

**Minutes of the 130th Board Meeting of the English Chess Federation  
June 7th 2019  
11.30 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.  
MSE Meeting Rooms, Oxford Street, London**

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

**1. Apologies for Absence** - As above.

**2. Appointments**

Julian Clissold was appointed as chair.

The following were appointed as alternate directors for the meeting:

- Malcolm Pein for Dominic Lawson
- Julian Clissold for Dave Thomas
- Mike Truran for Alex Holowczak

**3. Approvals**

The agenda was agreed and the minutes of the 129<sup>th</sup> board meeting were approved.

**4. Matters Arising from Minutes not on the Agenda** – There were no matters arising.



## 5. Matters Arising from the Council Meeting

Specific matters arising included the request for DE to review Silver membership rates for 2020/2021, and the results of the straw poll in relation to membership fees for County Associations with no game fees. Both matters were noted for review and action.

## 6. Review of Progress against Action Plan.

The Action plan was reviewed including closure of a number of actions which have now been completed.

In relation to MP's action on ECF representation at FIDE conferences, it was agreed that the ECF should look to send at least one person per meeting in addition to the FIDE delegate, for example AH in his capacity as secretary to the FIDE Qualifications Committee. In addition the Board felt that the Commonwealth CA meeting should be attended by AH if possible.

MP raised the issue of ECF support for FIDE fees. He explained that his current working practice was that the ECF would pay title fees for anyone under the age of 25 and transfer fees if there was a prospect that a non-ENG registered player might be selected for an English team. An action was agreed for Malcolm to produce a more detailed policy proposal for consideration at the next board meeting.

CF asked about the potential sale of assets held within the ECF library including the Harry Golombek painting.

DE advised that the portrait was owned by the Chess Centre Ltd which was owned by the PIF. Consideration of any asset sales was therefore deferred until June 2020 when an agreement was expected on the transfer of residual assets from the PIF to the Chess Trust. It was noted that the library should also probably be transferred to the Chess Trust in due course to avoid the potential for capital gains tax liabilities should any duplicates be sold.

CF provided a report on grants made to support Women's chess including: free entries to women players in relevant events organised by A Raoof; support for Hammersmith Chess Club's Women's chess month; and support for the Vera Menchik Invitation Women's tournament in North East England.

There was some discussion as to whether there was a potential conflict of interest disclosure point in relation to expenses payments made by the ECF to participants in the Invitational Tournament who also happened to be CSC employees. The Board noted the payments and confirmed that it was happy for CF to be approving these and similar types of payments as the responsible ECF director notwithstanding his role with CSC. The Board also noted that given



the large number of roles that many ECF directors held in a large number of other chess organisations such situations were almost impossible to avoid in practice.

## **7. Monthly Grading Update (DT)**

DT had submitted a written report. It was noted that the consultations to date have provided some very helpful feedback in support of the plan to implement monthly grading with 4 digit ratings.

Work is still in progress to specify the system requirements and identify software engineers to support the implementation including discussions with UKCC. MT noted that an application to the Chess Trust for financial support might be appropriate as this was an initiative of a developmental/strategic nature.

## **8. Hastings Congress (AE/ DE)**

The Board noted that the Hastings congress have requested support in raising funds for this year's congress. The ECF has already published a request for support in the newsletter and this will be extended to the web site and social media.

MP recommended that the ECF should provide some direct financial support given the importance of the Hastings event but that this should be conditional on changes to the Congress's committee structure and operation, and the Congress raising funds by other means as well.

It was agreed that the ECF should offer to provide a £5k donation to the congress for this year contingent on £5k or more being raised by other means, with the donation also dependent on the Congress taking actions to:

- implement a streamlined committee structure including a representative from the ECF;
- develop a social media presence;
- increase the level of female participation;
- actively seek new sponsorship arrangements for 2020 and future events.

## **9. Board Composition and Women's Chess: a Discussion (SW)**

SW presented a paper covering targets for the development of Women's chess, which he had prepared with CF. The paper includes targets for English chess to achieve including:

- Increased female presence on the ECF Board;
- Increased female representation at Council;



- Targeted increase in average rating for the women's squad;
- Increased percentage of female ECF members and supporters;
- Regular funding stream dedicated to supporting women's chess.

CF thanked SW and other Board members for their support in producing the paper.

It was proposed and agreed that the target of increasing female representation on the Board should be led by JC as Chair.

There was some discussion of the need to increase grass roots participation from women and girls including helping to overcome chess's image problem, and providing increased opportunities for females to play in a more social and collaborative environment in addition to participation in leagues and tournaments.

The targets were discussed and agreed in principle by the board as targets for English Chess as well as the ECF, subject to CF producing a detailed action plan in support of the targets and explaining how the targets were to be achieved. The Board noted that although the targets were agreed in principle they were very ambitious, both in terms of present female participation in English chess and in comparison to other Western European countries, many of which recognised chess as a sport, provided state funding and encouraged a culture of female participation in chess, and that achieving them would take us to close to best in class in Western Europe.

CF said he would sharing and getting feedback on the targets at the upcoming Women in Chess conference in August.

CF was asked to update as appropriate and present the targets with any changes at the August and/ or September Board meeting, together with the detailed action plan for approval.

#### **10. Finance Report (DE) including ECF Management Accounts to End of May.**

DE presented his finance report for the year to date. He indicated that ECF income and expenditure were broadly on target and presented the accounts to the end of May for noting.

DE reported that a slight shortfall was being forecast for membership fees against budget, but this was expected largely to be offset by an increase in game fee income. Spending in the various directorates had been broadly on plan.

The accounts for the year to end of May were noted by the Board.

DE advised that Isabel Keen had resigned as a Chess Trust trustee and it was hoped that she would be replaced by Sarah Longson.



### **11. Progress with PIF/ Chess Trust Transfers (DE)**

DE reported that the PIF and Chess Trust Trustees had held a meeting to agree the initial transfer of £70.5k and that the transfer of assets in specie from the PIF to the Chess Trust would be put in hand. It was expected the Chess Trust would make payments of £23.5K per year from these funds to the ECF over a period of three years. DE will apply for these Chess Trust payments to the ECF on request from Executive Directors as and when funds are required.

### **12. Development Officer Update (MT/ MP)**

MT reported that an advertisement had been placed in the Newsletter for the Development Officer position with two people already having expressed an interest in applying and responses requested by 5<sup>th</sup> July. SW will oversee the interview and selection process with an interview panel comprising SW, RS and JD. Interviews are currently planned for July with a recommendation from the panel to the Board to follow.

### **13. Directors' Reports against Action Plans**

- (a) Membership (DT) – DT had submitted a written report which was noted.
- (b) Home Chess (AE) – AE had submitted a written report which was noted.
- (c) Junior Chess (AH) – AH has submitted a written report which was noted.
- (d) International (MP)

MP provided a summary of the Falklands Island issue. He reported that the Argentinian federation had organised two congresses on the Falkland Islands which they registered as Argentinian congresses with the results submitted by the Argentinian federation. The ECF complained to FIDE, and FIDE ruled in the ECF's favour – full details can be found on the ECF website. The ECF has subsequently been in contact with Falklands players who are planning an inaugural meeting of a Falklands Islands Chess Club on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> June.

MP reported that he was looking to add a minimum rating as a condition for automatic qualification of the English Women's Championship winner to play in the International Team and is planning to discuss what the minimum rating should be with the selection



committee. MP also advised that he would discuss the matter further with CF. The proposal for a minimum rating condition was agreed by the board.

MP said that he was also trying to allocate more money to encourage titled players in the British Championships.

(e) Women's Chess (CF)

- CF reported on his plans for an English women's festival which is likely to take place in Birmingham on a Saturday in August with a livestream feed to be provided for those who cannot attend in person. CF noted progress for this year's English Women's Championship. There was one outstanding point JD had raised with him to be resolved. JD, having declared a personal interest, elaborated that she had queried with CF the requirement for players in the EWC to be ENG registered with FIDE, noting that there was no equivalent requirement for entry to the BCC to be registered with one of the "home" federations. It was agreed that the ENG stipulation should be removed for the English Women's Championship and replaced by a residency requirement.
- **Post meeting note** – It was decided after the Board meeting that the matter required a little more thought and would be reconsidered at a future Board meeting.

MT noted the appointment of Danny Rosenbaum as the ECF and 4NCL social media manager.

**14. A.O.B. Advised to Chair:**

- **Redaction Policy (CF)** – The Board noted RS's proposal for a Board meeting minutes redaction policy. This will be added to the Board Standing Orders.

**15. Date and time of next Board Meeting: 12<sup>th</sup> July 2019 Birmingham**

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