

Alex Holowczak,
ECF Director of Home Chess

2 February 2018

Subject: County Championships Consultation - Round 2

Dear Alex,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Surrey County Chess Association ("SCCA") in response to the second round of consultation, referenced above, that was launched by your email dated 3rd January 2018.

Thank you for asking our views on your detailed proposals as well as for your clarifications in our subsequent email exchange on 11 January.

1. Proposal 1 - We support the retention of 16 board Open teams. However, much as we are concerned about a possible "slippery slope", we cannot deny that getting sufficient players out for the U180/160/140 teams is a real, current, issue for Surrey. This was reflected in the feedback from all of our captains of those teams. Hence we are minded to support a lowering of the board numbers. However our belief is that other counties will feel that a reduction from 16 to 12 boards is too drastic. We suggest you present the alternatives of status quo, 14 boards or 12 boards as a way to try to find common ground, if that is indeed possible.

2. Proposal 2 - you have clarified that the proposal on venues only applies to ECF stages and not to Union stages. With this in mind it would seem acceptable to support the proposal with the provisos that the venues be public transport accessible and cost effective, and that their use not be compulsory. There should also be a carve out that, for ties involving counties from the same Union, they should generally be played at the "home" county's venue.

3. Proposal 3 - There is zero support for average grades from any Surrey quarter we have heard from, it just makes the task of captains that much harder, e.g. if late drop outs occur that push the average up. There is also the increased possibility of mismatches on some boards and likely excessive demands from many teams on a limited group of players. Surrey would not support Motion A. Motion B looks like the status quo. If that is what it is then we would support it.

4. Proposal 4 - What you report the survey told you was that captains are struggling to fill teams and counties are struggling to find captains. Surrey appears, currently, to be typical in that regard. Our captains have said that they don't want the added difficulty of having to populate boards with special category players and we believe their concerns should over-ride other

