



**The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the English Chess Federation held on Saturday 15 October 2022 at 1.30 pm at the Signing Tree Conference Centre, Ladywood Road, Birmingham B16 8SZ and via Zoom**

*Note: In these minutes the phrase 'with no one against' is used to indicate that no one voted against a motion. In some cases (perhaps many) the vote was probably unanimous but the difficulties of the hybrid environment make it difficult to see whether there might have been some abstentions*

**Attendees**

Adam Ashton

Alan Atkinson

Shohreh Bayat

Jamie Blair

Julian Clissold

Hok Yin Stephen Chiu

Chris Cook

Paul Cooksey

Neil Cooper

Robert Dennington

Nigel Dennis

Phil Ehr

Peter Farr

Michael Farthing

Nick Faulks

Satish Gaekwad

David Gilbert

Mike Gunn

John Hoddy

Christopher Holt

**Representing:**

Director of Finance

Thanet & East Kent Chess League and proxy for East Anglian Chess Union, Norfolk County Chess Association and Bury St Edminds Congress

Director of Events

Cambridgeshire Chess Association

Non-Executive Chair of the Board and proxy for Bolton Easter Congress, Leyland Rapidplay and Ribble Congresses

Leamington & District Chess League and proxy for Chess 2020

Hertfordshire Chess Association

Berkshire Chess Association

Briant Poulter Chess League

ECF Silver Members' Representative

Chiltern league, Thames Valley Chess League, Berks and Bucks Congress, Maidenhead Juniors, National Youth Chess Association, British Chess Problem Society and English Primary Schools Chess Association

Past Chief Executive

Sussex County Chess Association, Mid-Sussex League and proxy for Crowborough Rapidplay

Chairman

Bronowski Trophy, Croydon & District Chess League, Chair of the Finance Committee

Southern Counties Chess Union

Kent County Chess Association, London Chess League, London Public Service Chess League and proxy for Central London Chess Congress

Past Chair of Council

Derbyshire Chess Association

Lincolnshire Chess Association, Nottinghamshire Chess Association

Peter Hughes	Birmingham & District League
Roger Lancaster	Watford Junior Chess
Steve Mann	Doncaster Chess Congress
Alex McFarlane	Caplin Hastings International Congress and proxy for Chess Arbiters Association
Malcolm Pein	Director of International Chess and proxy for North Essex Chess League, Chess in Schools and Communities, Richmond Chess Club, the President, Director of Women's Chess (proxy)
Natasha Regan	Non-Executive Director
John Reyes	Manchester Chess Federation, Midland Counties Chess Union, South East Lancashire League, Stockport & District Chess League, Stockport Rapidplay League, Torbay Chess League, Warrington & District League, ECF Silver Members Representative and proxy for Bolton & District Chess League
Pat Ridley	Cheshire and North Wales Chess Association, Frodsham Congress
Robert Stern	Central London League, Chairman of the Governance Committee, Pimlico Summer Tournament and proxy for King's Place Chess Festival, Golders Green Congress and Hampstead Congress
Tina Teotia	ECF Bronze Members Representative
Nigel Towers	Warwickshire Chess Association, Director of Home Chess and proxy for Oxfordshire Chess Association, Worcestershire Chess Association, 4 Nations Chess League, Cannock & District Chess League, Dudley & District Chess League, North Staffs & District Chess League, Wolverhampton & District Chess League, Worcester & District Chess League, Kidlington Chess Congress, Witney Congress, Witney Rapidplay, Chief Executive, ECF Platinum Members' Representative (David Eustace),
John Upham	Surrey Border League
Brian Valentine	Bedfordshire County Chess Association
Andy Wainwright	Yorkshire Chess Association, Ilkley Chess Centre and proxy for Bradford & District Chess Association, Leeds Chess Association, Scarborough Chess Congress
Tim Wall	Northern Counties Chess Union, Durham County Chess Association, Northumberland Chess Association, North East League, Northumbria Junior Chess Association, Northumbria Masters, ECF Gold Members' Representative and proxy for Cumbria Chess Association and South Tyne Chess League
Jo Wildman	Kent Junior Chess Association
Huw Williams	Surrey County Chess Association and Surrey Congress Ltd
Rob Willmoth	Middlesex County Chess Association, Barnet Knights, Chess Coaching Services, English Junior Coaches and Organisers Association, Director of Membership and proxy for City Chess Association
Stephen Woodhouse	Non-Executive Director

## **1. Appointment of Chairman**

The Chairman was present for the start of the meeting.

## 2. Observation of a Minutes Silence

For colleagues who have died since the past meeting. Particularly was mentioned Andrew Leadbetter.

## 3. Notices

### **Apologies for Absence:**

Guy Greenland, David Eustace, Gareth Ellis.

Mike Gunn gave apologies that he would only be able to join part way through the meeting.

### **In Attendance with the Permission of the Chairman:**

Stephen Greep                      Candidate for Office

Andrew Walker                      ECF office

### **Appointment of Tellers:**

Tellers were not appointed for the meeting as an electronic voting system was in use.

## 4. Minutes of the Last Meeting on 23 April 2022

The minutes were approved without amendment and with no one against.

## 5. Matters Arising from these Minutes and not otherwise on the agenda.

There were no matters arising from the minutes

## 6. To receive and approve the following reports:

The following reports were received by the meeting and were all approved with no one against:

The Board of Directors' Report

Additional Report from the International Director

Report from the Non-Executive Directors

The Strategy Statement and Business Plan of the Board

The FIDE Delegate's Report

The Chairman of the Finance Committee gave an oral report and following the meeting submitted a written one, reflecting this. This report has been added to the papers for the meeting.

The reports drew a variety of questions and contributions from the floor which led to interesting, productive and good-natured discussions, some details of which are briefly noted below.

The progress of recovery of Over the Board chess from Covid was asked about and although some clubs and leagues have not resurfaced leagues are mostly back and club game submissions are up. David Gilbert commented on the value of the LMS software in helping this. There seems an increase in players, many introduced to face-to-face from online games. There was a question about how membership fees from new players would be spent though Adam Ashton pointed out that this was absorbed by 'catch up' from the past two years.

The British championships were asked about – they had a slight loss this year. There was some concern that the weekday events were losing numbers.

Questions were raised about the likelihood of approval for FIDE chess academies following the potential; for more than one organisation being awarded ECF Academy status as outlined in the Junior Development Pathway. Malcolm pein expressed optimism about this,.

Malcolm Pein's report highlighted that the pool of new exceptional players was small, hindered by the 'lost generation' leaving a 10 year 'talent gap', a lack of tournaments and of prizes. It was particularly noted that though there were lots of good juniors but a lack of opportunity for FIDE rating in the UK was a severe hindrance and there was concern that support from the John Robinson funds were difficult to access.

The progress on recognising chess as a sport was asked about. Malcolm Pein conceded that there was very limited success despite efforts over a long time but stressed that as a game chess was "standing on its feet".

## **7. To receive and approve the Audited Accounts for the year 2020-21**

Through a misunderstanding these accounts were not included in the Papers for the Meeting and in consequence could not be signed off. They have now been added to the papers, but will be presented for final acceptance by the Finance Council in April 2023

## **8. Elections**

*For each of the posts each candidate was allowed 5 minutes to speak and after all candidates had spoken there followed questions from the floor to either all or one of the candidates.*

*All elections were settled in a secret card vote with the results announced immediately after the voting.*

*The Chair thanks all candidates for their ready cooperation in keeping within the time limits.*

### **(a) Chair of Council.**

There was a single candidate:

**David Eustace**, nominated by: Non-Executive Director Stephen Woodhouse, Past Chair of Council.

David Eustace was elected with 199 votes and with 5 votes for 'Not this Candidate'.

### **(b) Non Executive Chairman of the Board:**

There were two candidates for this post:

**Tim Wall**, nominated by: Northern Counties Chess Union, Cumbria Chess Association, Northumberland Chess Association, South Tyne Chess League, South Lakes Chess Congress, Director of Women's Chess.

**Stephen Woodhouse**, nominated by: Manchester Chess Federation, Midland Counties Chess Union, Oxfordshire Chess Association, 4 Nations Chess League, Warrington & District Chess League, Kidlington Chess Congress, Witney Congress, Witney Rapidplay, Chief Executive, Director of Home Chess, Director of Events, Past Chair of Council.

Voting was as follows:

Tim Wall	71
Stephen Woodhouse	151
None of the Above	1

Stephen Woodhouse was declared elected.

### **(c) Director of International Chess.**

There was a single candidate for this post:

**Malcom Pein**, restanding and nominated by: Manchester Chess Federation, Midland Counties Chess Union, Warrington and District Chess League, Richmond Junior Chess Club, Director of Events, Director of Women's Chess.

Malcolm Pein was elected with 213 votes and with no votes against.

**(d) Director of Events.**

There was a single candidate for this post:

**Shohreh Bayat**, restanding and nominated by: Manchester Chess Federation, Midland Counties Chess Union, Oxfordshire Chess Association, 4 Nations Chess League, Warrington & District Chess League, Kidlington Chess Congress, Witney Congress, Witney Rapidplay, Chief Executive, Director of Women's Chess, Director of Home Chess, Non Executive Director Stephen Woodhouse, Gold Members' Representative Tim Wall.

Shohreh Bayat was elected with 219 votes and with 2 votes for 'Not this Candidate'.

**(e) Non Executive Director.**

There were three candidates for this post:

**Alan Atkinson**, nominated by: East Anglian Chess Union, Kent County Chess Association, Norfolk County Chess Association, Director of Women's Chess.

**Hok Yin Chiu**, nominated by: Lancashire Chess Association, Merseyside Chess Association, Birmingham & District Chess League, Central London Congress, Golders Green Congress, Hampstead Congress, Bronze Members' Representative Tina Teotia.

**Stephen Greep**, nominated by: Manchester Chess Federation, Midland Counties Chess Union, Oxfordshire Chess Association, 4 Nations Chess League, Blackpool & Fylde District League, Hull & District Chess Association, Warrington & District Chess League, Delancey UK Chess Challenge, Kidlington Chess Congress, Leyland Congress, Ribble Congresses, Witney Congress, Witney Rapidplay, Friends of Chess, Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Director of Junior Chess, Director of Home Chess, Director of Events, Non Executive Chair of the Board, Non Executive Director Stephen Woodhouse, Past Chair of Council, Platinum Members' Representative David Eustace.

Voting was as follows:

Alan Atkinson	81
Hok Yin Stephen Chiu	29
Stephen Greep	126
None of the Above	0

Stephen Greep was declared elected.

**(f) FIDE Representative:**

There was one candidates for this post:

**Malcom Pein**, restanding and nominated by: Richmond Junior Chess Club, Director of Women's Chess, Director of Events.

Malcolm Pein was elected with 219 votes and with 2 votes for 'Not this Candidate'.

**(g) Chair of Finance Committee:**

There was one candidate for this post:

**Nick Faulks**, restanding.

Nick Faulks was elected with 168 votes and with 16 votes for 'Not this Candidate'.

**(h) Member of Governance Committee:**

There was one candidate for this post:

**Mike Gunn**, nominated by: Chair of Governance Committee.

Mike Gunn was elected with 195 votes and no votes against.

## 9. Appointment of Auditor

The reappointment of Watson Associates was proposed and accepted on a hand vote with non against.

## 10. Ordinary Resolution proposed by the Manchester Chess Federation

There was a proposal from the floor that the new cycle of meeting venues proposed in the motion as published in the agenda should be changed to introduce a new venue at the earliest opportunity and that therefore the original wording 'commencing with London for the Annual General Meeting in 2023' should be replaced with 'commencing with Manchester or Leeds for the Annual General Meeting in 2023'. This amendment was accepted overwhelmingly in a hand vote and the motion was then passed with none against:

THAT the choice of venues for Meetings of Council shall be extended to include an accessible Northern city such as Manchester or Leeds, this to be achieved by amending the first sentence of paragraph 2.1 of the Procedural Byelaws to read as follows:

“The Finance Council and Annual General Meeting shall be held successively in London, Birmingham and either Manchester or Leeds commencing with Manchester or Leeds for the Annual General Meeting in 2023”

replacing the existing sentence:

“The meetings of Council for the Finance Council and the Annual General Meeting shall be held in London and Birmingham on a two-year cycle of London (Finance) and Birmingham (AGM) in even-numbered years, and Birmingham (Finance) and London (AGM) in odd-numbered years”

## 11. Ordinary Resolution proposed by the Board.

The motion on the agenda was passed on a hand vote with no one against:

THAT in recognition of his long service to chess, particularly as a trustee of the Permanent Investment Fund, Ray Edwards be made an Honorary Life Member of the ECF.

## 12. Awards

Council was invited to note the awards for 2022 as set out in the website presentation by Stephen Greep and papers accompanying the agenda.

## 13. Time and Place of Future Meetings

In line with the decision made at item 10, the motion as published in the agenda was amended to substitute “Manchester or Leeds” for London as the venue for the next AGM.

The chair noted that Tim Wall had suggested that the date of the AGM might be usefully delayed a week to facilitate many September AGMs that currently happen too late for them to consider submitting motions or candidates for election. However, the chair judged there to be insufficient time for this to be meaningfully discussed.

The motion as amended was passed with one vote against:

Council resolves that in 2023 its Finance Meeting shall be held by Zoom on 22 April 2023 and its Annual General Meeting shall be held in Manchester or Leeds, with access also by Zoom, on 14 October 2023.

## **15. Any Other Business**

There was no other business

*The non-sequential numbering here reflects a numbering mistake on the Agenda.*

*The meeting closed at 6.20 pm*

DRAFT