

SUFFOLK COUNTY CHESS ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the SCCA Committee Meeting

Held on line via Zoom on 11th May 2026, 7:30 - 8:30.

Present: President – Simon Wilks (SW)
Vice President – Piotr Dolewka (PD)
Secretary – John McAllister (JM)
Treasurer – Anthony Taylor (AT)
Competitions Secretary – Sam Gaffney (SG)
County First Team Captain – Simon Wilks (SW)
County U1850 Team Captain – Bob Jones (BJ)
Internet Officer – Steve Lovell (SL)
Junior Chess Representative – Ed Player (EP) (from 8:00pm)

1. Apologies for absence

None

2. Minutes of the last SCCA Committee Meeting June 6

JM was advised that the Child Welfare Policy should be referred to as the Child Protection Policy. This was later changed to the Safeguarding Policy as it could also be applied to vulnerable adults.

3. Matters Arising

SG pointed out that the rule changes made at last year's AGM had not appeared on the SCCA website. JM apologised for that and would attend to it as a matter of urgency.

4. Treasurer's Report

AT reported that the Community account stood at £803.47 and the Business Premium account stood at £1527.60.

Expenses incurred up to the end of May were

Room hire	80.00
EACU fees	303.00
Ipswich venue hire	50.00

Still expected are web site charges and the engraving of trophies.

Credits include £33 from three clubs for web hosting and £652 in league fees, leaving a current surplus for this year of £262. This compares to £241 for last year, but as we have yet to include web site costs and engraving our surplus this year will be considerably less than last year, but still in surplus.

5. Competition Secretary's Report

SG reported that division three was not yet completed as Bury could not make the divisional finals night and had to postpone their match against Sudbury.

Regarding the divisional finals night, SG reported these were quite successful for divisions one and two but in division three Saxmundham B were disqualified for two match defaults and with the Bury v Sudbury postponement there was only one team playing.

JM asked about the U1650 and SG confirmed that that too was not yet complete, but that also included a disqualified team (Bury) for two defaulted matches.

SG had received fewer complaints this season over last season, but there were three issues raised by Felixstowe. The first related to Clacton, who Felixstowe believe gain an unfair advantage in the Divisional Rapid Play Cup by not having a nominated team in the division. The second surrounded the estimated rating of a new player who was rated about 2000 some twenty years ago and Felixstowe wanted his estimate to be 1600. The third involved a default by Bury late in the season where Felixstowe wanted the claim that board without providing a name. SG Pointed out that while it is acceptable to claim a default without requiring the player to be present, it is not possible to claim a default without naming the player on the scoresheet as this also has implications for board order.

SL did not feel that applying board order rules when a team defaults on a higher board was right. A lengthy discussion followed that revolved around the application of rules 3.8 and 5.4. The consensus was that where there is a single default that results in a 4v3 match, then the team fielding four players must name all four and put them in board order according to rule 5.4. In a match with a default from each team resulting in a 3v3 match then the players of each team must play each other and be placed in board order according to rule 5.4. The issue of which board takes the double default, and which team gets the two white boards, was not resolved.

BJ raised the subject of the divisional finals nights. First, with divisions having an odd number of teams it means that not all teams are present for it, which means it loses some of its value, and second in two of the division the winning team had already been determined, making it even less relevant. SG acknowledged the issues but pointed out that there was nothing he could do about either matter. BJ suggested abandoning finals nights when there are an odd number of teams, particularly when teams playing each other like Bury v Stowmarket both have to travel for no real purpose.

Several other clubs had expressed concerns that they were losing one of their home fixtures, as well as their home nights for playing. While the idea of a single finals night was considered worthy, the practicalities made it less attractive. It was decided that the matter would be put on the agenda of the AGM for the league to decide whether to persevere with this arrangement.

6. First Team Captain's Report

SW had asked Tim Lunn if he wished to make a report, but Tim declined as he did not regarded himself as the captain, but more of a convener. SW reminded the committee

that at the last AGM, it was agreed that he, Tim Lunn and Rob Sanders would manage the county first team between them and he was able to report that they had successfully raised teams for all six matches, winning one of them and finishing bottom of the table. Suffolk where, he said, the weakest side in the group, but after being out for a year it was still an encouraging achievement.

SW concluded by saying that even though Tim does not want to be formally appointed as team captain he has already started preparations for next season, lining up the squad and generally organising things.

7. U1850 Team Captain's Report

BJ reported that just before the last round we were near the bottom and our only hope was to win both of our remaining matches and for one of the others to lose, which is exactly what happened, and we finished in second place. We thus reached the finals and last week we played Kent who were the winners of the Southern Region and we beat them 9-7. We now face Yorkshire in the semi-final to be held in Peterborough on June 14. Unfortunately he and several others will not be available for that match so we will be a much weakened side.

BJ highlighted the contribution of our juniors in the match against Kent, where we had three on the top nine boards, scoring an impressive 2/3 between them.

8. Review of the SCCA Child Protection Policy.

JM asked if changes and corrections to the policy required AGM approval. It was agreed that such matters could be handled by the committee itself. This led into a discussion of Stowmarket's Child Protection Policy and JM asked what it was that Stowmarket were proposing.

BJ was able to add some clarity. In December 2025 David Green sent BJ a two page document with the heading SCCA Child Safeguarding Policy, which he wants to use to replace the policy document agreed at last year's AGM.

At this point Ed Player joined the meeting.

A general discussion regarding the policy followed and the general feeling was that while our current policy could use a little trimming here and there, it could not be simplified to just two pages. Regardless of how detailed the policy may be SG raised the question of how could the SCCA monitor the application of it in the affiliated clubs. PD repeated that each club can have its own policy, and if it doesn't then they are obligated to apply the SCCA policy, and each club is responsible for itself. He added that if a club has its own policy then it should provide a copy to the SCCA for review. So far no club has done that.

PD proposed that the SCCA should have copies of the safeguarding policy from each club and the name of their lead for safeguarding. SW stated that either he or JM would write to all clubs ahead of the AGM for this information (AP31).

9. Appointment of Ed Player as Suffolk Junior Chess Representative

SW welcomed EP who introduced himself to the committee. At present EP lives in Germany but played in Suffolk for many years. He got involved in junior chess

through BJ and Bury St Edmunds chess club. During the pandemic Tim Kent set up and online junior chess club and EP got involved with that. After the pandemic Tim dropped out of the online side and concentrated on mentoring juniors while EP persevered with the project. Now that over the board chess is back to normal Suffolk had their first junior county match last year in a tournament involving several counties in the EACU, which will be repeated this year. A trophy has been donated in memory of Adam Hunt for the winning county.

The junior web site gets a steady stream of enquiries and EP is now making contacts with schools in Suffolk to run a workshop for teachers in developing chess. Adam Hunt's father recently donated 300 chess sets for Suffolk county schools.

10. Implications of the Stowmarket Child Protection Policy

This was covered in item 8.

11. Review of Action Points

AP23. BJ to liaise with Tim Kent to review the SCCA Child Protection Policy – completed

AP27. SW to circulate his views on the rapid play handicap issue for discussion regarding any future rule changes – completed without any changes to the rules.

AP28. JM to draft an amendment to rule 3.2 – completed.

AP29. SW to write to all clubs explaining the need for a first team captain – completed.

AP30. BJ to revisit his “Guidance for Captains” paper – completed but not published on the SCCA web site.

12. AOB

JM asked if anyone knew the history of the Division One trophy bearing the name, “The Whiteley Challenge Cup.” No one did although John Feavoyour was suggested as a possibility source.

13. Date and venue of SCCA AGM

The date for the 2026 AGM was set for July 1 2026 at the Ipswich Institute.

14. Date and venue of next SCCA Committee Meeting

To be decided.

SUMMARY OF ONGOING ACTION POINTS

AP31. SW/JM to write to all clubs to get details of their Safeguarding Policy and names of the Lead for Safeguarding.