

NORTHERN COUNTIES CHESS UNION FOUNDED 1899

Minutes
of the for NCCU Council Meeting held on 12th January 2025
via ZOOM
starting at 8.00 p,m,

Those attending were

Tim Wall	President, Northumberland representative
Steve Mann	Acting Secretary, Treasurer, Webmaster
Bryan Bainbridge	County Controller, Durham representative
David Kilmartin	Trophy Officer
Mick Norris	Rating Officer
Sarah Longson	Cheshire representative
Donna Chadwick	Greater Manchester representative
Richard Walsh	Lancashire representative
Andy Wainwright	Yorkshire representative

(The meeting was technically inquorate, though that does not prevent business being transacted.
See NCCU Constitution paragraph 7.)

1. Apologies for Absence

Mick Riding (Durham)

2. **Minutes of the NCCU AGM 2024** had been circulated beforehand and were accepted.

3. **Matters Arising from the Minutes** not otherwise covered below - none raised.

4. Officers' Reports:

President (Tim Wall)

?

General Secretary (Steve Mann) - report circulated earlier said,

"There seems nothing to report which is not covered elsewhere in the agenda or covered earlier on the website. For the acting secretary himself, the two critical worries at present are the lack of progress in transferring control of NCCU finances to the new treasurer elected at the AGM (agendum 04.3), and the need for new officers (agendum 10)."

Treasurer (Steve Mann) - a detailed report had been submitted before the meeting, key points of which were:

All the previous treasurer's records had evidently been thrown out by his relatives.

The necessary documentation to instate the new treasurer had been submitted to Santander, but the bank was less than helpful, supplying contradictory information and asking for highlighted items on follow-up paperwork to be filled in when no items were actually highlighted.

All that aside, they seemed not to accept "proof of identity" other than documents including either a passport or a driving licence, neither of which the new treasurer has ever possessed.

It was reported that Lancashire had had similar problems lasting a year.

Balances in the three accounts were/are as follows

Account	As at 30/04/2023	As at 05/12/2024
Current	1,162.42	
Deposit*	475.67	
NMS*	742.67	762.22

* interest bearing - at same very low rate

Consequently it has decided to look into opening an account with a different bank, with Mick Norris, Tim Wall and Steve Mann as likely signatories, and with Mick Norris doing initial spadework.

County Championships Organiser (Bryan Bainbridge - assisted by Mick Norris)

The Open section was to be held 4-team Jamboree (3 rounds) on 2nd February 2025.

In the Under 2050, after three matches Greater Manchester were in the lead, the remaining 3 matches being due to be played one on 16th Feb and two on 16th March.

In the Under 1850, only two matches had been played, with Merseyside the only team on 110%, and three matches scheduled for 19th January, 26th January and 9th March respectively. Merseyside v Yorkshire had yet to be scheduled.

In the Under 1650, two of the three matches had been played and all hinged on the Yorks, v Lancs, match scheduled for 16th March. Greater Manchester were well-placed to win.

The Under 1450, after initially being mooted before the September captain's meeting as a 4-team Jamboree involving only three counties with two team from one, had later been replanned at the captains' meeting as a 4-team Jamboree (3 rounds) on 9th March 2025. Unfortunately, the decision of the September Captains' meeting had not reached Donna Chadwick of Gr.

Manchester, as full details had not at that point appeared on LMS as pairings were at that point available.

Post-meeting comment: LMS now showing all details.

Club Championship Organiser (Tim Wall)

One inquiry had been received from David Mills of Hull, but this event, which had not been run since 2017, did not seem viable when competing with for time and administrative resources with the county matches and regeneration in some of the counties. Tim recommended these events be left in obedience.

Trophy Officer (Dave Kilmartin)

A number of the trophies are in poor condition, and there is the consideration that some are named after the old grade-limited county competition sections as opposed to the newer rating-limited events, and Dave Kilmartin suggested 5 new trophies might be purchased. Tim Wall thought the old trophies should be kept for the historic information they carry, but it was suggested new trophy should be purchased and the old trophies nevertheless retained for their value as historic records. Research would be initiated re the new trophy option. It was suggested applying for ECF grass-root funding might be feasible, which matter was left in the hands of the Trophy Officer, Richard Walsh and Andrew Wainwright, the latter two having regional administrative responsibilities for ECF grassroot funding.

Webmaster (Steve Mann)

In a written report provided before the meeting, the webmaster reported:

"The website should in itself be explanatory.

Mick Norris passes on snippets of information from time to time.

I aim to advertise impending congress etc and give results. These can of course be found elsewhere, but pulling them together in one place can only help albeit only slightly.

My method of covering inter-county matches has the advantage over LMS of keeping all matches along with result tables for a given section all in one place, as in the style of various organisations' paper bulletins of the past.

I would not expect any future webmaster to do the same. Most modern websites provide hyperlinks to other site, saving work for the webmaster but necessitating endless mouse clicks on the part of the reader!

ECF Delegate (Tim Wall)

Tim Wall reported that the last ECF meeting was relatively uneventful, but mentioned the ECF Grassroot funding initiative.

5. Congress(es) for NCCU Individuals 2025 and NCCU British Qualifying place 2025

It was agreed the NCCU Individual Championships (open-age Championship proper, Seniors', and Junior) with attendant qualifying place which attached to the open-age Championship should be granted to Cheshire & North Wales, which was the next county on the alphabetic rota, at the Cheadle event in early February.

Post-meeting comment: When it was realised this was a week-day event during most schools' termtime, it was decided the Junior Championship should be reallocated, and Cumbria were approached regarding the South Lakes congress expected in June.

6. Pennine Cup 2024-25

Adam Scoular of Greater Manchester was organising this on Sunday 23 February at Fletcher Hall, Swinton, Greater Manchester, the same venue as last season. Andrew Wainwright expressed dissatisfaction with the date, saying it clashed with the Doncaster Congress and that consequently Yorkshire might not be able to field a team. The President reminded the meeting that the congestion of the calendar had already been alluded to.

7. BCET School Award 2025

A nomination for NCCU to submit to the British Chess Education Trust for a BCET School Award 2025 was due from **Cheshire & N Wales** (as per AGM minutes item 10). Sarah Longson said she could meet this, having a Stockport school in mind. Steve Mann undertook to supply details in due course. (Invitation from BCET no expected until end January.)

8. NCCU School Award 2025

A nomination is due from **Durham** for the NCCU School Award 2025 (as per AGM minutes item 10). Durham could not come up with anything it was decided to pass the option to the next county on the alphabetic rota, which, pre-empting the next item, was deemed to be Greater Manchester. Steve Mann undertook to contact GM with appropriate info.

9. Greater Manchester or Manchester Chess Federation

As the right to nominate schools for the above two awards, and also, when it arises, to nominate a candidate to be the next NCCU President, we needed to be clear by what name "Manchester" is to feature in the three rotas: beginning either with "G" or with "M". Decision made under item 8.

10. Succession Planning

A paper outlining how few people are doing too many jobs had been circulated, one crucial point being that a local league level potential new officers in local clubs are well known, but the NCCU secretary cannot have this grass-root knowledge. A proposed strategy was to contact counties ahead of their AGMs requesting counties address the question.

11. Date and Venue of Next Meeting (i.e. AGM 2025)

In view of the potentially full calendar and the currently unknown variable, this was to be addressed by consultation between Messrs Wall and Mann.

12. Any Other Business

None

Meeting closed at 9.48 p.m.