

# **SUFFOLK COUNTY CHESS ASSOCIATION**

**Minutes of the SCCA Committee Meeting, held on line via Microsoft Teams on 25th October 2021, 7.30-8.40.**

## **Present**

President – Stephen Lewis (SLe)  
Secretary – John McAllister (JM)  
Treasurer – David Green (DG)  
Competitions Secretary – Sam Gaffney (SG)  
County First Team Captain – Steve Ruthen (SR)  
County U1850 Team Captain – Bob Jones (BJ)  
Internet Officer – Steve Lovell (SLo)

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Rob Sanders (Rapid Play Organiser)

### **2. Minutes of the last SCCA Committee Meeting**

Minutes of the July Committee were circulated in advance of the meeting, and with one spelling correction were accepted without amendment.

### **3. Matters Arising**

Regarding AP1, BJ was now in possession of the N&S Rules and would circulate them after the meeting. AP1 is now closed.

### **4. Membership of the SCCA Committee after June 2022**

The committee still lack a Vice-President, and neither of the two additional places on the committee are occupied. AP2 will therefore remain open, and SLe suggested JM concentrate his efforts on Ipswich, for while they are the largest club in the Association, they are not represented on the committee at all.

### **5. Treasurer's report**

DG presented the following report;

“I am still not authorised by a quorate general meeting to act as Treasurer or to in any way alter the banking arrangements of the SCCA as laid down in the SCCA constitution. I have to say that having the Treasurer’s duties rigidly specified in the constitution with its need for a super majority for any change at a general meeting is awkward and cumbersome for an incoming Treasurer.

At the moment I am operating under the Pandemic emergency powers taken upon itself by the committee which I have to remind this meeting is still totally unelected.

I am still pursuing the change of mandate with Barclays to replace the outgoing Treasurer as a signatory but Barclays do not make this easy. I have visited the Woodbridge Branch, itself something of a chore as it is open only part time and in an inaccessible no parking area in Woodbridge only to be told that Barclays branches cannot process changes to mandates and it has to be done centrally via a telephone call centre. After three attempts when I was kept hanging on line for up to an hour before being summarily cut off I have to admit that I have temporarily given up trying.

As a result I have had no bank statements from Barclays since our last meeting but given the miniscule interest being paid on deposits (£2.71 interest in 2019/2020) I believe there is very little change in our financial position.

I can confirm that I have issued team fees invoices by e-mail to all of our clubs to a total of £419.00 which is quite substantially down from the 2019/2020 season total of £648.00 as there are fewer teams in the league. If expenditure remains as it was in 2019/2020 then we will make a loss of about £85.00 in 2021/2022. I discussed this position with our President and he is happy that we should use some of our reserves to finance this loss.

So far I have received acknowledgements from 3 clubs of receipt of the invoices.

At the Stowmarket AGM held face to face on Tuesday 19.10.21 I received the Stowmarket fees cheque which awaits being deposited so it can share an envelope and deposit slip with other cheques.

No demands for money have arrived and I have no contact names or any form of address for the EACU Treasurer or other of our usual creditors.

There has been some other success, Mike Clapham has agreed to continue to audit the SCCA’s accounts and I have set up the excel spreadsheet for the accounts records to continue in the same format that our last Treasurer used for 20 years.

Mike Clapham and I have agreed that no audit is needed for the 2020/2021 season as there was no activity other than a minimal increase in our bank balance due to interest.”

The committee did not disagree with anything in the treasurer’s report, and fully understood the difficulties he is operating under. The expectation is that a physical AGM will be possible next year after the season has ended where these matters will be resolved.

## **6. Review of new season and ECF League Management System Update**

SG reported that apart from a 4-0 default match, the season was progressing reasonably well. Some fixtures have been rearranged, but for venue availability issues rather than Covid.

BJ raised the issue of face masks, pointing out that the SCCA rules demand that the whole team wear masks if just one person in one of the teams demands it. The difficulties this would create at venues where several matches were taking place simultaneously (especially if any of those matches involved teams from other competitions that had different Covid rules) was made clear. While many players have demanded that their opponent wear a face mask, no one has yet demanded that the whole team should. The committee was informed that some players have

declared that they would walk away from a match and suffer a default rather than play with a mask on. After some discussion, it was agreed to limit the mandatory wearing of face masks to a board by board basis, rather than a team by team – which was in fact what was happening in practice. BJ was requested to send a copy of the Bury Area League rule on this to all committee members to serve as a template for the SCCA rule (**AP 12**).

## **7. Proposals from the Committee to be put before the AGM**

There were no new proposals put forward at this meeting. Existing proposals would be carried forward to the next AGM.

## **8. AOB**

The SCCA had received a communication from John Lambert (Clacton) questioning the Suffolk League Rules that allow a person to play for more than one club. This was discussed at some length, but the consensus was that as a person could not play for more than one club in the same division, no change would be proposed.

BJ confirmed his agreement to take on the role of liaison officer between the committee and the junior chess organiser, Tim Kent.

SR questioned whether the SCCA should reintroduce a board fee for county matches. BJ added that Turner Hall were raising their charges from £120 to £150. The idea of “charging” players to represent the county, along with the added burden it places on the captain to collect the fees, were sufficient to persuade the committee that the cost of county matches would continue to be met by the SCCA. For the next county match BJ stated he had a very strong team, while SR confessed to struggling a little with his team.

SG asked whether the committee had a plan should the government reintroduce certain covid measures such as mask wearing. The committee agreed that if measures were mandatory we would have no choice but to follow them, but if they are not, we would deal with them if or when they arrive.

SG also asked if the SCCA would fund a County Championship again. While there was general agreement that it would be a good idea, doubts were expressed as to whether there would be sufficient interest. No further action was agreed at this time. SG wondered if the committee could offer help to clubs in raising the general standard of novice adults – coaching sessions of some kind, or simply sharing best practice. It was unclear what role the SCCA could offer, hence the matter would be left to individual clubs to develop.

## **9. Date and venue of next SCCA Committee Meeting**

The President felt that the committee should meet more frequently while the pandemic continues, therefore the next meeting was set for Monday January 10th 2022, and would again be conducted via Microsoft Teams.

## **SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS**

**AP from previous meeting.** BJ and AS to provide an up to date inventory of trophies.

**AP2.** JM to contact all club secretaries to canvas for a new Vice-President.

**AP9.** DG to scrutinise the SCCA rules and identify all the changes needed to reflect the transition from BCF Grades to ECF Ratings. DG has completed his part and passed the results to JM for completion.

**AP12.** BJ to send a copy of the Bury Area League rule on mask wearing to all committee members to serve as a template for a SCCA rule.

## **SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS FROM THE COMMITTEE**

### **Proposal 2. Change to clause 4.1 of the Constitution.**

The purpose of this change is to enable any new posts created by the League (such as Internet Officer) to be automatically invited onto the committee without the need to change the League Rules. It also removes roles that are no longer filled.

Delete the words "County Team Captains, Suffolk Junior Chess representative, Women's Chess representative, Correspondence Chess captain, County Results Officer" and insert the word "and" between "Treasurer" and "Competitions Secretary". Delete the existing sentence after "Competitions Secretary" and replace it with, "Occupants of all other roles of the SCCA will be invited to join the committee at the AGM".

### **Proposal 4. Change to Rule 5.1.**

The purpose of this change is to remove the need to nominate players that are unlikely to be played should the regular players in such a team happen to be the lowest rated players as well.

Add to the first sentence, "except for teams in the lowest division where only boards 1 and 2 need nominating. The remaining boards in that Team/Teams will be filled in accordance with Rule 5.3"

### **Proposal 5. Change to clause 4.8 of the Constitution.**

The purpose of this change is to remove the anomaly that exists whereby a secretary can give just 21 days "notice" for a meeting, when members must submit any items for inclusion on the agenda for that meeting at least 28 days in advance.

Change “The Secretary shall give members 21 days’ notice of the date of each meeting, together with an Agenda and the Minutes of the previous Committee Meeting.”

To “The Secretary shall give members an agenda, along with minutes of the previous Committee Meeting, plus any other necessary documentation, at least 21 days before the date of each meeting.”

### **Proposal 6. Change 8.3 of the SCCA Constitution.**

The purpose of this change is to enable the use of internet banking and electronic money transfers. Currently the SCCA finances rely solely on paper-based transactions such as cheques and paying in slips. There is a current account that requires two signatures on each cheque and a deposit account that holds about 70% of the SCCA’s cash and requires just one signature to make a withdrawal. It is proposed that the current account be moved to a provider that will give free internet banking and allow postal deposits of received cheques. It is proposed that the Deposit Account be unchanged except that two signatures should be needed in future to make any withdrawal. The recommendation from the SCCA Treasurer, is that the SCCA uses Santander Bank.

Change “A Current Account will be maintained by the Treasurer to receive income and make payments on behalf of the SCCA. All withdrawals will require two signatories drawn from the President, Secretary and Treasurer. A Deposit account may also be held to hold extra funds. Withdrawals from this account will be paid into the current account and only one signatory is required for this purpose.”

To “A Current Account with online facilities will be maintained by the Treasurer to receive income and make payments on behalf of the SCCA. The Treasurer and the President and/or the Secretary will hold the access codes and passwords for the on-line current account with the Treasurer authorised to make BACS payments that do not require a signature. A Deposit Account may also be held for extra funds. Withdrawals from this account will be paid into the current account and two signatories drawn from the President, Treasurer and Secretary are required for this purpose.

### **Proposal 7. New emergency clause in the Constitution**

The committee proposes that the following new clause be added to the constitution to enable it to act constitutionally during such events as have occurred this past year.

## **12. Suspension to the Constitution or Competition Rules**

In the event of an emergency the committee has the power to suspend normal SCCA protocols.