

Report into Chris Fegan's appeal in relation to the composition of the panel which investigated his original complaint.

In October 2021 we were asked by Julian Clissold (JC), then ECF Non-Executive Chairman, to investigate a complaint made by Chris Fegan (CF), then ECF Director of Women's Chess. This related to a previous complaint by CF against the CEO (then as now), Mike Truran. CF did not accept the conclusions of the panel which had rejected his complaint, on the grounds that neither Stephen Woodhouse (SF), then NED and now NEC, nor JC himself was unbiased in the matter and that both had, in fact, been attempting to achieve his removal from the Board.

We were asked specifically to investigate this claim and not to revisit the original complaint.

Our first step was to ask CF to provide evidence in support of his claims of bias. This was a slow process, since he was very busy and lacked time to trawl through old documents. In due course he did provide us with a small selection of emails, mostly between himself and SW, but we found nothing at all unfriendly, or of relevance to his case. There followed a spasmodic and unsatisfactory dialogue, during which he assured us that a large number of other emails existed, far more than we would wish to examine, and we replied that this was exactly what we needed to see. CF suggested that many of these might be found on his ECF account, to which he no longer had direct access, but we do not believe that he requested this. We would certainly have supported such a request, if indeed it were considered controversial. We did not consider it was our task to instigate this process, or even that it would have been proper for us to read such private emails unless they were relevant to the case.

Our eventual conclusion was that we had been shown no evidence of bias or improper behaviour on the part of JC or SW, and there was no likelihood that we would receive any further information. There followed, for a variety of

reasons, an unconscionably long series of delays in producing our simple report.

Our conclusion is that Chris Fegan's appeal is dismissed for lack of supporting evidence.

On that basis, the £50 deposit should not be returned. Nonetheless, the investigation into his complaint has not been finalised in the timely manner which he had a right to expect, and we feel that an *ex gratia* payment in recompense might be appropriate.

Michael Farthing

Nick Faulks

31.8.2023