



Minutes of Emergency Meeting of CS Executive

Sunday 6th August 10.15 am

Invited CS Exec + Junior Director (Home)

Agenda

1. Present: Alex McFarlane (Chair), Andy Howie, David Deary, Ian Brownlee. Also present was Harry Marron.
2. Information on the grant being offered by the British Govt were discussed. This grant has not yet been confirmed. However, from information received from the ECF it is unlikely that any of this money, reported at £500k will be available to Scotland or Wales.
3. It was agreed that members of the Scottish Parliament would be contacted with the intention of seeking similar treatment. A main list of MSPs holding posts relevant to promoting chess was constructed and a letter agreed. AH and DD would lead on this. Other identified MSPs would be contacted by CS members in their constituencies. (AH to identify potential members). In addition, all members would be asked to contact their MP or MSP on the matter. It was felt that production of a standard letter for members would be counter-productive as it is thought that multiple copies of identical letters have minimum impact. Members were asked to insert the following points into their letters
 - Be Individual letters. (Standard letters are normally binned!)
 - Mention English Grant
 - Ask if CS can receive similar treatment
 - Point out Junior Achievements primarily Louis & Freddy.
 - Mention REAL risk of some of the most promising transferring to England. Others losing motivation.

Players or, if appropriate, their parents are encouraged to go to surgeries held by MSPs and to raise the issue as an alternative to writing.

4. It was agreed that the main areas (not in order) for which funding should be sought were:
 - a) International
 - b) Junior/Schools
 - c) Senior/Social

The apparent reason for the Westminster Grant is to allow players to compete at International events. That obviously has to be confirmed. We need to sell this area. This might be the most difficult but some can be included in the other areas. My personal view is that we should be selling a whole package.

Junior & Schools – This should encompass all areas. Training for the top players but also establishing chess in schools (new curriculum) – Selling the educational advantages shown from this.



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Senior/social – This can include training for the Senior Team but also the community chess that I've been trying to push. Willingness to involve commercial partnerships. Keeping the brain active, sense of worth. Giving back to the community.

The meeting finished at 12.45pm.



Suggested points of contact

Cabinet Position	Minister
First Minister AH	Humza Yousaf (Glasgow Pollok)
Health & Social Care DD	Michael Matheson (Falkirk West)
Education & Skills AH	Jenny Gilruth (Mid Fife & Glenrothes)
Wellbeing	Neil Gray (Airdrie & Shotts)
Culture DD	Angus Robertson (Edinburgh Central)
Social Justice	Shirley-Anne Somerville (Dunfermline)
Others	
Public Health/Women's Health	Jenni Minto (Argyll & Bute)
Social Care/Mental Wellbeing/Sport	Maree Todd (Caithness, Sutherland & Ross)
Children/Young People	Natalie Don (Renfrewshire North & West)
Further Education?	Graeme Dey (Angus South)
Culture	Christina McKelvie (Hamilton, Larkhall & Stonehouse)
Equalities/Refugees	Emma Roddick (Highlands & Islands)

Committee	Chair
Education, Children and Young People Committee	Sue Web (Lothian) Stephanie Callaghan (Uddingston & Bellshill) AMcF
Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee	Kaukab Stewart (Glasgow Kelvin)
Health, Social Care and Sport Committee	Clare Haughey (Rutherglen)
Social Justice and Social Security Committee AH	Collette Stevenson (E Kilbride)

The following could also be approached

Secy of State for Scotland: Alister Jack (Dumfries & Galloway)

Shadow Secy of State: Ian Murray (Edinburgh South)

Leader of SNP: Stephen Flynn (Aberdeen South)

Leader of Lib/Dems: Christine Jardine (Edinburgh West)



Draft Letter to MSPs from CS

Dear x,

You may be aware that the Westminster government has agreed to give the English Chess Federation a grant of £500,000 over the next two years. This is designed to enable English players to compete against the best in the world.

You may not however be aware of the extraordinary progress that Scottish Junior players are making this year. This is despite Scotland being one of only four countries in Europe without government funding.

Louis Cheng is the World U-8 Blitz Champion. He also finished Second in the World U-8 Rapidplay.

Supratit Banerjee was 3rd in the U-10 Rapidplay.

Freddy Gordon at the age of 12 had achieved the FM title. This is the third highest title available to adult chess players.

In their age groups we have the following on the August world rankings:

Age	Name	Standard	Rapid	Blitz
Age 8 (b. 2015)	Louis Cheng	40 th	3 rd	5 th
Age 9 (b. 2014)	Supratit Banerjee 2 nd	2 nd	5 th	4 th
	Rithvik Deepak Ambattu	3 rd	10 th	6 th
	Tavish Railwani 37 th	37 th	68 th	69 th
Age 12 (b. 2011)	Rishi Vijayakumar	97 th	73 rd	-
Age 13 (b. 2010)	Freddy Waldhausen Gordon	31 st	44 th	6 th

Scotland is also recognised as having some of the top arbiters (referees) in the world, performing at the highest levels. Andy Howie is a FIDE Fair Play Commissioner and has officiated in that capacity at the World Championship. Alex McFarlane has also been an arbiter at top events and leads the FIDE Arbiters' Education Team. Both train others in their area of expertise.

These achievements have all been made without any significant support other than from those parents who can afford to do so. Unfortunately, this means that some have had to forgo these opportunities.

There is an additional problem that the English Chess Federation has no restriction on its nationality requirements, unlike Chess Scotland. This means that we are in danger of players changing their nationality to England to benefit from this new funding.

However, Chess Scotland does not just care about elite chess players. We have been working on a plan to develop chess in the community with afternoon chess clubs for the more mature in years and



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unemployed. These clubs are aimed at new and inexperienced chess players who will hopefully benefit from the social interaction and mental stimulation.

We are also looking at training players with free time and also some from our community scheme to go into schools and help run clubs. There is plenty of evidence indicating the advantages to pupil performance and behaviour from research studying the advantages to children of playing chess.

Indeed, chess could easily fit into the upcoming education reforms that are being considered.

[10 Things Chess Does To Your Brain | Science Times](#)

[\(PDF\) Chess Practice as a Protective Factor in Dementia \(researchgate.net\)](#)

Chess Scotland is committed to creating a culture which is fair, treats others as they would wish to be treated, shows respect for differences in race, ethnic origin, religion, faith, marital status, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, social and educational background and one where all forms of diversity are valued.

A huge advantage to chess is that there are no barriers to participation. Everyone is able to compete on a level playing field. Even if housebound, playing on the Internet is possible. At tournaments it is common to see a 7 year old competing against a 70 year old.

Chess in Scotland needs financial support to achieve the goals that we are setting. Obviously, it would be great to receive government funding as the English Chess Federation has. If that can be made available it would be well used but other support can be given. We seek advice from MSP's on sources of funding available and offer support when applying for it.

If you are willing to help then we would be pleased to meet with you or to provide you with further details of our plans.