

**Minutes of the 145th Board Meeting of the English Chess Federation  
Friday 30th July 2021  
Zoom Meeting  
2.30 - 5.00 pm**

**Directors:**

President, Dominic Lawson - APOL	DL
Chief Executive, Mike Truran - APOL	MT
Director of Finance, Adam Ashton	AA
Director of Events, Shohreh Bayat - APOL	SB
Director of Women's Chess, Chris Fegan	CF
Director of Junior Chess, Alex Holowczak	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
Aga Milewska (CS&C) – APOL	AM
Meetings Secretary, Danny Rosenbaum	DR
Chair of Council, Michael Farthing (Item 11)	MF

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were noted as above.

**2. Agenda**

The Agenda was approved with the addition of an item on the conduct of ECF officials and board members.

**3. [Redacted]**

**4. Minutes of 144th Board Meeting**

The minutes of the 144<sup>th</sup> Board were agreed with one vote against.

**5. Finance Report (AA)**

AA reported that the final figure for membership income for 2020/21 was £124,456. Slightly above the revised budget figure of £121,710. AA noted there had been £28,785 income from membership for 2021/22 thus far compared to only around £2000 at the same stage last year. There had been efforts to encourage earlier renewal this year and it was too early to

make judgements about what overall numbers would be.



The uptake of the GoMembership scheme had been very encouraging.

The audit had been held up by missing bank statements from relatively unused accounts. Copies had been requested but were still awaited.

The library had finally completed its move to De Montfort University, and there had been income of around £7000 from duplicate book sales (split between ECF/Chess Centre/the Chess Trust).

## **6. Membership Report (RW)**

RW was cautiously optimistic about the future and getting membership back up to where it was before the pandemic. At the time of his report there had already been 1469 members signed up.

The ChessKid event was a success raising £480 and RW forecast that it would be even better next year.

RW stated that another reminder should be sent out in August about membership and GoMembership.

## **7. Chess-Fest (MP)**

MP reported that the festival was a great success. 6000 people attended with a wide demographic mix. MP has started planning for next year already. He believed it would be easy to replicate and could be run anytime in the summer and in various cities. MP said he would consider doing something jointly between the CSC and the ECF and that he hoped that the ECF would be involved more in publicising itself and seeking increased membership at future festivals.

## **8. Junior Director's Report: The Development Pathway (AH)**

AH presented a paper outlining the tiers of the English junior coaching schemes. The ECF Academy, ECF Academy Plus, the Development Programme (funded by the Chess Trust), and the Accelerator Programme.

AH envisaged the National Coaching Group appearing at the bottom of the pyramid under the Academy. AH believed that the regional hubs comprising this, would comprise the local junior clubs that exist now with the ECF and EJCOA trying to create new regional centres where there was not already a strong presence.

AP145/01 AH, RW and others to further develop the plans for regional hubs.

## **9. British Online Chess Championships and the Grand Prix (NT)**

NT reported that the Championships had started and that the Blitz finals had just taken place with victory for IM Richard Pert in the main event and GM Keith Arkell in the seniors. During the meeting, it was revealed that IM Brandon Clarke had won the Rapidplay. The Championships would run until 8 August if play-offs were needed.

NT thanked and congratulated Natasha Regan and Matthew Sadler for their commentary during the Championships.

NT reported that the number of entrants was slightly down on December but better than expected. There were approximately 800 entrants (and 1500 – 1600 entries) in December whereas there were circa 600 entrants for the current Championships.

Although the Championships did not have the sponsorship of Caplin Systems this time round, the ticket price was slightly higher and overall the Online Championships should make a healthy profit.

The Chair thanked NT and his team on behalf of the Board, on an excellent job. Those involved included the central control team including Kevin Staveley, Adrian Elwin, Andy Howie and Matt Carr; the Chief Arbiter Shohreh Bayat together with the Online Arbiter team; and the commentary team including WIM Natasha Regan, GM Matthew Sadler.

NT also reported that the Grand Prix, which has been happening every first and third Sunday of the month has also made a good profit.

#### **10. Applications from Northumbria Chess Masters and North East League to join the ECF**

These applications were approved Nem Con.

AP 145/02 DR to advise Tim Wall (the applicant) of both decisions.

#### **11. Council Meeting in October: Virtual or Face to Face (MF).**

The Board were asked by Council to advise whether the Council should be held face-to-face or virtually.

The advice given would be subject to matters relating to the pandemic.

It was agreed that the Board's advice was to hold a hybrid meeting with a mix of a venue in London and a virtual meeting, for example, on Zoom.

MF said he would need help sorting out the venue and MP said that he could find someone to do it if they were paid for a few hours work at £20 to £25 an hour. This was agreed.

AP145/03 MP to brief someone on location finding

The budget for the event was set at £2500.

If problems arose and there were doubts about the feasibility of a hybrid event, it was agreed that a panel would be empowered to determine the format of the meeting. The panel would consist of MF, JC, AA and SW.

RS noted that as a matter of law, if the Wi-Fi failed, it would be acceptable to operate a conference call as a substitute but that if this was not practicable, the meeting would have to be adjourned and reconvened at a later date.

#### **12. The ECF Awards**

The Board ratified the awards as submitted in his paper by Stephen Greep (SG) subject to checking that all the winners were eligible.

AP 145/04 DR to inform SG of this decision.

### **13. AOB**

- a) It was agreed there would not be a pre-Council Board meeting unless it became apparent that there would be business to be conducted at such a meeting which could not reasonably be deferred to the next scheduled Board meeting.
- b) It was agreed that the next meeting should be virtual rather than in London with the first face to face meeting after the Board. JC agreed to circulate an updated calendar.
- c) MP indicated that he intended to bring a paper to the next Board relating to voting transparency.

AP 145/05 JC to issue an amended calendar.

Next Board Meeting: Friday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2021 Virtual at 2.30 p.m.