

Meeting Details:

Whangarei Chess Club Inaugural Meeting

23/09/2026

Bridge Club venue, Whangarei

Attendance:

Ben Firestone, Jeremy Browne, Jasper Hewelett -Coffey, Noah Hewlett-Coffey, Vito Sperber, Brian Cox, Kim Nguyen, Bernard Philbrick, Joachim Prinsloo, Albert Onrubia, Leonix Mackie, Matthew Henshaw,

Apologies:

Diyon Basnayaka, Bronwyn Bayne,

Feedback RE inaugural Rapid

Key Highlights and Issues: Feedback from recent chess sessions was discussed. Members found the sessions overall positive. One concern raised was the lack of a separate category for junior players; however, this worked out well as there were insufficient junior players to warrant a meaningful separate division. Some parents unable to attend tonight provided similar feedback. It was noted that the playing area became loud at times between games, and some adult language was overheard by younger attendees.

Questions Raised and Responses: Discussion occurred regarding potential solutions for junior players, including an optional earlier start time with short coaching sessions and casual or rapid games, allowing juniors to stay later if they wished to play with more advanced players. This would require commitment of sufficient junior numbers and volunteers willing to facilitate education sessions.

Decisions or Directions Given: Housekeeping rules to be implemented including minimal talking in the playing area during games, with designated areas for analysis and casual games. Members to be mindful of language around younger players.

Calendar Review

Presenter: Meeting facilitator

Key Highlights and Issues: A proposed calendar for the remainder of 2026 was presented. The Spring Rapid tournament will commence next week, with the coaching session moved to 04/11/2026 to serve as an explanatory night for 960 rapid format. A prize giving for four tournaments is planned for the first week of December along with social chess. A 2027 calendar was also presented, designed to align with school holidays with 44 weeks of activity including four regular rapid tournaments per season, one 960 tournament, two classical tournaments including a club championship,

structured education sessions, Grim Reaper blitz variant events, a rapid championship, and six weeks of social chess. The club will shut down from early December to early February as a cost-saving measure and to accommodate exam periods and summer leave.

Decisions or Directions Given: Calendar approved with adjustments as discussed.

Strategic Items:

Incorporation and New Zealand Chess Federation Affiliation

Background and Context: Discussion regarding incorporation as a society and affiliation with the New Zealand Chess Federation. From February 2026, anyone competing in a rated event must be a member of an affiliated club and a member of the New Zealand Chess Federation. Affiliation would allow the club to have a say in New Zealand Chess matters, be advertised on the New Zealand Chess Federation website, and access grants for equipment. Games played in classic or rapid tournaments could be Chess Federation rated, providing members with an initial rating for external competition.

Options Presented: Annual membership fee of \$60 for club membership plus \$25 for New Zealand Chess Federation membership, totalling \$85 per year. Alternative option of \$5 monthly payment for New Zealand Chess Federation membership available for casual attendees or those on the fence.

Discussion Summary: Members expressed support for incorporation and New Zealand Chess Federation affiliation. Auckland tournaments were noted as accessible for members wishing to compete, and having a New Zealand Chess Federation or FIDE rating would be beneficial. Potential to host a FIDE-rated rapid tournament in Whangarei in 2027 or 2028 was discussed. The Blackburn Cup interclub hybrid tournament was explained, which involves over-the-board and online play between clubs around New Zealand.

Resolution and Decision: Unanimous agreement to proceed with incorporation and New Zealand Chess Federation affiliation.

Membership Fees and Funding

Background and Context: Venue rental costs approximately \$2,200 per year. Target membership of approximately 40 people to achieve sustainable funding at \$60 annual fee. Some flexibility may be required initially to build membership numbers.

Options Presented: Annual fee of \$60 for club membership. Full annual payment for remainder of 2026 with payments restarting in February to build reserve funds.

Discussion Summary: Members supportive of proposed fee structure. Jeremy confirmed that Henderson Reeves Lawyers will donate \$1,000 once the club has a bank account established this calendar year. Resolution and Decision: Annual membership fee of \$60 plus \$25 New Zealand Chess Federation membership approved.

Constitution

Background and Context: A draft constitution based on the New Zealand Chess Federation template was circulated. Jeremy had reviewed the document.

Options Presented: Minor amendment proposed to the committee section on page six to clarify that a majority of the committee must be members of the society or the parent or guardian of a member, allowing interested parents to participate without requiring them to be paying members.

Discussion Summary: Members reviewed the constitution and amendment.

Resolution and Decision: Constitution approved with amendment.

Committee Formation

Background and Context: A committee of minimum three members is required for incorporation.

Discussion Summary: Four members volunteered for the committee. Ben (President), Brian, Bernard, Matthew

Resolution and Decision: Four committee members confirmed.

Bank Account

Background and Context: Bank account required for incorporation. Can be single signatory.

Discussion Summary: Current bank account to continue temporarily. Funds to be transferred to new club bank account once incorporated. Membership form to be updated with correct bank account details.

Resolution and Decision: Proceed with current arrangements pending incorporation.

Action Register:

Incorporate as a society and register bank account. Membership form to be sent via email by end of this week or next week for initial members to complete. Spring Rapid tournament to commence next week with 25+5 time control format. Coaching session moved to 04/11/2026. Annual General Meeting to be held around this time next year.

Next Meeting:

Next week for Spring Rapid tournament. Annual General Meeting around September 2027.