

WECU Council Meeting - Saturday 1st June 2019

VenueBlackdown Garden Centre, W Buckland, Wellington. TA21 9HY

Present Kevin Markey (KM), President; Gerry Jepps(GJ), Deputy President; John Wheeler (JW), Hampshire; Jonathan Underwood (JU), Devon; Phil Meade (PM), Fixtures Secretary

1. Chairman's Welcome and Opening RemarksKM welcomed those present and extended thanks to Mark Hassall for providing a room for the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Guy Greenland (General Secretary), Bev Schofield (Junior Secretan/), Malcolm Steevens (Dorset), Mark Hassall (Jamboree Organiser), BobJones (Archivist and Publicity Officer), Oliver Wensley (Treasurer),

3. Approval of Minutes of the 2018 Council MeetingDraft minutes had been prepared by Guy Greenland. KM read out the draft minutes and these were agreed.

4. Matters ArisingThe WECU currently lacks a functioning web-site. It was agreed that, although it was preferable for WECU to have its own web-site, practically the best solution would be for a WECU section on a County web-site if an amenable host could be found. The meeting agreed in principle to continuing the previous practice of WECU making a contribution to the costs of a host web-site. JU offered to make enquiries as to whether the proposed new Devon web-site would be prepared to host a WECU section.

Action JU

5. Matters of Urgency Brought Forward by ChairmanKM raised the issue of the future of the ECF County Championship and the WECU County competitions. It was decided to defer consideration of this important topic to a future meeting as a notified agenda item.

6. Officers Reports

6.1 PresidentNothing to report

6.2 General Secretary

GG was unavoidably absent from the meeting and so there was no report.

6.3 Treasurer

Although the Treasurer was unable to attend, he had provided a summary of WECU's accounts for the period 01/04/2018 to 31/03/2019. The accounts were in balance (net loss for the year £1.14, although there were still some County fees outstanding) and there was no need for any change in subscriptions.

The Treasurer's report was accepted by the meeting.

6.4 Fixtures Secretary

The report had been circulated by PM prior to the meeting and is reproduced below for convenience:

(i) Review of 2018/2019 Inter-County Programme

DIVISION 1 (Harold Meek Trophy)

	CORN	DEVON	SOMS	Points	Posn
CORNWALL	xx	5	10	2	1/2
DEVON	11	xx	-	2	1/2
SOMERSET	6	-	xx	0	3

DIVISION 2 (Wayling Cup)

	CORN	DEVON	SOMS	Points	Posn
CORNWALL	xx	7	-	0	2/3
DEVON	9	xx	10	4	1
SOMERSET	-	6	xx	0	2/3

As the tables above indicate, county chess in the Union continues to decline. Gloucestershire, who have struggled to raise teams for the past few seasons, have lost more players and been forced to withdraw from the competition. We were almost reduced to two teams by the resignation of Somerset captain Roger Morgan only one year into his second stint at the job, a situation which caused me to offer my own resignation at the start of the season. Luckily Guy Greenland stepped in to enable Somerset to honour at least some of their fixtures, and we thank him for his efforts.

In Division 1 the match between Devon and Somerset was not played, which left Devon and Cornwall joint winners with two points each, with Devon retaining the Trophy on tie-break by virtue of having won their individual match. Devon also won Division 2 by beating both Cornwall and Somerset, while the match between the latter two counties was not played.

(ii) Progress of WECU Teams in National Stages 2019

Minor: Devon 8.5 Nottinghamshire 7.5

Under 180: Cornwall 5.5 Essex 10.5

Under 160: Devon 8 Nottinghamshire 8 (Nottinghamshire won on board count)

Under 140: Hampshire 5.5 Yorkshire 10.5

Cornwall had qualified for the Minor but opted, with ECF agreement, to play instead in the Under 180, which was undersubscribed.

Good luck to Devon 1, our sole survivor!

(iii) Proposed Inter-County Programme for 2019/20

As agreed at the Spring Executive Meeting, and assuming the same three counties enter next year, I have scheduled the six possible matches on different dates in the hope of getting all six played. I have tried to avoid any obvious clashes but am likely to be sympathetic to any requests for rearranged dates as long as these are earlier than the 2020 Spring Executive Meeting.

*Sun 15th Sep 2019? WECU Jamboree (but see note in Section 6.8 of these minutes)

Sat 5th Oct 2019 Cornwall 1 v Somerset 1

Sat 16th Nov 2019 Devon 2 v Somerset 2

Sat 7th Dec 2019 Somerset 1 v Devon 1

Sat 18th Jan 2020 Cornwall 2 v Devon 2

Sat 15th Feb 2020 Devon 1 v Cornwall 1

Sat 7 March 2020 Somerset 2 v Cornwall 2 (but see note at the end of this report)

*date to be set by Jamboree organiser

Entries for next season based on current information:

	DIV 1	DIV 2 (bds)	ECF National Stages						
			Open	Minor	U180	U160	U140	U120	U100
Cornwall	Yes	Yes 16		?	?				
Devon	Yes	Yes 16		Yes		Yes			
Dorset	No	No							
Gloucester	No	No							
Hampshire	No	No					Yes		
Somerset	Yes	Yes 16							
Wiltshire	No	No							

Cornwall have until 1st September to choose between Minor and Under 180 or not to enter the National Stages at all. Any other changes to the above are also required to be notified by 1st September.

It was noted by the meeting that the proposed date of 7th March clashed with the Exeter Congress. Subsequent to the meeting PM confirmed that there was no problem with re-scheduling to the 29th February.

There was some discussion as to whether Gloucestershire could be persuaded to re-enter. The problem is thought to be mainly a shortage of available players. JW agreed to approach the Bristol website to seek interest from Bristol players to play in a Gloucestershire county team.

Action JW

6.5 Congress Secretary

MS reported on the 2019 WECU Easter Congress. Matthew Turner had won the Open. The British Championship Place for 2019 went to Patryk Krzyzanowski and Dominic Mackle had also qualified from 2018 (deferred for a year).

Financially the Congress had been a disaster with insufficient numbers and a loss of over £1000. Room costs had also been higher than budgeted. Some of the decline in numbers was thought to be due to confusion over cancellation of the WECU Junior Championship with some potential players thinking it was the adult Championship that had been cancelled.

There are continuing problems with the Royal Beacon venue and the meeting decided that alternative venues should be investigated. JW offered to draft an email for KM to distribute to the Counties asking whether any County would consider hosting the Congress.

Action JJW/KM

6.6 Junior Activities

Unfortunately the 2019 WECU Junior Championship had had to be cancelled because of problems with the venue.

6.7 ECF Delegate

Roger Hardy was not at the Meeting so no report was available.

It was noted that ECF membership fees are due for a substantial above inflation increase. Fees are going to increase over two successive seasons as follows:

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Platinum	£70	£75	£80
Gold	£34	£39	£41
Silver	£23.50	£27	£30
Bronze	£16	£18	£20
Junior	£5	£6	£6

The ECF is also proposing to change from 3-figure grades updated every six months to 4-figure ELO-type grades updated every month. The current schedule is for trials of the new system to begin in January 2020 with a decision as to whether to definitely make the switch to be made in August 2020. If the switch is made, the first official grading list with ELO-type grades will be published in August 2021. Until then, the current-style grading list will be the one to use for all graded competitions.

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6.9 Archivist and Publicity Officer

A report had been submitted to the Spring Executive Meeting and a summary of activities was well received by the meeting.

8. Presentation of Prizes

Devon were presented with the Harold Meek and Wayling cups.

9. Election of Officers

KM proposed that all Officers were re-elected 'en-bloc'. However, GJ has completed his term as Deputy President. JU suggested that Malcolm Steevens be contacted to see if he was willing to take on the role (and subsequently that of President).

Action JU

An ECF delegate was also required. PM suggested asking Nigel Hoskyns.

Action KM

President - K. Markey

Deputy President - TBD

General Secretary - G Greenland

Treasurer - O Wensley

Junior Chess Secretary - Mrs B Schofield

Congress Secretary - TBD

Fixtures Secretary - P Meade

ECF Delegate - TBD

Jamboree Organiser - TBD

Archivist and Publicity Officer - R.Jones

10. Re-election of Vice - Presidents

All were re-elected unanimously:

J. Fewkes, I. George, Mrs F. Headlong, B. Hewson, D Jarrett, G. Jepps. R. Jones, , P.Meade, R. Rendell, M Steevens, L Walker, J Wheeler.

12. British Educational Trust Award 2019

No candidate submissions were presented at the meeting, but those present were encouraged to identify a candidate and let KM know by 1/12/2019.

13. Confirmation of dates for 2020

(i) Spring Executive - 21st March 2020

(ii) Council Meeting - 6th June 2020

14. Any Other Business

KM raised the issue of the future of the WECU and whether we need to hold two meetings each year. Both were deferred on the basis they were not an Agenda item, however it was agreed that future meetings could be cancelled if they were not required.

Meeting closed 4:15 pm.

G. Jepps

04/06/2019