

**Minutes of the 140<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting of the English Chess Federation  
Friday 30th October 2020  
Zoom Meeting  
2.30- 4.30 pm**

**Members:**

President, Dominic Lawson	APOL	DL
Chief Executive, Mike Truran		MT
Director of Finance, Adam Ashton		AA
Director of Women's Chess, Chris Fegan		CF
Director of Junior Chess, Alex Holowczak	APOL	AH
Director of International Chess, Malcolm Pein		MP
Director of Home Chess, Nigel Towers		NT
Director of Membership, Rob Willmoth		RW
Non-executive Chairman, Julian Clissold		JC
Non-executive Director, Natasha Regan		NR
Non-executive Director, Stephen Woodhouse		SW

**Invited: Observers and Guests**

Chairman, Governance Committee, Robert Stern		RS
Chairman, Finance Committee, Nick Faulks		NF
Meetings Secretary, Gary Willson		GW
Alternate Director of Women's Chess, Aga Milewska		AM

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were noted as above.

**2. Welcome and Introductions for New Members – MT**

MT welcomed AA, NT, RW and NR to their first Board meeting and thanked retiring Directors David Eustace, Adrian Elwin, Dave Thomas and Julie Denning for their work on behalf of the ECF.

**3. Appointment of Chair**

**4. JC was appointed as Chair with SW running the Zoom meeting. Approval of the Agenda**

Some adjustments were made to the order of agenda items. The revised agenda was approved nem con.

**5. Minutes of 139th Board Meeting and Outstanding Actions**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

AP 132:05 No contact had been made, RW agreed to contact AH.

AP 139:04 NT and RW will progress.



## **6. Confirmation of email votes since last meeting.**

One email vote had been conducted (to confirm the amendment to Regulation 2 to change the requirements for the Finance Director role). This was confirmed nem con.

## **7. Financial Position/ Membership Renewals/ New Member Update – AA, RW**

RW updated the Board on the current position concerning membership renewals. The British Online Chess Championships are expected to break even on entry fees. New members are coming through at the rate of around 100 per week.

It was agreed that further renewal reminders would be sent out at suitable intervals.

AP 140/01 AA to produce an update of the financial position for 2021 at the next meeting.

## **8. Monthly Rating – NT, RW**

The new rating system went live in September, and 15 new OTB tournaments had been added. We have three volunteer developers who have been fixing bugs, and the implementation has otherwise gone smoothly.

Players are starting to lose ratings because so little OTB chess has been played during 2020. NT informed the Board that the intention is to extend the calculation periods by 12 months for each category.

More changes are planned for the coming months including tournament registrations, report production, game fee calculation and calculation of online ratings.

MT had been contacted by Andy Howie of Chess Scotland, who may want to use LMS for their own online national chess league. MT said that he had asked Andy Howie for help in identifying IT developer support to help with LMS.

The Board gave a vote of thanks to Steve Bush, Nigel Towers, Brian Valentine, Dave Thomas, Matthew Carr and James Schofield, the volunteers who had contributed to success of the project and to the maintenance team of Jay Steele, Kelvin Hunter, and Mark Davey.

AP 140/02 NT and RW to consider how to treat overseas games for monthly rating purposes in conjunction with Brian Valentine

## **9. ECF Online Report – NT**

NT confirmed that events are continuing to increase in number, including online leagues and International matches. An online club Grand Prix has been suggested, and junior and women's events are going well.

Thanks were given to NR and Matthew Sadler for providing online commentary, and a fixture against Finland is due on 1 November.

AP 140/03 NT to speak to NR concerning an individual online Grand Prix tournament

## **10. Governance Matters – RS**

RS informed the Board that the Governance Committee had already met since Council, and were focusing their attention on two specific areas:

- They will consult with Council over the length of Directors' terms with a view to presenting options to the next Finance Council meeting.
- They are setting up a committee to consider how best to consider the question of votes at Council for organisations running online events, with options to be put to Council in due course.

### **11. ECF Board Code of Conduct - SW, JC**

The revised document had been circulated ahead of the meeting. It was noted that the paragraphs concerning social media need amending.

AP 140/04 JC and SW to revise the Code of Conduct ahead of the next meeting.

### **12. Safeguarding Update – JC**

JC has agreed targets with Samantha Ali and Paul Sharratt and will be taking these forward.

Work will continue on safeguarding for online chess and vulnerable adults in all forms of chess.

AP 140/06 SW to provide Kevin Hurney's contact details to JC, concerning adults at risk.

AP 140/07 NT to speak to Samantha Ali concerning DBS checks for online arbiter ad organisers.

### **13. British Championship Update – NT**

Schedule is to run a two-week tournament over the Xmas holiday to be managed by NT and Kevin Staveley.

Sections will be open, junior, senior, women and rating limited. Work was progressing on the tournament regulations and fair play rules. There would be no cash prizes, but trophies and titles would be awarded. There is a clash with the London Junior Chess Championships, but NT is working to manage the impact.

Financial budgets are being worked on, and it is hoped to go live in the next couple of weeks.

### **14. Appointments Spreadsheet Review: The updated spreadsheet had been circulated.**

NT confirmed the appointment of Andrew Caswell as the Manager of Daily Chess. The board voted nem con in favour of the appointment.

FIDE's Online Olympiad for People with Disabilities has reinforced the need to have a Manager of Disabled Chess in post. Two people have expressed an interest. We need to have a password—protected register of disabled players in particular.

### **15. New Directors' Plans**

#### **a. Finance – AA**

AA informed the Board that he is in the process of getting to grips with existing practices. He has access to Xero, and his intention is to maximise its functionality over the coming months to streamline provision of management information.

We will continue to make use of HM Government support schemes over the coming months. NT commented that we would need Office staff support over the Xmas period to help with the British Online Chess Championships in particular.

#### b. Membership – RW

RW gave a PowerPoint presentation on his plans to improve the benefits available to members. He is also considering proposing to the Board set fee arrangements for ~~the~~ rating certain events to reduce the need for non-member game fee collection, and the creation of a grading system for school events.

AP 140/08 RW, AH, NT and AA to draw up a financial model for a school grading system to consider the effectiveness and the financial implications of introducing a set fee structure vs the current game fee arrangements

#### c. Home Chess – NT

NT gave a presentation to the Board on the key areas on which he wanted to focus: return to OTB play, communications, ratings, and online.

**16.** It was noted that the 2021 British Chess Championships may be at risk should there be no significant improvement in the present Covid-affected circumstances. It was not believed we are financially exposed as we have an option to defer if necessary  
Calendar 2020-21 – JC

JC thanked NR for her observations. With those corrections, the document previously circulated will be the final version.

#### **17. AOB**

It was resolved that Steve Bush be given a lifetime membership.

RW updated the Board on a complaint that had been received concerning UKCC. The Board noted that the ECF has no jurisdiction to intervene in the dispute and would need the agreement of both parties if a complaints panel were to be convened.

Date and time of next Board Meeting: 2.30 pm, Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2020