

Agenda of the
Bury St Edmunds Chess Club
Annual General Meeting

Date and Time: 12 Aug 2021 at 7:30pm
Venue: Moreton Hall Community Centre

- 1. Welcome**
 - Present
 - Apologies

- 2. Minutes of the 2020 AGM held 3 Sept 2020**
 - Approval, or otherwise, of the minutes
 - Matters arising from the minutes and approval of this agenda

- 3. Officers' Reports**
 - Treasurer
 - Others as necessary

- 4. Introduction of a Club Constitution**

- 5. Election of Officers**
 - President (incumbent: Steve Ruthen)
 - Club Secretary (Steve Lovell)
 - Match Secretary (Bob Jones)
 - Treasurer (Hugo Smith)
 - Competitions Secretary (Vacant)
 - Communications Officer (Steve Lovell)
 - Events Officer (Alan Watkins)
 - Safeguarding Officer (Bob Jones)
 - Ex Officio officers (Ed Player, Colin Roberts)

- 6. League Matters**

- 7. Teams and Captains for Next Season**

- 8. Any other Business**

Bury St Edmunds Chess Club

Annual General Meeting

Held: 3 September 2020 at 7:30pm on Jitsi.org

Note from the Admin Secretary:

Some of the items on the agenda were closely related and as such the actual order in which topics were discussed did not always follow the order in which those topics appeared on the agenda. Where possible without distortion, the order in which topics are presented below reflects the order they appeared in on the agenda.

1. Welcome

Present: Steve Ruthen (SR), Steve Lovell (SL), Hugo Smith (HS), Colin Roberts (CR), Ed Player (EP), Dick Myhill (DM), Rob Lepley (RL). (7 Members)

Apologies: Bob Jones (BJ)

Noting the low attendance, CR queried whether the meeting was quorate. SL responded that there is no club constitution and therefore no definition of a quorum.

2. Minutes of the 2019 AGM

SR noted that the minutes had been circulated previously and requested that the meeting either approve them or raise any issues. They were approved without amendment. SR asked if anyone saw any matters arising from the minutes which need to be addressed. SL noted two: (a) club sponsorship and (b) the club safeguarding policy.

(a) SL had approached a couple of organisations, but had had no success, though one had not actually responded. When time allows, he intends to make some additional approaches.

(b) The last AGM had agreed to adopt the SCCA's safeguarding policy as our own, with BJ to make such amendments as were necessary to make it refer to our club rather than the SCCA and our officers rather than the SCCA's.

Action: SL to update the website to show the minutes of the 2019 AGM are no longer provisional.

Action: BJ to finalise the Safeguarding policy and send to SL for publishing on the club website.

Action: SL to resume work on finding sponsorship for the club.

3. Officers' Reports

Treasurer (HS)

Hugo outlined the financial position of the club, noting that we had continued to operate at a slight loss during the season just completed. Rather than continue to drain our now rather small reserves, HS proposed to increase the various membership fees (£30 → £36, £20 → £24, and £10 → £12). Though there were some minor changes for the concessionary rates a few years ago, for the full membership fee this is the first increase we've seen since the ECF introduced the membership scheme in 2012. The proposed membership fee increases were approved by the meeting.

HS further proposed, and the meeting approved, that no membership fees be levied until over-the-board chess resumes, at which point the figures above would be prorated according to the proportion of a full season they are expected to cover.

DM queried whether we would be liable for venue hire during the current hiatus. HS and SL assured him that this was not the case. This led to a further question from RL as to whether when we are ready to resume the venue might already have been booked for use by others. SL explained when communicating with the venue manager he'd said they would not be meeting again until at least January but would appreciate it if our usual Thursday evening slot be reserved for us from January forwards. If resumption is further delayed, the approach will be the same: allow bookings in our slot up to some specified point and request that the slot be held in reserve for us from that date onwards.

Admin Secretary (SL)

SL briefly outlined his activities on behalf of the club since the beginning of lockdown. Amongst other things, he has sent approximately 30 emails to all members, organised 14 online tournaments, the Simul with GM Matthew Sadler, and completely reworked the club website. As noted by EP, some of the tournaments were well supported with a dozen or so entrants, but interest tailed off over time. It is hoped that interest will be reinvigorated by new online competitions beginning this Autumn.

4. Election of Officers

With all officers understood to be willing to continue in their roles, the group was re-elected *en bloc*. The club's officers are therefore as listed below.

Office	Officer
President	Steve Ruthen
Match Secretary	Bob Jones
Admin Secretary	Steve Lovell
Treasurer	Hugo Smith
Social Secretary	Alan Watkins
Safeguarding Officer	Bob Jones
Club Championship Organiser	Vacant
Ex Officio	Colin Roberts
Ex Officio	Ed Player

5. League Matters

The committee of the SCCA suspended play in March and will presumably lead on when SCCA league chess will resume. The Executive of the BACL has delegated this decision to a committee, which needs a representative of each club. SL commented that he would suggest BJ is best placed to play this role for our club due to his close involvement with setting up the venue each week.

Action: SL to approach BJ about this.

Both leagues have endorsed the Icen Live League and Icen Live Classic events and encourage clubs and their members to enter. Those events are successors to the Norfolk Live League and Norfolk Live Classic and will run on the same basis, only now additionally inviting entries from Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, parts of Lincolnshire and possibly also Bedfordshire.

SL noted that despite attempts to raise interest in these events, he's had little response. We have 4 or 5 players interested in the League event and no entrants to the Classic. RL hypothesised that lack of interest may be a result of the event seeming "abstract" and unrelated to the club, the teams and the players that people are familiar with. This might be a particular issue for the Classic (individual) event where one would not generally know one's opponent. CR and EP suggested that we really should be able to sustain at least one team for the League event and should enter a team there. For those wanting a longer time control option against familiar opponents, RL suggested that we should instigate an internal competition on a similar basis to the Icen Classic. This would be much like previous Club Championship events but held online, commencing in November to allow enough time to promote the event internally. The meeting approved both suggestions.

Action: SL to enter a Bury St Edmunds team into the Icen League and seek a captain for the team.

Action: SL to promote the online "Club Championship", with the intention of commencing in the event in November.

In connection to the BACL, SL noted that the rules adopted to determine final standings in the otherwise unfinished competitions resulted in Bury Scarabs being declared Division 1 champions. In addition, Jaden Jermy was named as Division 1 Player of the Year.

6. Teams and Captains for Next Season

This item was understood to have been adequately addressed under item 5.

7. Club matters

Club Approach to Resumption

SL mentioned that the ECF had produced guidance for clubs, including a template risk assessment, which outlined the steps that a club would have to undertake to re-open safely. These requirements are very onerous and would both increase the workload for those setting-up and setting-down the venue and lessen the enjoyment for the players. We'd also need to be able to reassure visiting clubs that our measures were adequate and be assured that the measures of clubs we visit are adequate. Consideration would also need to be given to making travel arrangements "COVID-secure". All agreed that it was not sensible to resume at the current time.

Online Community: Slack

SL outlined the benefits of this system which he'd implemented for the club during the lockdown. At present only the committee members plus one other have joined. Slack has many of the benefits of a WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger group, including instant notifications and all members being able to interact despite not necessarily knowing email addresses or phone numbers. As with those platforms, members can be blocked, banned or simply ignored if they become a nuisance. Unlike those systems, discussion is organised in "channels" and notification options can be different for each. Members may wish to hear about player requests for Division 2, but not about Division 1, having these in different channels means members don't need to be bothered by notifications that aren't of interest.

SL explained that Slack is available (free) on iOS and Android, but can also be installed on Windows, Mac and Linux, or simply used in a web-browser.

EP noted that Slack should not be used for all communication, and that more formal announcements by email would continue to be necessary and noted that some people may be reluctant to sign up for "yet another" communication tool. Despite this, the general feeling was that the current trial of Slack should continue.

Action: SL to continue to promote Slack to members as and when appropriate.

8. Any other Business

Club Approach to Resumption Revisited

Although we had already discussed this question, SL was concerned that we hadn't determined our next steps and how we might ever decide to resume normal club activities. At this juncture, we agreed that the decision would be taken by the club committee, which would convene periodically (every month or two) to review the situation and initiate such actions as are required.

Action: SL to diarise "meetings" of the club committee (real or online) for this purpose.

Close: 8:30pm

Constitution of the Bury St Edmunds Chess Club

As submitted for approval at the AGM 12 August 2021.

1. Name of the club

The name of the club will be the '*Bury St Edmunds Chess Club*'. In this document, it will be referred to as '*the Club*'.

2. Aims of the Club

The aims of the Club are:

- a) to organise and promote the playing of chess in the Bury St Edmunds region,
- b) to provide a home venue for chess matches and social chess games,
- c) to enter and support teams in local and national chess competitions,
- d) to organise chess competitions within the Club,
- e) to organise other events (including, but not limited to: social chess, coaching, simultaneous demonstrations and social events),
- f) to represent its members to such bodies as organise events in which the Club participates and to any other organisation deemed appropriate.

3. Membership

Any individual may join the Club, subject to ratification of their application by the Committee. The Committee may expel or suspend the membership of any member whom it deems to have behaved in an illegal or inappropriate manner.

4. Club Committee

The Club Committee will consist of the following officers: President, Club Secretary, Match Secretary, Treasurer, Competitions Secretary, Communications Officer, Events Office, Safeguarding Officer and up to two *ex officio* officers. Their essential functions are as follows:

The **President** will normally chair Club and Committee meetings.

The **Club Secretary** will carry out general administrative roles for the Club, including the organisation and minuting of Committee Meetings, the Annual Meeting and Extraordinary Meetings.

The **Match Secretary** will be responsible for (1) organising the Club's external competition schedule, (2) liaising, as necessary, with team captains concerning the organisation of individual matches.

The responsibilities of the **Treasurer** are outlined in Clause 8.

The **Competitions Secretary** is responsible for organising internal club competitions, including the Club Championship, the format of the latter to be agreed by the Committee.

The **Communications Officer** will maintain the Club's website and disseminate information to the membership.

The **Events Officer** will organise events for members other than those which fall within the remit of the Match Secretary or Competitions Secretary. This will include non-routine chess events and social events.

The **Safeguarding Officer** will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Club's Safeguarding Policy and will be the main point of contact for any safeguarding concerns.

The Committee will be elected at the Annual Meeting every year, but it will have the power to fill any vacancy that occurs in it during the year. An individual may perform more than one of the committee's roles.

5. Committee and Club Meetings

5.1 Chairing of Meetings

Meetings of the Club or of the Committee will normally be chaired by the President. If the President is unavailable any club officer may act as Chair, with preference given to longer serving members of the Committee.

The Chair will be responsible for ensuring

- the smooth and fair running of the meeting,
- that all the business set before the meeting is discussed, and
- that clear and actionable decisions are made in accordance with this Constitution

5.2 Committee Meetings

The Committee will meet at least once a year. Further meetings may be called if two or more Committee members request it. Meetings may be held online if necessary.

A majority of the individual members of the Committee will constitute a quorum. If a quorum is not present for a meeting, it will be adjourned to another day to be fixed by the Secretary.

In matters requiring a vote, each member of the Committee will have one vote except the Chair who, in the event of equality of votes, will have the casting vote.

The Club Secretary will make every effort to schedule Committee Meetings so that as many as possible of the Committee can attend.

5.3 Club Meetings

5.3.1 Notice of Meetings

The Club Secretary will send notice and the agenda of any Club Meeting to the Club's members at least twenty-one days prior to the meeting.

5.3.2 Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting will be held in the summer, outside of normal local League seasons that involve the Club's teams. Any proposals, including any to amend the Constitution, must be submitted to the Club Secretary at least fourteen days before the meeting.

The quorum for the Annual Meeting is eight adult membersⁱ. If a quorum is not present within thirty minutes of the time called for the meeting, the meeting will not be held.

If the Annual Meeting is not held due to it being inquorate, or for any other reason, the Committee will be empowered to meet and take all decisions that were scheduled for the Annual Meeting.

5.3.3 Extraordinary Meetings

An Extraordinary Meeting may be called by the Club Secretary if one is desired by the Committee, or upon receipt of a written request signed by at least ten adult Club members. The request must clearly state the reason for the meeting. The Club Secretary must call the meeting within twenty-one days of the request being received and the meeting must take place within six weeks of the call unless agreed otherwise by all interested parties.

A quorum for an Extraordinary Meeting is ten adult members and, for meetings called by members, at least six of the signatories to the request must attend. If a quorum is not present within fifteen minutes of the time called for the meeting, the meeting will not be held.

5.3.4 Voting

Any Club member over the age of eighteen may vote at Club meetings, provided that their Club subscriptions are not in arrears.

5.3.5 Agenda Items for the Annual Meeting

Club members may ask for items to be included in the agenda. These must be submitted by email to the Club Secretary at least 14 days before the meeting is due to be held.

The agenda will be subject to change until 7 days before the meeting at which point the latest circulated agenda will be considered finalised.

Club Officers or the Committee as a group may amend or add agenda items at any stage before the agenda is finalised.

6. Conduct

The Club relies on the good conduct of members. Sanctions may be taken against individuals whose conduct is unsatisfactory. The Committee will rule on such matters. Visiting members of other clubs who behave inappropriately may be excluded by the Committee from visiting the Club.

7. Finance

7.1 Financial Year

The Club's financial year will run from 1 June to 31 May. The Club's accounts will be audited annually, shortly before the Annual Meeting, by an appointed responsible person who is not a member of the Committee.

7.2 Subscriptions

Subscription rates will be determined yearly at the Annual Meeting. The Club will normally aim to retain sufficient financial reserves to operate for at least six months. The Treasurer will maintain proper financial records and will present the Club accounts to the Annual Meeting.

7.3 Bank account

A Bank account will be maintained by the Treasurer to receive income and make payments on behalf of the Club. A Deposit account may also be held to hold extra funds. Withdrawals from the latter account will be paid into the current account. Permitted signatories to the Club's bank accounts will be the Treasurer, the President and the Club Secretary.

7.4 Expenses

Claims for expenses incurred on behalf of the Club must be submitted (with receipts where appropriate) to the Treasurer. Payments must normally be agreed with the Treasurer before they are made.

8. Trophies

Trophies that are returnable to the Club or to some other organisation, and which are won by Club members or teams, will be the responsibility of the winning individual or the Captain of the team that wins them.

In the event of their loss or damage, they will be responsible for the cost of replacing or repairing them. The Match Secretary will maintain a list of returnable trophies and their whereabouts.

9. Child Protection

The Club's Child Protection Policy can be viewed [here](#).

10. Dissolution

A resolution to dissolve the Club can only be passed at an Annual or Extraordinary Meeting of the Club and will be subject to the normal rules of those meetings in relation to any quorum requirement.

In the event of dissolution, assets which remain after settling any debts of the Club will become the property of one or more chess organisation with similar aims to our own. The recipients are to be determined by the meeting at which the Club is dissolved. That meeting is asked to consider dividing the assets between the following organisations:

- Any other chess club which is a natural successor to the Club, and which meets in or near Bury St Edmunds,
- Any junior chess club with which the Club maintains a close connection,
- Any leagues in which the Club has participated,
- The East Anglian Chess Union,
- The English Chess Federation.

It is not a requirement that all the assets be passed to the same organisation, nor that all organisations described above receive a share of the assets. The meeting may appoint one or more persons to make and/or administer these decisions on its behalf.

11. Amendments to the Constitution

Amendments to the Constitution may only be made at the Annual Meeting. To be approved, amendments must receive at least two thirds of the available votes at the meeting. Proxy voting is not allowed. Proposals for amendments must be sent to the Club Secretary, in writing or electronically, not less than fourteen days before the meeting at which they are to be proposed. They must be circulated to the Club membership not less than seven days before the meeting.

ⁱ An 'adult member' is any member aged eighteen years or more.