 4NCL's requirement for a female player in first division teams.

TW proposed an amendment for the motion to read as follows:

A team in the County Championships shall receive one extra point if it fields at least one female player in the National Stage, starting from the 2019/2020 season.

*The amendment to the motion was voted on and agreed with 14 in favour and 8 against.*

*The amended motion was then voted on by show of hands with 14 for and 11 against.*

*A card vote was requested and the amended motion was rejected by card vote with voting as follows:*

<i>For -</i>	<i>88</i>
<i>Against</i>	<i>91</i>
<i>Abstentions</i>	<i>34</i>

#### **Item 11 – Counties' membership fees**

Should all Counties pay the minimum membership fee if they submit no games for grading? The chairman will conduct a straw vote.

MG explained that the Articles required Counties to pay the minimum fee if they had no game submissions to offset against the fee. The ECF had not been invoicing three Counties with no games submitted for some time and was seeking guidance on whether it should be looking to start collecting the minimum membership fee for these Counties.

*A straw vote was conducted and it was agreed that Counties with no games submitted should be approached to pay the minimum membership fee with 17 for and 4 against. The Board was asked to note and act on the results of the straw poll.*