

**Minutes of the 153rd Board Meeting of the English Chess Federation
Thursday 2 March 2023 at 11.30 a.m. by Zoom**

Directors:

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| President, Dominic Lawson | APOL | DL |
| Chief Executive, Mike Truran | | MT |
| Director of Finance, Adam Ashton | | AA |
| Director of Women's Chess, Aga Milewska | | AM |
| Director of Junior Chess, Alex Holowczak | APOL | AH |
| Director of International Chess and External Relations, Malcolm Pein | | MP |
| Director of Home Chess, Nigel Towers | | NT |
| Director of Membership, Rob Willmoth | | RW |
| Director of Events Shohreh Bayat | APOL | SB |
| Non-executive Director, Stephen Greep | | SG |
| Non-executive Director, Natasha Regan | APOL | NR |
| Non-executive Chairman, Stephen Woodhouse | | SVW |

Invited: Observers and Guests

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| Chairman, Governance Committee, Robert Stern | APOL | RS |
| Chairman, Finance Committee, Nick Faulks | | NF |
| Chair of Council, David Eustace | | DE |

Apologies, Minutes and Conflicts

1. Apologies for absence
As noted above.
2. Minutes of 152nd Board Meeting and Outstanding Actions (SVW)

Following a discussion about concern about entry fee levels for the Women's English Championship, it was agreed that this would be reduced to £30 with the aim of increasing the number of female entries.

3. Conflicts declaration (SVW)
No conflicts had been identified.

Directors Reports

4. Finance (AA)
This would be discussed under Special Business.
5. Home Chess (NT)
The report had been circulated prior to the meeting and there were no issues raised.
6. Events (SB)



There was nothing to be raised under this heading.

7. Membership (RW)
This would be discussed under Special Business.
8. Women's Chess (AM)
The report had been circulated prior to the meeting and there were no issues raised.
9. Junior Chess (AH)
The report had been circulated prior to the meeting and there were no issues raised.
10. International (MP)
The report had been circulated prior to the meeting and there were no issues raised. MP noted that the Russian Chess Federation had moved to being part of FIDE's Asia region following the imposition of sanctions by the European Chess Union.

Special Business

11. Publicity Officer (MT)
It was noted that the ECF does not have a Publicity Officer and that this was inhibiting the ability of the ECF to meet its objectives of advancing English chess and growing its membership levels.

MP endorsed this and it was agreed that MP as Director of International Chess and External Relations would explore the scope for identifying a suitable appointee and report back to the next Board meeting.

Action: MP to report on progress at the next Board meeting

12. Council Agenda/Finance Report and Papers (SVW/AA)

Budgets

AA had discussed the budgets for the various departments with the respective directors and would be discussing potential further amendments with NT, MP, AH and AM.

AA noted, in response to a question, that support for the British Chess Championships from the Chess Trust and John Robinson Youth Chess Trust was not included in the budget because the amounts were not yet guaranteed.

Expenditure

It was noted that a number of ECF-organised events were planned to run at a loss, and that this should be recognised under the Home Directorate section of the budget rather than being budgeted to break even (the assumption used

in previous budgets). It was also noted that staffing levels would need to be kept under review as the increasing membership also represented an increasing workload. The Board observed that increases in membership levels placed the ECF in a relatively good position to deal with extra cost pressures (see below).

Action: AA/NT/MP/AH/AG to review and MT to finalise budgets with AA before submission to Council

Membership Fees

There was further discussion about the setting of membership fees. It was noted that membership levels were increasing, with a concomitant increase in income. Equally, costs were rising and were expected to continue to increase.

It was also recognised that many members were be affected by the current cost of living crisis.

The Board concluded that it would not propose any increase in membership fees this year, but that it was possible that an increase might be proposed in 2024.

Reserves/Investment

Further, AA noted that the target reserve level of £50,000 rather than £100,000 had been set previously on the basis that the Chess Trust now held an emergency fund of no less than £100,000 should the ECF's financial position require it. This helped to ensure that funds that could be deployed elsewhere were not tied up unnecessarily in the ECF.

Council Papers

DE said that the final date for all papers for Council would be 29th March. He asked that AA send him a copy of the ECF's and BCF's 2020/21 and 2021/22 (draft) accounts.

Action: AA to finalise finance papers and send ECF and BCF accounts to DE.

13. Financial Bye Laws Amendments /Governance Changes (SVW)

The meeting was happy with the proposed amendments.

14. Finance Report and Papers

These had been reviewed as part of the discussion regarding preparation for Council.

15. Governance Changes

The proposed resolution was noted.

Any Other Business

There being no further business SVW declared the meeting closed and confirmed that he would email members with the date of the next meeting.