

## **AGM Lancashire Chess Association**

### **Minutes of meeting held on Saturday 4 November – 10am – 11 am**

#### **Attendance**

Richard Walsh (Lancaster Chess Club and acting President); Carl Tillotson (Preston CC and acting Treasurer); Karl Barnsley (Clitheroe CC); Stephen Flaherty (Heywood CC); Malcom Peacock (Preston CC and ECF grading administrator); Phil Raynor (Lytham CC and Blackpool and Fylde League); Phil Seery (Bare Village CC).

#### **Apologies**

Dave Clayton (Leyland CC and ECF Arbiter).

#### **Appointment of Chair for the meeting**

Richard Walsh was appointed Chair.

#### **Welcome and statement from acting President**

Richard reminded the meeting that Bill O'Rourke had stepped down as President/Secretary of the Association. He announced his intention to do so a couple of years ago and this had now happened. He would continue to run Blackpool Congress. Bill had run the Association for over 30 years, and the meeting thanked him for his massive contribution over that time.

Richard Walsh explained that following discussions with Bill and Carl he had agreed to take on the role of Acting President a couple of months ago and that Carl had taken on the role of Acting Treasurer some time ago.

The overarching purpose of the AGM was to relaunch Lancashire Chess Association following the abeyance resulting from the Covid period. The agenda for the AGM was circulated to all club secretaries and some others who are active on the Lancashire chess scene a month before the AGM. Clubs were invited to submit motions not listed on the agenda by 21 October. As none were received the agenda remained as previously notified.

#### **Acting Treasurer's report**

The acting treasurer provided the meeting with an account of the current financial situation and position the Association found itself in after Barclays had closed two of the Association accounts during "Covid" due to inactivity. After a period of 18+ months, and many e-mails and telephone conversations with Barclays an agreement was reached where the "frozen" accounts were transferred into the Congress Account.

The amounts transferred into this account, will be paid into a new account to be set up for the Association. The "acting" Treasurer has authorised the release of some of these funds to pay outstanding expenses that had been owed to Bill O'Rourke for several years.

In terms of existing liabilities, there are technical debts owed to the NCCU and the ECF. The "acting" Treasurer was hopeful, that we could reach an agreement with both organisations for the debt to be cleared – considering the hiatus of the last 2 years and no incoming funds

to the Association during that time. No affiliation fees have been collected from Lancashire clubs since the 2017-2018 season.

The “acting” Treasurer needed to reconcile these transfers against known records, primarily to produce a full statement of accounts that the Auditor could sign off. Whilst the “acting” Treasurer has statements from the “Main” account, there are no records for the “Juniors” account, and it is a mystery as to who has these. The former Treasurer claims they did not have any statements from the “Juniors” account.

The “acting” Treasurer indicated they would furnish an up to date set of accounts, assuming elected, and would circulate this after a full audit has taken place. David Thorp is the current auditor, and it is assumed that David will be happy to audit the accounts once prepared.

## **Elections**

No other nominations were received in advance of the meeting and those present voted on the following posts:

- President – Richard Walsh – unanimous
- Secretary – the meeting agreed that the post of Secretary should be separate from that of President to ensure good governance of LCA. As no nominations had been received for this post it would remain vacant for the time being. In the event of the need for a signature by the Secretary for official documents etc, it was agreed that the President should have this authority.
- Treasurer – Carl Tillotson – unanimous

## **Discussion points following elections.**

- The Treasurer outlined plans to open a new account. It was agreed that the account would have multiple signatories to safeguard against similar issues reoccurring (although the old Barclays accounts had multiple signatories). The meeting authorised the Treasurer to open an account. It was agreed the signatories should be one of the President, Secretary (once elected) and Treasurer; with the default main signatory being the Treasurer.
- Getting people together again. The AGM agreed that a one day rapid play Lancashire Clubs Congress run along the lines of the newly revived National Clubs Championship with teams of 4 players would be a good way to resume engagement with the LCA. It would be held in 2024. The President would explore potential venues and work with Carl on this. Attendees suggested:
  - Clitheroe could enter 2 or 3 teams
  - Preston – at least 1
  - Lytham – 1
  - Lancaster at least 1
  - The venue should be selected on the basis of ease to get to; facilities (including parking and rail connections) and cost

- Constitution – needed to be revised – Richard, Carl and Phil would work on this together with policies on safeguarding, EDI and GDPR before circulating recommended versions more widely
- County Chess – it would not be practical for LCA to enter teams until the 2024/25 season. There were also some legacy issues to address with the NCCU. Richard had established with the ECF that LCA have the option of reaffiliating with the NCCU or going direct with the ECF – discussion on which option to be chosen would be deferred until 2024
- Relations with the National Charity – Chess in Schools and Communities. Richard explained that he was being appointed as Lancashire Regional Organiser for CSC. The role would fit well with LCA President. Some primary schools in Lancashire were likely to receive DfE funding for CSC tutoring and some local authorities funding for outdoor chess tables from levelling up Dept. Once the lists of successful candidates were published Richard would be in contact as appropriate
- Future meetings – attendees were broadly content with the current format of virtual meetings at the weekend but the rapid play congress could provide an opportunity for a F2F meeting with a wider audience
- The question was raised as to the relationship between National congresses organised in the LCA region and their relationship with the LCA eg Blackpool, Leyland and Lancaster. Post meeting it was confirmed that such congresses are independent and LCA has no financial liabilities for them. That said LCA should of course continue its policy of mentioning them on its website and there were no obstacles to officers of LCA having additional and separate roles for National congresses and clubs etc
- Future AGMs – traditionally AGMs were held in June or October. The date of the next one would, to some extent, be dependent on relaunch progress
- The meeting was closed and all attendees expressed again their fond thanks to Bill for all his support over the years
- Next steps – Richard and Carl to update LCA clubs etc on progress as it is made.  
Minutes to be circulated

Richard Walsh – President

Carl Tillotson – Treasurer

Date: 20-11-2023

Circulated: 20-11-2023