

Minutes of the 138th Board Meeting of the English Chess Federation
Friday 19th June, 2020
Zoom Meeting
2-30 to 4-00 pm

Members:

President, Dominic Lawson	Apologies	DL
Chief Executive, Mike Truran		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, David 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, Governance Committee, Robert Stern	RS
Chairman, Finance Committee, Nick Faulks	NF
Chair of Council, Michael Farthing	MF
Meetings Secretary, Nigel Towers	NT

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were noted as above.

2. Appointments

JC was appointed as Chair with SW running the Zoom meeting.

3. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved.

4. Minutes of the 137th Board Meeting

The minutes were approved with no amendments.



It was noted and accepted that the Zoom meeting was to be recorded to support preparation of the minutes.

5. Financial Plan and Budget for 2020/21 (DE)

DE presented the finance spreadsheet and summarised changes from the previous version including:

- Amendments to income projections with a supporter fee increase from £5 to £10 and a revised projection on the number of supporters joining;
- Removal of company secretarial services;
- Removal of FIDE title costs – will need to be borne by the individuals;
- Reductions in:
 - Grading administration costs
 - Bookkeeping costs
 - Yearbook costs;

The overall effect is to raise the surplus for the year to £24, 827. These savings have been allocated to:

- Retained as surplus for the year £7,327
- International £13,900
- Women's £2,500
- Home £600
- Junior £500.

In addition a further £14,100 has been added for International and £2,500 for Women's as supplementary funding from external sources, probably, from the Permanent Invested Fund. This will bring the budgets of International to £28,000 and Women's to £5,000 which is 50% of the budget in "normal" times before any funds provided by the Chess Trust.

DE confirmed that the budget spreadsheet would be submitted to Council as a single spreadsheet as the Board's view of a realistic option with approval to be requested for the Board to revisit the budget during 2020/21 as and when the Covid-19 situation's effect on the ECF's income and activities becomes clearer.



Supplementary funding may be sought from the PIF, but only when any funding requirement is clear.

MT noted that financial support in terms of timely membership renewals on the part of members at this critical time for the ECF would be essential if the ECF was to continue in anything like its present form, and that calls to action over the coming months should be made in the forthcoming newsletters and on social media.

MP made the point that although evidence was still very patchy there were signs of a faster than expected return to OTB chess in mainland Europe and there might be some return towards normality towards the end of the calendar year.

DT confirmed that his membership/ activity projections were based on a return to OTB chess by January 2021.

MF asked if there had been any consideration of a three year membership option at discounted rates to help with liquidity. DE explained that this was kept under regular review, but that in his view it was important to keep the flexibility of an annual renewal process.

The budget proposed by DE was approved unanimously.

DE further outlined the proposals to maintain current membership fee levels of 2020/2021 and to raise the supporters fee from £5 to £10 (with the supporters' package to go on sale from 1st July).

The proposal on membership and supporters' fees was also approved unanimously.

6. Finance Chair Report

NF described the proposed finance report to Council including:

- A broadly positive view of the Xero accounting system from which the Finance Director is able to produce a robust set of management accounts;



- Agreement that a single set of budgetary figures should be presented to Council and that options to vary from these could always be considered at the October AGM if circumstances changed.

MT asked if the Finance Committee had any candidates to put forward for the post of Finance Director.

MP said that he had approached a potential candidate for the post.

NF noted that:

- Ray Clark has indicated that he would like to return to a more prominent role on the committee, which NF felt was very welcome;
- DE might want to consider a position on the Committee when he stepped down as Finance Director.

7. Finance Council Meeting

MF and SW explained that there was to be a Zoom Council meeting on 18th July with votes based on on-screen polls. Further review would be required to decide how to handle card votes.

There was some discussion of the approach for organisation membership fees for those with no rated games submitted.

It was agreed this would not be an issue for the 2020 Finance Council as voting rights would be based on 2018-2019 submissions and that the matter should be considered separately for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 submissions in relation to voting rights at future Council meetings.

RS pointed out that it would not be possible to hold a BCF meeting via Zoom as this was not allowed for in the articles and current legislation only allows for an override for limited companies such as the ECF.

CF asked to defer presentation of the Women's Chess development plan to the AGM in October, and this was agreed unanimously.

A timetable was agreed for sending the agenda and calling notice by 25th June, the



supporting papers to accompany the calling notice or shortly thereafter.

8. Online Fair Play

NT explained that the fair play guidance policy and guidance document v1.2 had been published on the website.

There had been some positive feedback on the policy and a number of ECF online events had taken place during the month with the policy in force.

9. Safeguarding

SW and JC explained that Board responsibilities for Safeguarding had now been transferred to Julian Clissold. The policy had also been updated to take account of online chess activities with an updated policy and guidance / code of conduct appendix published on the website.

JC mentioned that he had been touch with the NSPCC and had discussed with them areas that should be covered for online chess and how the ECF should approach giving guidance to member organisations of the ECF.

It was acknowledged that Regulation 2 would need to be amended as it provides for Board responsibility for safeguarding to rest with the Junior Director.

Accordingly, it was unanimously resolved that the regulation be changed to state that responsibility would be held by the Chairman or other Board member as designated by the Chairman.

RS agreed to update the regulation for publication on the website and distribution with the Council papers.

CF indicated that he was happy with progress on child safeguarding but wished to see some further coverage of vulnerable adults.

An action was agreed for SW to look at this separately and revert in due course.

10. AOB

Appointment of Officers





CF noted that he wished to create a new post of Women's Online Chess Admin Officer reporting to Jo Hutchinson as ECF Manager of Women's Online Chess. The appointment was agreed.

11. Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next Board meeting should take place at a date to be agreed later in the year and after the Finance Council meeting.

12 Meeting End

There being no other business the Board meeting closed at 4.00 pm.

