

The Governance Committee has had a reasonably busy year; it has continued its practice of meeting every two months to deal with matters arising.

The Governance Committee has throughout the year dealt with the usual ad hoc requests for guidance and advice. More substantially, activity in the year on constitutional matters has included:

- Developing and drafting a complaints procedure for inappropriate behaviour by direct members and supporters
- Advising on various issues relating to the Board's proposed changes to the ECF membership structure
- Developing constitutional changes in relation to the membership of and appointment of members to the Governance Committee and the Finance Committee; these were adopted at Finance Council
- Continuing to review the Bye-laws and Regulations, as well as the standing orders of the Governance Committee and the Finance Committee, resulting in changes to standing orders and to the complaints procedure.

The Governance Committee has noted the difficulty that both the Board and Council are facing in determining the extent to which meetings should take place virtually or physically. As regards the Board, this has contributed to an irregular pattern of meetings over the last 12 months but there is now a clear timetable stretching into next year. As regards Council, it remains to be seen whether hybrid meetings are capable of providing sufficient understanding of proceedings and sufficient voice to those attending remotely and of attracting sufficient numbers attending in person to justify the increased organisational complexity, but the position may well be clearer after the October meeting in Manchester.

Looking forward to the coming 12 months, the Governance Committee will again turn its attention to the DMR regime; it is mindful that there have been instances where the system is failing because the requisite consultation has not occurred. It will also be considering whether there are changes that could be made; these might include the introduction of junior DMRs and increasing the length of term in office of DMRs. Time will also be devoted in the coming months to seeking to increase diversity, including the possibility of recruiting from outside the chess world, and also to best succession planning practice.

The Pearce Report recommends that the annual report of each Standing Committee sets out specific recommendations for Council to endorse and for Council, or the Board, as appropriate, to implement, with agreed time limits for implementation. The Governance Committee has no items for specific recommendation this year.

Robert Stern – 20th September, 2023

