

**Oxfordshire Chess Association
Extraordinary General Meeting
Tuesday 27 August at 7.30pm
Held at Simon King's House**

Present: Kevin Henbest (Oxford University), Roger Thetford (Didcot), Mike Truran (Witney), Simon King (Oxford City), Gerard O'Reilly (Cowley), Will Burt (Cowley)

- The meeting was called after request by three clubs in accordance with Article 2.5 of the Constitution.
- As at an AGM, each club has one vote.
- In the absence of the Association's chair Ian Bush, vice-chair Kevin Henbest took this role.

1. Apologies for Absence

Ian Bush (Cumnor), Steve Bennett (Cumnor), Steve Rumsby (Banbury), Rod Langham (Oxford City) and from the Cumnor, Banbury and Wantage clubs for being unable to send a representative.

2. Proposals to Resolve Issues Surrounding the Composition of the League for Season 2019–20

The Chair invited Mike Truran from Witney to give the background to his club's request to allow its second team to drop down to Division 2. He explained that they had had some difficulties last season running its Division 1 teams. In addition the club was expecting several players of top division calibre to be unavailable in the coming season. There was also some general discussion of whether there has been a general decline in league chess participation in recent times. The meeting then discussed and voted on the submitted proposals. These are attached in full to these minutes and briefly described below.

Proposal 1: A few years ago the Rules for competitions were separated from the Constitution. This has led to an anomaly, as an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) can no longer change the Rules (see Article 2.2). This proposal changes the Constitution so that an EGM can also change the Rules. This was proposed by Kevin Henbest, seconded by Simon King and passed unanimously.

Proposal 2: This is to clarify that the end of July deadline for proposals (Article 2.8) applies specifically to the AGM, as this is not currently made explicit. It was proposed by Gerard O'Reilly, seconded by Kevin Henbest

and passed unanimously.

Proposal 3: The purpose of this EGM is to deal promptly with an issue affecting league structure. At present, however, the Rules also specify that this can only take place at the AGM, so this proposal is to allow an EGM to change the league structure. This was proposed by Roger Thetford, seconded by Kevin Henbest and passed unanimously.

Proposal 4: This allows Witney 2 to give up its place in Division 1 next season and play in Division 2. It was proposed by Mike Truran, seconded by Gerard O'Reilly and passed unanimously.

Proposal 5: This gives the vacant position in Division 1 to the team (Didcot 1) which would ordinarily have been relegated. It was proposed by Gerard O'Reilly, seconded by Kevin Henbest and passed unanimously.

Proposal 6: This gave an alternative plan, the promotion of Banbury 2 to Division 1, only to be considered in the event that Proposal 5 was rejected.

3. Any Other Business

Roger Thetford asked if we should have some penalty for teams wishing to drop to a lower division, such as a points deduction or being ineligible to win the divisional trophy. This could be discussed further at the next May Committee Meeting.

With only five clubs able to attend this EGM, there was brief discussion of proxy votes at general meetings—these are not currently allowed by the Constitution.

Documents for the forthcoming AGM include versions of the Constitution and Rules with minor updates to deal with small inconsistencies. The changes made tonight will need to be added in to those documents.

Votes of thanks were made to Simon King for providing the venue for tonight's meeting and to Rod Langham for his work assembling the proposals that were considered.

The meeting closed at 8.31pm.

Will Burt (Minutes Secretary)

30 August 2019

Proposals for EGM to resolve issues surrounding the composition of the League for season 2019-20

The first two proposals are to change the Constitution so that an EGM may change both the Rules and the Constitution, in the same way as an AGM. These two proposals have been introduced following guidance from Gerard O'Reilly so that the EGM can proceed without falling foul of the current Constitution and Rules.

Proposal 1.

Articles 2.1 and 2.2 of the Constitution currently read:

"2.1 The OCA will operate according to the provisions of this Constitution and the Rules of the OCA League.

2.2 Changes to the constitution can be made only at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) or at an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)."

The EGM proposes to amend Article 2.2 of the Constitution to read:

"2.2 Changes to the Constitution **and/or the League Rules** can be made only at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) or at an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)."

Rationale: This follows advice from Gerard O'Reilly and Ian Bush that, as things stand, an EGM cannot change the League Rules but can change the Constitution; so the Constitution would have to first be suitably amended by the EGM to allow it to then proceed to alter the Rules, and thence the composition of the League.

Proposal 2.

Article 2.8 of the Constitution currently reads:

"2.8 Proposals to change or amend this Constitution or the League Rules must reach the Secretary by the end of July, and will be included on the Agenda for the AGM. The Secretary shall circulate them to the clubs by the end of the first week in August."

The EGM proposes to amend Article 2.8 of the Constitution to read

"2.8 Proposals **for the AGM** to change or amend this Constitution or the League Rules must reach the Secretary by the end of July and will be included on the Agenda for the AGM. The Secretary shall circulate them to the clubs by the end of the first week in August."

*Rationale: This follows guidance from Gerard O'Reilly: "Even though in the context of the Constitution the **intention** of the current Article 2.8 seems pretty clearly to refer specifically to preparations for the AGM, it is arguable that what it says is that **any** proposed rule changes must be with the Secretary by the end of July, etc. This proposal seeks to make clear what would otherwise be at best confusing. This amendment clarifies that Article 2.8 of the Constitution applies specifically to the AGM."*

The next proposal is for the EGM to change the Rules regarding setting the composition of the Leagues.

Proposal 3. (only to be considered if Proposals 1 and 2 are passed)

Article 1.1 of the Rules currently reads:

"1.1 The composition of the League will be decided at the AGM. After the AGM, late adjustments may be made by the Committee."

The EGM proposes to amend Article 1.1 of the Rules to read:

"1.1 The composition of the League will be decided at the AGM **or exceptionally at an EGM**. After the AGM, late adjustments may be made by the Committee."

Rationale: This change in the Rules – enabled by Proposals 1 and 2, is to allow the AGM or an EGM to set the composition of the League.

The following three Proposals concern the specific situation which has arisen for season 2019-20.

Proposal 4. (only to be considered if Proposal 3 is passed)

That, for the season 2019-20, Witney 2 be allowed to give up its place in Division 1 and play in Division 2.

Rationale: As Ian Bush has written "I've been contacted by Witney to say that they will not be able to run Witney 2 in Division 1 next season. The reason for this (as I understand it) is a lack of sufficient players to play in Division 1. As such they have asked if, instead of disbanding Witney 2, it can be relegated to Division 2. This is allowed by rule 1.2 where it states:

'1.2 In normal circumstances promotion and relegation of teams will be mandatory; however it may be necessary for other teams to be promoted or relegated in the interest of the League.'

Given that I think we can all agree that it is not in the interest of the League or Association for any team to disband if there is a way around it, we need to think how this problem should be addressed."

Proposal 5. (only to be considered if Proposal 4 is passed)

That the vacancy created in Division 1 by Proposal 4 be offered to the team which would ordinarily be relegated in the previous season from Division 1, i.e. Didcot 1.

Proposal 6. (only to be considered if proposal 4 is passed and Proposal 5 is not passed)

That the vacancy created in Division 1 by Proposal 4 be offered to the runner-up in Division 2, i.e. Banbury 2.

Rationale: These last two proposals are not given in any particular order of importance – there are arguments for this order and there are other arguments for putting Proposal 6 before Proposal 5. I have simply retained this order as the order which Ian Bush used in his initial email to all Committee members. Thus, Proposal 5 corresponds to Ian's option (b) and Proposal 6 corresponds to Ian's option (c). Staying with Ian's order should help to avoid confusion – although it seems only correct and fair that the EGM should consider both Proposals 5 and 6 before taking a vote on either.

Rod Langham
7th August 2019