

Minutes of the
Bury St Edmunds Chess Club: Annual General Meeting 2023
Held Thursday 24 August 2023 at 7:30pm

1. Welcome

Present: Craig Bradshaw, George Robinson, Mark Webb, Zbynek Strela, Dan Pugh (DP), Steve Lovell (SL), Steve Ruthen (SR), Bob Jones (BJ), Hugo Smith (HS), John Feavoyour, Sam Inman

Apologies: Mike Harris, Danny Harrison

This satisfies the quorum of 8 adult members.

2. Approval of Minutes of the AGM Held 30 June 2022

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes and Approval of Agenda

It was agreed that there were no matters arising from the Minutes of the 2022 AGM.

4. Reports

Treasurer (Hugo Smith)

HS reported on the club's financial position, providing annualised accounts and cashflow statements, and a variety of other figures. HS reported that whilst the annual cashflow statement showed a minor deficit, there was still a good cash reserve in the Club's account.

It was noted that there had been a slight increase in membership numbers in the 2022/23 season, and a further increase in membership is anticipated for the forthcoming season. As a result of this, there had been a modest increase in income via membership subscriptions and attendance money in 2022/23.

There had been no real increase in expenditure in the 2022/23 season, but HS commented that he anticipates an increase in expenditures for the forthcoming season given the current economic climate. Despite this, HS did not anticipate that an increase in membership fees was required at this stage.

A point was raised as to whether it would be possible to identify potential corporate sponsors from the local area to provide a short-term cash flow buffer, but this was not considered a necessity given the Club's current financial position.

Match Secretary (Bob Jones)

BJ reported that the Club had experienced a strong season, and in particular had won the Norfolk and Suffolk Cup for the second year in a row, represented in the finals by Mike Harris, Jaden Jermy, Mark le Vine, Jan Balogh, Steve Ruthen and Steve Lovell. BJ noted that it represented the strength of talent in the Club that the Club had been able to retain its title.

BJ also reported that the Club's team had placed first in the Division 1 of the Roger Goldsmith League, with the Club's Division 2 team also attaining joint first place. Whilst the Club's teams had not won any of the Bury Area Chess League or Suffolk League divisions, the Club's teams had been runners up in all divisions of these leagues.

Communications Officer (Steve Lovell)

SL noted that there are now over 100 recipients on the Club's mailing list, and whilst some of these may be members who are no longer active or have moved elsewhere, this still reflected the Club's growth in recent years.

SL has made enquiries about the potential for alternative payment methods for the £1 attendance fee, including obtaining a card reader or a device that takes mobile payments. Unfortunately, these options do not seem feasible for the foreseeable future, due to the financial and practical difficulties involved. It was agreed that the £1 attendance fee would continue to be collected in cash for the foreseeable future, and that cash was in fact a useful method to measure weekly attendance, as opposed to having to reconcile payments into the Club's bank account on a weekly basis to ascertain attendance numbers.

5. Election of Officers

Whilst Colin Roberts and Alan Watkins were not in attendance, neither had indicated a desire to step down from their positions. As such, all officers were re-elected and the committee is as follows:

- President – Steve Ruthen
- Club Secretary – Colin Roberts
- Match Secretary – Bob Jones
- Treasurer – Hugo Smith
- Safeguarding Officer – Bob Jones
- Communications Officer – Steve Lovell
- Events Officer – Alan Watkins
- Competitions Secretary – Vacant
- Ex Officio – Ed Player

6. League Matters

SL reported that the fees for the Suffolk League are anticipated to increase slightly in the forthcoming year. SL also noted that both the Suffolk League and the Bury Area Chess League are currently experiencing a shortage of staff/volunteers and invited anybody interested in assisting them to get in contact with either him or the relevant league.

There are no rule changes that have been reported for either the Bury Area Chess League or the Suffolk League for the forthcoming season.

7. Next Season

BJ circulated team lists and fixture dates for the forthcoming season and confirmed that he will email team captains soon with further information about the forthcoming season.

Action: BJ to contact team captains with further information regarding 23/24 season.

8. Any Other Business

Bury Knights

BJ reminded members that the Bury Knights meet from 6-8pm on Friday nights at the Moreton Hall Community Centre. BJ commented that there are a number of strong junior players in the Bury Knights, and that it would be helpful for adult members to attend to assist in coaching and playing some of the juniors.

Chess in High Point Prison

DP raised that SR and Laurie Pott have recently been attending High Point Prison under the auspices of Chess in School and Communities to provide chess tutoring to some of the inmates. SR commented that the sessions had been a great success so far, and that there were a number of strong players at the prison. DP enquired as to whether it might be possible for Club members to donate unwanted chess books/magazines to the Prison library, to which SR replied that this was a possibility as the Prison already has a library of both chess and non-chess material.

Close of Meeting: 8:01pm