Subject: ECF Finance Council Meeting (“FCM” and BCF meeting) 23 April 2022

Dear SCCA Participants,

I am writing to solicit your input in respect to some key matters at the upcoming ECF FCM and BCF meetings. Papers for which can be found here [Council Papers – English Chess Federation](https://www.englishchess.org.uk/about/ecf-council-and-board/).

1. Motion to allow Council meetings to be made public via internet (item 5 FCM agenda)

Propose: Do not support

If one thinks for no more than a second about this it seems fine. Why not be open and transparent?

Our concern is for ECF’s reputation. Having now witnessed six ECF general meetings I have been disheartened by the factional nature of the organisation and the sometimes very poor behaviour of some parties at the meetings, including some who have no qualms about making allegations of impropriety about others. In light of the resolution at the 2021 AGM that ECF will be going out to attract more public money we are not convinced that making general meetings more public is in the best interests of English Chess.

1. Fees (item 8 FCM agenda)

Propose: Support

The proposal is to not change the Fees, save for one error correction to the FIDE rated pay to play fee from £11 to £12. It is welcome that ECF is keeping its fees down in inflationary times.

1. Motion to BCF to donate Permanent Invested Funds to Chess Trust (item 5 BCF agenda)

Propose: Support pending clarification

According to the supporting papers there are tax shielding advantages of making the donation to the Chess Trust (a registered charity). Provided that assurances can be obtained at the meeting that the Chess Trust will act independently of ECF and that the draft memorandum of understanding between the Chess Trust and ECF is supported by the Chess Trust our inclination is to support this motion.

1. Blitz Games (item 11 FCM agenda)

Propose: Support

A motion to bring Blitz games into the same category as SP and RP games insofar as that, after a threshold number of games have been played by a non-ECF member, game fee equivalent to the relevant membership fee will be charged. This seems reasonable.

1. Motions re: Direct Members Representatives (“DMR”) (items 14-17 FCM agenda)

Propose: Support

Item 14 requires a new election if a vacancy arises instead of the current rule that allows the ECF Board to find a replacement. We think it is important to keep DMR independent of the ECF Board.

Item 15 requires that DMRs should consult with constituents and vote based on the views they receive. Rather sad that such a motion is thought to be required. It is not a bad thing to set such expectations of DMRs. However, we are not sure how this could be enforced in practice as defining objective criteria on what constitutes adequate consultation and voting in light of that is problematic.

Item 16 requires that DMRs should be in the membership class of their constituents. The question we have here is what happens if, say, a Bronze DMR moves to Silver or Gold during the relevant period? If they are allowed to finish their term of office then this is ok.

Item 17. Board members can’t be DMRs. You may recall that I said that I would write to the Governance Committee in my report of the 2021 AGM after a second person ended up being a Board member and DMR. They have duly responded. Independence of DMRs is crucial to their role.

1. Rolling Membership (item 18 FCM agenda)

Propose: Do not support

A proposal to change the current 1 Sept to 31 Aug membership system with one whereby renewal is done on the anniversary of joining, whenever that is.

Our concern with this proposal is the potential for such a scheme to cause a significant increased admin burden on clubs and the county because it would mean having to check players’ ECF membership status throughout the season in case their membership suddenly lapses part way through. Missing such lapses could cause significant game fee liabilities to be incurred.

1. Ukraine (item 20 FCM agenda)

Propose: Support

A motion for ECF to call for the immediate resignation of FIDE President Arkady Dvorkovich. This appears to be consistent with the IOC’s call on sports to deny the Russian regime propaganda opportunities. Chess is high profile in Russia. Hence, we are minded to support this.

What do you think about all of the above?

I would be very grateful for SCCA participants’ feedback no later than end of day 18th April please. Please email me at tv1div1@surbitonchessclub.co.uk

Many thanks.

Paul Shepherd – SCCA ECF Representative