

Minutes of Council Meeting 22/06/2013

Location: Premier Inn, Charing Cross, Glasgow

Time: 12:00

Attendees : IA Ken Stewart (KS), IA Steve Mannion (SM), Alan Borwell (AB), David Deary (DD), Pat McGovern (PM), Jim Webster (JW), IM Andrew Muir (AM), IM Douglas Bryson (DB), Robin Templeton (RT), Derek Howie (DH), Linda McCusker (LM), Michael Hanley (MH), Peter Devenny (PD), Andy McCulloch (AMc), IA IO Alex McFarlane (AMF), Tom Brown (TB), Jacqui Thomas (JT), Phil Thomas (PT), Andy MacQueen (AMQ), FA Andy Howie (AH) , David Congalton (DC), Hamish Glen (HG, Chair)

Apologies

John Montgomery, Dick Heathwood, Iain Fraser

Minutes

HG addressed the meeting reminding those there as observers were there to observe and could not address the meeting unless invited. Number of issues to go through and looking to try and go through as quickly as possible to allow time at the end to have an open forum to allow discussion on the way ahead.

The agenda was amended as we are bringing the budget to the first discussion point and with Dick's absence, moving Standards Committee Operational Procedures to the AGM. Should really move the Selections motion to the AGM as it should be discussed in a more open forum as there have been comments made about it.

1. Minutes of the Previous Council Meeting

The minutes were agreed to be accurate and no matters were considered to be arising,

Nominated KS, Seconded DD carried *Nem con*

2. Budget and Fees

DC noted that the news on not being successful in getting lottery funding was disappointing and we are looking at approaching the Big Lottery Fund. In order to do this we are going to need assistance from all areas to agree on the projects to apply for funding for. We are trying to get further funding to supplement the proposed budget but one advantage of what has happened is we can now budget for several years. All Directors were asked to prioritise their spending to allow us to determine where to allocate funds.

AM asked how DC saw the funding for the Olympiad and how much was available

AH asked if we should be looking to try and secure sponsorship

DC replied that yes we should. Provisionally there is £3.9K allocated for the Olympiad and with several big events in Scotland that year, it is hard to see where we can get extra budget from.

AB Noted that there were no actuals from last year and the main thing was there appeared to be a deficit and asked if that had changed

DC replied that there will be a small surplus of funds as not all directors had spent their budgets. The lack of actuals was down to a computer glitch that wiped out all of last year's figures, they are being recreated.

MH noted on lottery funding that he had been in the Lottery offices discussing a grant. They had stated that it had to be for something specific and indicated they would be willing to give funding for the Commonwealth Chess Championship.

DC Noted that they had been looking at a few things for funding; they had a couple of choices and in reality did not stand a chance.

DB asked why we applied for funding in the area we did. We were up against Rape Crisis centres. Did we complain

DC replied that that was where we had been advised to apply to. We have been waiting for feedback but this has opened other avenues that are currently being explored.

DH stated that it was worthwhile noting that appealing for grant give us extra funding.

AH Called for a motion of thanks for the team that worked on the application.

DH noted that despite losing the grant, we are keeping fees the same. Costs are increasing. Should we not be considering a 2 – 3% increase across the board

DD Agreed with DH

HG replied that most of the leagues have already agreed their fees for 2013/14 based on the current season

DH noted that being asked to pay more is a sign of the times we are in.

DC replied that marginal increases might be the breaking point for some congresses with the increase in grading fees

AH noted at how it works in other sports highlighting Archery as an example. Chess does have it really cheap.

DH advised that he had some figures to show what increasing would bring in and could distribute them

HG advised that they could not be looked at today as they had not been notified prior. They could be sent out to Council for consultation

AMF agreed with Derek in principle noting that we need to also consider looking at the events that currently don't pay a grading fee. A Two year budget is an excellent idea.

DD Agreed with AMF

DH stated that he had asked for a list of Council members on a few occasions which would have allowed him to circulate this information but it had not been received. DH observed that the figures for membership in the budget looked optimistic. There were 325 members V 293 on list, 19 U17 v 11 on list 44 U14 v 36 on list. We might need to cut back.

DC replied that he had reviewed the year's figures and we have to be looking to increase membership

DH argued that we would be better to be prudent.

DD noted that in Dicks report, there appeared to be about 600 members, including 130 life members

DB stated that the number excluding life members was currently 536 but there is a 3 month churn with people renewing.

HG added that we are better to be proactive

DH asked if the donations figure was realistic given the level of donation shown in the budget in previous years

DC replied that they are all anonymous and are 95% guaranteed

DH asked how the costs were reduced by £1,800

DC replied that as an example, Peter Woods had not spent as much as had been anticipated so we could make a savings there.

DH asked how many copies of the magazine we had expected to sell.

DC replied that he did not have that information with him

AB advised that the actual number was 4,800

DC noted that we had missed the FIDE Delegate budget to allow attendance at the ECU AGM and that we would have to absorb that.

DH asked what the costs were in the Development Category of the budget

DC replied it was for replacing equipment such as clocks boards etc.

DH noted that there had been an increase in the Grand Prix

DC replied that it was £75 and in reality had been moved from the Junior Home Director budget to keep them all together.

DH asked if we had analysed Grading and Membership services and the level of work

DC replied that we had and they were well below the minimum wage!

MH asked why we have spent a fortune on boards, sets and clocks and not billed congresses for their use.

AH replied that we had all agreed that we were going to use these to provide a service and absorb thorough the grading fee

MH noted that we should be advertising that fact.

AMF asked why we don't ask for a deposit to make sure that the kit comes back and in a reasonable state.

Action -> HG and DC to look at this

DD noted that if all reasonable checks had been done then he was happy, well done

DH noted that to aid or review is not easy and stressed the need for comparison asking if we can get this going forward

AB advised that he was going to speak to the SCCA about the grant they receive from Chess Scotland.

LM noted that she was disappointed that there was no budget for the Schools Director.

DC advised that it was a small amount and the nature of it makes it a prime candidate for lottery funding. By doing it this way we can increase the amount of funds available for projects.

LM advised she would be happy with this.

DH noted we had the Glorney next year

DC advised it was going to be a nightmare and we were going to try and coordinate with Commonwealth and Olympiad

AH invited JT, as she was the Principle organiser last time, about the funding

JT advised that last time we had £2,000 from CS, as well as a grant from SJCAET but since then we have found out that other nations charge extra to cover the costs

Budget proposed DD seconded AMF carried *nem con*
Fees proposed DD seconded KS carried *nem con*

3. Director Reports

Presidents

HG advised that he had not prepared a report but gave an oral one at the Council meeting where he described this year as challenging and it being an "Annus Horribilus".

AM asked where the missing reports were

HG replied that if there are reports that are damaging to Chess Scotland, we have a duty of care not to publish them. We have to work for the benefit of Chess Scotland

DH noted that HG had not been transparent and that members are not getting to see this to form their own opinions.

HG replied that there had been ongoing issues. There had been potential to nip it in the bud but it had not been done. We should have tried harder to mediate.

AM stated that he did not think that a director should take legal action against another director.

AMF stated that he had to threaten to do that long in the past to prevent a threat to his career.

DD asked if the directors had spoken

HG replied that the words used were legal advice not legal action. No call had taken place

AB complained about the shortage of notice and not having definite dates. Everyone should know about the meetings

HG agreed advising that this had been exceptional and would be covered later

Membership Secretary

DH noted that someone had tried to join and had been rejected

HG advised this was being discussed under AOCB

Grading Report

DB noted that there were a lack of FIDE rated events and that the Richardson should be FIDE rated.

AM noted that the team captains voted against it

DC asked why we would want to have more

DH agreed that we need more citing the effect it has on the juniors grading

AMF noted that FIDE grading is a double edged sword and with the current system it is best not to go for it until you are 2000-2100 as it is hard to increase the grade after 30 games. This will change when FIDE makes the changes to the K factor they are working on at the moment.

AH advised that SNCL had moved to FIDE grading and he was hopeful of doing the same with the Glasgow Congress next year

AM stated that a lot of players don't like the two games a day format

AMF reminded everyone that for a FIDE tournament, it has to be one of the four FIDE licenced arbiters covering the event.

International Director

AM asked if Matthew Turner was currently eligible to represent Scotland

AH replied that we are still in the process of setting up a BICC meeting, there was one hopefully soon (as an aside this was cancelled due to the organiser's father sadly passing away)

Schools and Technical Director

No questions for either

Finance Report

DH asked what the current Bank balance was

DC did not have that information to hand but will advise

Scottish Championship

AMF advised he did not write a report for the Council meeting as the event hasn't taken place yet. There were a few problems with accommodation in Helensburgh and more titled players had entered recently.

Likely dates for the Commonwealth are 30th June – 8th July

Home Director Junior Report

HG noted that there had been a spat and there were concerns about the reports which were asked to be withdrawn as there were issues that were not correct.

MH stated that he had given the reasons for what he had said

HG continued that the other problem was MH has stated he was going to resign which has caused an ambiguity and has withdrawn the report as it is difficult and inaccurate. If the mark has been overstepped then so be it.

MH noted that he called a spade a spade. There was the email from Gerald Lobley. It is unlikely that SJC are going to be running the events for CS next season. Hamilton CC lost a promising junior because of what has happened. Due to this he is looking to abolish the Standards Committee at the AGM, there wasn't one for 100 years and we don't want one now. Giving CS a reasonable time to find an alternative.

DC noted that MH had stated that the delay in the council meeting was a cover up. He has not seen a cover up and the delay was caused by waiting to find out what funding we had.

HG noted that he did not like anyone saying that Chess Scotland are corrupt and supporting an assault

MH asked if HG had read his reply

HG advised that he didn't appreciate reply Seemed to be debatable on various points.

PM noted that the use of the word underhand was a bit wrong given what was said. He also noted that posts on the notice board are by him as an individual and that the timeline given was incorrect.

AM stated that, the Standards Committee didn't give names or the people involved so how can we be sure that justice is served?

HG replied that there had to be an element of confidentiality. One of the reasons that he has not been visible at events is the atmosphere this has created.

SM advised that when Linda appealed against the SC decision, that went before the appeal panel. Part of her objection was that the SC panel was not properly constituted and the matter should have been co-opted out. Although Appeal board chairman, SM could not be part of the Appeal Panel as he was involved in the initial gathering of evidence

DH noted that there was no evidence given to the Standards Committee as it was not asked for

KS stated that he was a member of the SC panel. Those members of the Standards Committee who had connections to the people involved quite rightly stepped down. There was an admission of guilt and it was quite clear that it was an assault but at the lower end of the assault scale. There was no cover up at all in respect of the Standards Committee

SM asked who it was that MH had the problem with

MH replied that it was the actions of the Standards Committee that was the problem they had investigated but not interviewed the people involved.

KS noted that the matter had been put to the SC in an unusual manner, namely direct from the PVG investigation rather than the original complainant. There were written submissions from both SM and others and the panel was satisfied that it could proceed without any further information needed or indeed how any further information would be relevant. Options on a penalty were limited; to use an analogy, you can't put a sentence of death on a person who has committed suicide.

LM replied that her concern is with the Standards Committee was the counter accusations that came out that made it look as if the fault for the issue was hers. LM further noted that she had an email stating that she had an agenda. This is where MH is getting this from.

KS noted that PVG was investigated and it was given to SM to see if any action could be taken

LM advised that she had received a letter from the Standards Committee making it look like it all had been her fault. That is how the letter read.

SM then read part of the report. As agreed with the meeting, it was not minuted..

KS advised that the purpose of the letter from the Standards Committee was as a courtesy to LM. Everything had been done with the best of intentions but unfortunately it did not come out that way

HG stated that to see the comments in the HJD report in black and white were an insult to Chess Scotland and all the volunteer workers. We could not put that up on the website.

JW asked if it was normal to be offensive just to be heard, surely this is not the way forward.

LM noted that she had had many communications with CS officials that had gone unanswered and she felt she was being ignored.

HG replied that he had decided to keep himself out of things as he knew he had to be involved at a later date

LM retorted that he should have told her that to save frustration

DH asked if HG had been unable to address the issues, surely it should have been given to someone who should have

HG replied that he had given what he thought was a satisfactory answer

AB noted that it dismayed him to see this in Chess Scotland. There have been some misunderstandings. What remedies are people seeking? If it is to do away with the Standards Committee then that is nonsense

LM replied that that is why she had submitted the recommendations

MH observed that he had been given more information at the meeting than he had in the last 6 months and had the transparency been there then we would not be in this mess.

HG stated that we have to learn from this and move on. But there is still the issue with the report.

MH listed the winners of the various trophies this year and advised council that due to the delay, there would be no Boy or Girl player of the year this year.

AMF objected as it would mean that 2 people would miss out. Would it not be better to have 6 months each with the trophy?

MH agreed to look into this and to rewrite his report

International Junior Director

DH asked if Paul was travelling to Cardiff for the Glorney this year as the most recent correspondence had him as Head of Delegation

DC confirmed that he (DC) would be travelling as Head of Delegation

Meeting broke from 14:30 – 14:40

4. Standards Committee Operational Procedures – Dick Heathwood

Moved to AGM

5. Role of Council within Chess Scotland – Derek and Andy Howie

AH stated that the discussion here was in two parts. First part to determine frequency of council meetings and the second to discuss Derek's paper. There is a problem in that council at the moment meet only once a year which means anything needing to be brought before it can be delayed by several months. Can we look at either 2+AGM or 3+ AGM per year which will shorten the meetings

HG asked if we would be better looking at Scheduling better

DH noted that traditionally we have one in March to approve the budget possibly would be better to move to May

AB requested that it should be more central

Meeting agreed for AGM on 24/25th August and 2 council meetings per year + AGM with the potential to call one in May should there be matters requiring it. May Council meeting would likely be the Saturday evening at the Ayrshire Congress.

DH then spoke of his proposals one of the concerns being there is no visibility of who the council members are

AH suggested we could have @chessscotland.com addresses and be added to the contacts page within the next month

HG suggested that the paper on the role of council should be rubber stamped at the AGM

Meeting agreed with this

→ Paper to be added to AGM motions

6. Consent Form (Hamilton Motion 1) – Hamilton Chess Club seconded LM

HG requested that we allow Phil to speak about this motion as he had all the information. This was rejected by the meeting

MH stated that the new consent form goes too far. He had shown it to a policeman he was friendly with and his reply was "I would not sign that, they would have more rights than I would as a parent!". If parents are there then the Head of Delegation cannot overrule parental responsibility. There are already people refusing to sign it which mean Juniors are not getting to play.

DH requested to make a counter proposal stating that the words are not acceptable and do not meet requirements. This is not a consent form.

HG agreed that there are issues finding a form that is suitable and asked if the parents are there who has the responsibilities. If it is the parents, why is a Head of Delegation needed.

LM replied that when a parent travels then it is their responsibility and the Role of the Head of Delegation in that instance is not child welfare.

AMF stated that there was a sad case in England where a school had gone for a river walk. A parent was helping and their child had fallen in and drowned. It was the teacher who appeared in court not the parent.

SM pointed out that if a parent was present, they would need to be PVG'd before they could look after others.

AB noted that you have to be careful not to undermine the role of the Head of Delegation. There have been cases in the past where the parent has interfered with what has been happening and the child has not been selected again because of this. Where a parent is present it is best to be consultative.

DD noted that he had seen a lot of different consent forms recently and agreed we need to agree and standardise them

HG stated that the role of the Head of Delegation must be recognised. HG had downloaded a consent form that was used in his old school / Local Authority and the suggestion for the meeting was this consent form was to be given to Linda to examine and determine if it is suitable.

→ LM to report suitability to AGM

DD asked what form we were to use at the Glorney

DH showed the meeting one that was used in the past

Meeting agreed that this form was the one to used for the forthcoming Glorney tournament.

7. PVG (Hamilton Motions 2 and 3) – Hamilton Chess Club

Motion 2

SM noted that he had asked people for feedback on this for nearly 10 years and was delighted that people had taken the time to word these motions.

SM continued that it was only when he considered the motions that he realised that everyone had missed out something glaring out and that would need to be addressed

When you know or if you suspect, both the motions and the existing policy are deficient as none give the advice to get the child out of harms way. The process should start with this and then if it is serious then you must, must tell the police straight away.

Really liked what was in the motions with 1 caveat and that is when you look at who is most likely to be the offender then parents and close relatives rank fairly highly. Totally agree with the sentiments and it is really good to see.

DH Noted that on the main policy document, there is a list at the end on unacceptable behaviour. Should this not be elsewhere

PM agreed stating that he works with Juniors and child protection and it would be better to have it separate

SM then requested permission from the meeting to redraft the proposals to counter the issues he had seen and report to the AGM. Meeting agreed

→ SM to report changes to AGM

Motion 3

SM noted that this had been raised before and had not been forgotten about. It is a problem and we should legislate but do need to get the view of parents on this as well.

PM stated that the adult in charge should not consume alcohol. There may be a time when off duty.

HG noted that he did not disagree but what would we do if there was an official dinner. Would this mean that we would always have to send a coach to make sure there is always one person on duty

PM replied that there should always be a responsible person who is completely sober.

→ MH and SM to have a discussion and raise to AGM

8. Chess Scotland Child Protection Procedures – Linda McCusker

HG stated that we had been through a lot of this already today

LM replied that the report contained recommendations and the general consensus is to go through them and make sure we have learn from what has happened to make sure it does not happen again.

HG advised that he thought it was almost like an appeal again

DH stated that the fact that it was not put on the website and then a link to the report was removed from the noticeboard showed it was handled unsatisfactory

LM agreed stating that the reason HG felt like that is because there needed to be context to the report. LM then suggested it would be better if we were to get a group together to examine this.

SM then gave a frank report on the recent case. It was agreed that as it was sensitive it would be not minuted

AMF asked if we should be looking at PVG handling training

→ HG to investigate

Meeting decided to form a committee to look into the recommendations with a view to giving their thoughts at either the AGM or a later council meeting. The committee was to comprise JW, LM, PM and DH

AMF proposed a motion of thanks to SM, the Standards Committee and all those involved with bringing this to the council meeting, for all working together to find a solution. Special thanks to LM for bringing this up under difficult circumstances.

9. Junior Selection Criteria – Sean Milton & Andy Howie

The meeting decided to send this to the AGM for further consideration

10. AOCB

DH noted on the website there is a box for the top scorer donations. Should this not be changed?

→ Box to be removed

DH stated that two people had recently had their memberships rejected.

HG asked PT and JT to step out of the room while this was being discussed.

HG then addressed the meeting admitting that he had made a mistake in giving his approval. Concern was a) why would want to re-join just before the council meeting and b) PT had been making difficult comments. HG

confirmed that it was his decision to reject and conceded that this was the wrong thing to do. HG apologised for overstepping the mark.

AH replied that he was flabbergasted that we were quite happy to have PT and JT assist him for a full weekend the weekend before the meeting, pointed out that JT had been working to try and get sponsorship for the Commonwealth Championships and had done more for Chess in Scotland than the vast number of the members.

DD suggested that we should freeze membership applications a period of time before a meeting

AB noted that even had the memberships been accepted then they could only have come to council as observers anyway as they were not members of council

AMF stated that it was unfortunate that they were rejected, especially as JT had not done anything to warrant that rejection. Have said many times, the way to make change is on the inside, never the outside.

AB noted that his concern was if everyone who posted critical things were banned then we would have nobody

DH stated that PT had expressed a wish to put forward the motions. It was for that reason and that reason alone that he wanted to re-join. Being critical is not a reason for this and we owe them an apology for this dreadful decision

HG conceded that this had been his fault and then asked PD to bring them in to apologise.

It then transpired that JT and PT had left the building

HG addressed the meeting promising to arrange for PT and JT to receive their apology

HG thanked everyone for attending the meeting and wished everyone a safe journey home.

Meeting ended 16:45