

Trust Board Meeting Minutes – Part A

19:30 – 27th April 2015, St James Park –Courtney Room

Trustees Present:

Laurence Overend (LO), Martin Weiler (MW), Peter Holding (PH), Neil Le Milliere (NLM), Elaine Davis (ED), David Hitt (DH), Richard Clutterbuck (RC); John Kanefsky, Linden Bray (LB)

Officers Present:

Andy Beer, Nick Hawker

Guests:

Roger Doidge, Byll Pulman, Bernadette Coates, Spike Sussex, Simon Yates, Douglas Gillard

A/01 Apologies

Alice Cooke, Peter Martin

A/02 Approval of Minutes from the 4th March 2015

Acceptance of Minutes

Proposed by: Elaine Davis

Seconded by: Peter Holding

Carried

A/03 Actions Arising

RC reported that the Corporation Tax had been paid but that a significant refund was due but as yet not received;

NLM would be replacing LB at forthcoming event at the Emirates aimed at people wanting a career in football;

NLM asked about the status of the foundation. NH said that this would be set aside for the next meeting.

A/05 (i) Members proposal regarding Paul Tisdale (promoted from 'Any Other Business')

Member Byll Pulman explained that the first 5 years of Club management by Paul Tisdale had been a he success. More recently however, this had not been the case with a series of poor home performances. The member wished to judge what support Paul Tisdale had amongst members of the Supporters Trust. His proposal was:

I propose that the Board of Exeter City Supporters' Trust carry out a ballot of its entire membership, to discover how many members wish to see Paul Tisdale's managership of Exeter City FC come to an end. If this ballot returns a majority in favour of him leaving his position, the Trust, through its representation on the Board of Directors of Exeter City FC, should ask for Mr Tisdale's resignation.

In this instance, should Mr Tisdale be unwilling to resign without a financial penalty being incurred by the club and if that penalty be deemed unaffordable by the trust representatives on the board of directors, they should immediately seek a renegotiation of Mr Tisdale's terms of employment, in order to place him on a fixed term, performance related contract of employment.

A detailed debate covered opinions around the return rate of the survey conducted by the Member; how views might differ between HOME and AWAY fans; the apparent lack of any 'performance management' at the Club; the difficulty in engaging prospective younger supporters; perceptions around Paul Tisdale's contract; and the general feeling around the Club this year as opposed to previsouly.

The TB members expressed concerns around the proposal and in particular, whether this was the right time for such a proposal. The Member was assured that the issue would be raised at the next Club Board meeting but that currently it was not deemed appropriate to take the matter any further. However, the TB thanked the Member for the proposal and for the concern and interest taken in.

Proposal not to submit the Members Proposal to the Membership

Proposed by: Neil Le Milliere

Seconded by: David Hitt

Carried

A/04 Reports from Sub-Board & Working Groups

i. Finance & Governance

PH reported that the Trust accounts were in a 'much better place'. He noted that Mike Braund, who had worked extensively on the accounts, was not interested in a governance role but more so in account reconciliation. A Finance Officer therefore, would be sought.

Two principle concerns were raised and would require further investigation:

- a. The 1931 Fund Payments &
- b. Payments to the Club

PH reported that half of the short term loan (Trust to Club) had now been repaid (£30k) and that a second amount should be paid in August 2015.

PH referred to his submitted reports for other matters.

ii. Trust Ownership & Membership

ED reported that new Trust Membership forms were in production in terms of their design. David Treharne, it was reported, was to present a paper on Corporate Membership in due course. It was also reported that players would be asked to sign up to the Trust as part of their 'Induction' process.

The next Trust Forum was in the planning and LO said that he would ask Gary Haylock to present to Members.

ED referred to his submitted reports for other matters.

iii. Community

PF reported that he was conducting a volunteer survey and noted the numerous initiatives being jointly undertaken with the University of Exeter.

There was some difficulty this year in finding volunteers for the Respect Festival but more work was being done on this.

PF brought to the Trust's attention the probable creation of a former players association.

PF referred to his submitted reports for other matters.

iv. PR & Communications

AB referred to the considerable assistance being provided by Member Bernadette Coates whilst another Member, Paul Hibberd, was to revamp the Trust WEB site and our Social Media efforts around FACEBOOK and TWITTER.

LO asked on the progress of the new Comms group. DH noted that another meeting was due but that AC was currently away. They required a calendar of 'things to do'.

JK had produced a paper on the future of Trust Contributions stating that we (the TB) should develop our role in using the money forthcoming from subscriptions in a planned approach. This led to a number of comments and debate around the purchase of Club shares and capital/revenue projects. A Member present suggested that there was a misconception among some members that the Trust held a 'money trough' that the 'suits could dig into'. Another Member present suggested that both the Club and Trust were vulnerable to the extent that we relied on volunteers and challenged if the 'Grimes money' was an opportunity for change. There was clearly more thought and work to be done around this topic.

A/05 Any Other Business

ii. **Living Wage**

NLM asked if the Trust supported the notion of the Living Wage whilst ED challenged if this could be met through the trusts current contribution to the Club.

PH asked exactly what we were proposing; to support he 'Living Wage' or to move towards it, which would come at a cost.

Proposal that the Trust believe, as a matter of principle, to pay the 'Living Wage'

Proposed by: Neil Le Milliere

Seconded by: Paul Farley

For: 4

Against: 6

iii. **Supporters Direct Summit**

Both JK and PM expressed interest in attending the summit this year, entry to which would be paid for by the Trust. NLM would already be attending in his capacity of an SD Board Member. It was noted that Trust member David Treharne would also be attending.

iv. **Trust Rules – Update on AGM Requirements**

LO details his concerns on the current rule changes in as much as they were contradictory. However, the rules as proposed and accepted at the previous AGM must be submitted to the FCA for approval. **NH to action.**

v. **Trust Vision & Strategy**

DH stated that this had been a difficult process that had produced an excellent document with good targets in place to follow up on.

Proposal that the document is approved, published, and reviewed every 6 months:

Proposed by: David Hitt

Seconded by: Paul Farley

Carried

vi. **The purchase of ground rollers for the Club**

PH referred to a document that he had distributed with respect to this. The state of the Cat & Fiddle pitches had resulted in training taking place at the University which in turn had resulted in player injuries. The Club required 2 rollers that would harden the soft playing pitch.

DH commented that since part of the argument was to create better football results should this be deemed a loan? ED replied that we should 'give' this money, RC agreed.

LO questioned why this matter had suddenly arisen (e.g. this season as opposed to last).

Proposal that the Trust Purchase 2 Rollers @£15k:

Proposed by: Peter Holding

Seconded by: Elaine Davis

For: 9

Against: 1

Carried

vii. **Policies & Procedures**

NH stated that he was currently compiling an 'up to date' library of existing Trust policies and procedures. These would be distributed in due course for review and approval.

viii. **Club Commercial WEB Site Update**

This was making good progress and would be 'live' soon.

Date of Next Meeting: Monday 22nd June, 6.30 pm.