



**The Minutes of the Finance Council Meeting of the English Chess Federation
held on Saturday 27th April 2024 at 1.30pm via Zoom**

Attendees:

Jimmy Blair
Gavin Cartwright
Chris Cook
Paul Cooksey
Gareth Ellis

Adrian Elwin

David Eustace
Peter Farr
Michael Farthing
Nick Faulks

Nikki Forster

Satish Gaekwad
David Gilbert

Stephen Greep
Christopher Holt

Roger Lancaster
Christopher Lewis
Alex Longson
Steve Mann
Alex McFarlane

Aga Milewska
Meghana Mohan
Malcolm Pein

Stewart Reuben
John Reyes

Robert Stern

Nigel Towers

Representing:

Cambridgeshire Chess Association

Silver Members' Representative

Hertfordshire Chess Association

Berkshire Chess Association

Lancashire Chess Association, Merseyside Chess Association,
Chester & District League, Bronze Members' Representative
Platinum Members' Representative, Bedfordshire Chess
Association (as proxy)

Chair of Council, Platinum Members' Representative

Sussex County Chess Association, Sussex League

Past Chair of Council, Voting Register Officer

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

West of England Chess Union, Dorset County Chess Association,
Bournemouth & District League

Southern Counties Chess Union

Kent County Chess Association, London Chess League, London
Public Service League, Essex Chess Association (as proxy)

Non-Executive Director

Lincolnshire Chess Association, Nottinghamshire Chess
Association

Watford Junior Chess

Shropshire Chess Association

Delancey UK Schools Chess Challenge, Director of Finance

Doncaster Chess Congress

Caplin Hastings International Congress, Chess Arbiters
Association (as proxy)

Director of Women's Chess

Coventry and District League

Director of International Chess, FIDE Delegate, Chess in Schools
and Communities (as proxy) The Past Chief Executive (as proxy)

Life Members' Representative

Manchester Chess Federation, South East Lancashire League,
Stockport & District Chess League, Stockport Rapidplay League,
Torbay Chess League, Warrington & District League, Silver
Members Representative, Bolton Easter Congress (as proxy)
Stockport Rapidplay Chess Congress (as proxy)

Central London League, Pimlico Summer Tournament, Chair of the
Governance Committee

Warwickshire Chess Association, Director of Home Chess

Mike Truran	Oxfordshire Chess Association, 4 Nations Chess League, British Rapidplay, Kidlington Chess Congress, Witney Congresses, Chief Executive, Hull & East Riding Chess Association (as proxy)
Mike Waddington	Gold Members' Representative
Tim Walker	Midland Counties Chess Union
Tim Wall	Northern Counties Chess Union, Durham County Chess Association, Northumberland Chess Association, North East League, Northumbria Chess Masters, Northumbria Junior Chess Association, Gold Members' Representative
Gerry Walsh	Braille Chess Association, Life Members' Representative
John Wickham	East Anglian Chess Union, Norfolk County Chess Association, North Essex Chess League, Bury St Edmunds Congress
Rob Willmoth	Middlesex County Chess Association, Barnet Knights, Chess Coaching Services, English Junior Coaches and Organisers Association, Director of Membership
Stephen Woodhouse	Non-Executive Chair, Worcestershire Chess Association (as proxy), Cannock and District Chess League (as proxy), Dudley & District League (as proxy), North Staffordshire & District Chess League (as proxy), Wolverhampton & District Chess League (as proxy), Worcester & District Chess League (as proxy), Non-Executive Director 2 (as proxy)

1. Appointment of Chair

The Chair was present for the start of the meeting.

2. Observation of One Minute's Silence

One minute's silence was observed for those had died since the last meeting.

3. Notices

Apologies had been received from Tina Teotia

In Attendance with the permission of the Chair:

Dr John Higgs - Chair of the John Robinson Youth Chess Trust
 Simon Brown - Chair of the Chess Trust
 Clive Frostick - President of Surrey County Chess Association
 Andrew Walker - ECF Office and Hosting

4. Minutes of the 14th October 2023 Annual General Meeting

Council resolves that the Chair of the meeting shall sign the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 14th October 2023 as being an accurate record.

The minutes were agreed nem con, and it was agreed that the Chair would sign them.

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Annual Accounts and Finance Director's Report

- (i) The Finance Director presented the draft accounts for the ECF for the year ended 31st August 2023 and explained the following key points:
- The auditor had raised no issues with the accounts.
 - The loss for the year was £7k against a planned profit of £19k giving an adverse variance of £26k.
 - Referring to the balance sheet, a cash balance of £220k and reserves of £77k were held, which provides a good position with which to meet any short-term financial shocks.

The accounts for the year ended 31st August 2023 were accepted nem con.

- (ii) The Finance Director presented his report for the year ended 31st August 2023 and explained the following points:
- The ECF has received a grant of £500k over two years from DCMS: £250k ending March 2024 and £250k ending March 2025.
 - The grant is for incremental expenditure over and above the normal budget.
 - The grant is to be spent on international chess initiatives and elite players.
 - Although it is hoped that the grant will be repeated in future years it is not guaranteed, therefore future years' budgets are currently constructed assuming no further grants.
 - On membership rates an increase of £2 pa across all categories is proposed alongside the amalgamation of the Silver and Gold categories. This should provide additional revenue of £11k for this year and £22k in future years.

The report was noted and agreed nem con.

8. Membership Fees

The Board had proposed a set of new membership fees as given in the agenda. There was much discussion on several of the proposed fees and the following amendments were proposed:

- a) The new combined Silver/Gold category fee should remain at the £33 instead of the proposed rate of £35 pa. Proposed by Gavin Cartwright, seconded by John Reyes.

Result: In favour 5. Against 20. Amendment failed.

- b) The Bronze membership fee should remain at £18 instead of the proposed £20 pa. Proposed by David Gilbert

Result: In favour 7. Against 20. Amendment failed.

- c) That a Junior Bronze membership should be included in the membership rates which would be free in the first year and at £6 p.a. thereafter. Proposed by Nikki Forster, seconded by David Gilbert

Result: In favour 16. Against 12. Amendment passed. A card vote was called.

- d) Card vote : That Council amends the membership fee table in the agenda to add a Junior Bronze membership fee: free in the first year and £6 p.a. thereafter, and to add a junior non-members Bronze game fee of £6.

Proposed by Nikki Forster, seconded by David Gilbert

Result: In favour 98. Against 88. Amendment passed.

Vote on membership fees detailed in the tables below as proposed by the Board and amended for item 8 (d) above.

Result: in favour 27, Against 3. Motion passed.

Consequently, the fees below will be effective from 1st July 2024.

	Current Price 2023-2024	New Price 2024-2025
	£	£
Bronze	18.00	20.00
Silver (discontinued)	27.00	N/A
Gold	39.00	N/A
Platinum	75.00	77.00
Supporter	10.00	12.00
Junior Bronze (First year free)		6.00
Junior Silver (discontinued)	6.00	N/A
Junior Gold	19.50	N/A
Junior Platinum	75.00	77.00
New adult Gold (merged with Silver)	N/A	35.00
New junior Gold (merged with Silver)	N/A	12.00

Pay to Play Fees and Game Fees:

Other Charges	Current 2023- 2024	New Price 2024- 2025	Explanation
FIDE rated pay to play fee	12.00	N/A	No distinction between FIDE and non-FIDE events following Silver/Gold merger
Congress pay to play fee	9.00	15.00	Difference between Bronze and new Gold
Congress pay to play fee (junior)	2.50	3.00	
FIDE admin fee – players who are non-ENG federation and not gold members	1.50	1.50	No change. Note: Charge waved in 2024-2025 and until further notice.

Non-members game fee	18.00	20.00	Equivalent to new Bronze rate
Non-members game fee (junior)	6.00	6.00	Equivalent to new Junior rate

Note: The Board has advised that the implementation date of 1st July might be later for technical reasons, and in that event will determine an implementation date on or before 31st August 2024.

9. Budget

The budget for 2024/25 as set out in the Finance Director's documents was accepted nem con.

10. Report of the Chair of the Finance Committee

Nick Faulks added to his report that the financial position was satisfactory and that the Finance Director had kept him abreast of events. The grassroots budget will be discussed at the next Board meeting.

The report was noted.

11. Presentation on the Use of the Grant from the DCMS

Malcolm Pein presented a very useful explanation of the grant which the ECF has received from the DCMS. The presentation is included in the papers for the meeting and those with an interest should refer to that document.

12. Rolling Membership Resolutions

(i) This resolution was proposed as a special resolution:

THAT the articles of association of the ECF be amended by deleting the existing wording of article 18 (5) and replacing it with "Determination of the Membership Fee to be charged for each category of Direct Member for membership periods commencing between 1st September next, (or, if Council so determines in any year, an earlier date up to two months before to be determined by the Board), and 31st August of the following year.

Vote. The resolution was passed nem con.

(iii) The following resolution was proposed as an ordinary resolution:

THAT The Direct Members Bye Laws be amended by:

- (a) deleting the second paragraph of clause 2 and replacing it with the following: “The membership period in respect of a new Direct Member, or an existing Direct Member renewing for a higher category of membership, shall be for a period of 12 months commencing on the first day of the calendar month in which they join or, as the case may be, renew. The membership period for a renewing member for the same or lower category of membership shall, provided that renewal is effected no later than one month after expiry of their then current membership, be for a period of 12 calendar months commencing immediately on expiry of the expired membership period. If renewal is not effected within such one month period, then the application for membership shall be treated in the same way as an application by a new Direct Member.”
- (b) replacing all references, whether capitalised or not, to “grading” or “graded” to “rating” and “rated” respectively; and
- (c) deleting the schedule to the Bye Laws.

Vote: The resolution was passed nem con.

12. Amendment to Implement Abolition of Organisation Membership Fee and Having Clubs as Members

The paper entitled “Proposals to Extend Club Representation, Abolish Council Membership Fees, and Update Council Membership Arrangements” explained the changes proposed by the Board for the abolition of the organisation membership fee and the mechanism for allowing clubs as members.

The following resolution was proposed as a special resolution:

THAT the articles of association of the company be amended as set out in the marked-up draft articles of association signed by the Chair of the meeting for the purposes of identification.

Vote: In favour 25. Against 1. Motion passed.

13. Amendments to Procedural Bye-Laws

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The following proposals to amend Bye Law No 3 (Procedural Bye-Laws) were presented:

The amendments were agreed nem con.

- (a) deleting the last sentence of paragraph 2.1 and replacing it with “For the purposes of this paragraph 2.1 if a meeting is held virtually, it shall be deemed not to have taken place for the purposes of the operation of the meetings cycle.
- (b) deleting sub-paragraph (a) of paragraph 12.6 (and re-lettering the existing sub-paragraphs (b) and (c) accordingly); and
- (c) in paragraph 12.7, deleting the wording from “indicating” to the end and replacing it with “...indicating the Post for which they are nominated and the name of their proposer or proposers but only the proposer or proposers that sufficed for the candidate to be duly nominated.”

14. Grassroots Chess Initiatives

The Director of Home Chess explained the Board’s proposals on the use of the funds for grass roots chess which are contained in the agenda papers by the Director of Home Chess.

15. Any Other Business

No further items were raised.

16. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting (the Annual General Meeting) will be on 28th October 2024 at 13.30 in London and video-conference facilities will be available.

The Chair thanked those present and closed the meeting.