



Board Meeting (virtual)

MINUTES

7pm – 10 October 2023

Present: Ian Bennett (IB), Paul Smith (PS), Tom Scott (TS), Peter Bradbury (PB), Richard Marsh (RM), David Lee (DL), Phiroze Mackenzie (PM)

Apologies: Neil Seepujak (NS)

Guests in attendance: Jim (Sheff Cam); Emma Partridge (EP) and Bethany Patrick (BP), both representing the SWFC Women's Supporters Group

A social session with Jim (Sheff Cam) took place prior to the start of the meeting, which covered Jim's YouTube channel and some general SWFC / football chat. The formal part of the meeting started at 8pm and Clive Betts MP (CB) joined the meeting at 8pm.

Minute		Action
1.0	<p>Meeting with Clive Betts MP</p> <p>PS introduced those present from the Trust and guests in attendance to CB. CB explained that he had got in touch with the Trust as he shared the Trust's concerns regarding the comments made by the Club's Chairman in his recent statement. CB also stated that it had been helpful that the Trust had raised these concerns, which effectively gives notice to the Chairman that people are watching him.</p> <p>CB stated that he knows senior figures at the FSA and the EFL and has worked with them very closely on the need to reform football finances. It was noted that CB spoke alongside Kevin Miles (Chief Executive, FSA) and Rick Parry (Chairman, EFL) at the EFL conference earlier this year.</p> <p>CB stated that he had spoken with John Nagle (Head of Policy, EFL) and Rick Parry over the weekend just gone and they are both aware of the Chairman's statement. CB stated that, at this stage, the EFL doesn't have a concern that the Chairman is going to cut funding to the Club altogether and there is no indication that the Chairman isn't going to honour the financial agreements that the Club submitted to the EFL, although the EFL will closely monitor the situation.</p> <p>CB stated that he had been working with Stuart Andrew MP regarding the Fan Led Review and the related White Paper, which is expected to come through in future legislation covering the finance and governance of football clubs, including the introduction of an independent regulator, the distribution of funding in the football pyramid and requirements to publicly consult with relevant fan groups.</p> <p>In response to a question from RM, CB stated that when the legislation comes into force, it is likely that fan groups will have to demonstrate that they are true representative bodies of a club's fanbase; this could include having good membership numbers and perhaps one step could be for established groups to work in partnership via an 'umbrella' arrangement.</p>	

	<p>A short discussion took place regarding the fan groups that were currently represented on the Club's Engagement Panel, noting that the Women's Supporters Group, Rainbow Owls and the Armed Forces Supporters Club have recently been invited to join the Panel. It was noted that the Trust has not been part of the Panel since mid-2021; in addition, it was generally agreed that any hint of criticism / challenge of the Club can lead to the exclusion of a fan group from the Panel.</p> <p>CB agreed to contact Kevin Miles to seek guidance on an appropriate way to develop relationships between fan groups (i.e. so that fan representation is more collaborative / comprehensive) in anticipation of the legislative changes.</p> <p>RM stated that he had written to the licensing team at Sheffield City Council to establish whether the Trust could get involved with the local Safety Advisory Group. CB agreed to contact the Executive Director of the licencing team to follow this up. PS is to provide a copy of RM's email to CB as reference.</p> <p>CB stated that he would be happy to keep in touch with the Trust and provide updates as necessary (e.g. from the EFL). In response to a question from PS, CB confirmed that he is comfortable with the Trust publicly stating that CB has met with the EFL and talked with the FSA and continues to work on issues relating to the Club in the interests of the Club and its supporters.</p> <p><i>CB and EP left the meeting; the meeting adjourned at 8:35pm and resumed at 8:40pm</i></p>	<p>CB</p> <p>CB PS</p>
<p>2.0</p>	<p>Minutes of previous meetings</p> <p>The Minutes from the Board meeting held on 20 September 2023 were approved. PS is to send the Minutes to TS for loading to the website.</p> <p>The notes from the meeting held with Jane Hughes (EFL Network Manager) from the FSA on 30 September 2023 were noted.</p>	<p>PS</p>
<p>3.0</p>	<p>Action log</p> <p>The following items were briefly considered:</p> <p><i>List of community groups / key stakeholders:</i> TS is to contact the University students to (a) establish whether they collated the list and (b) to provide feedback regarding their work for the Trust.</p> <p><i>Conflicts of interest document:</i> PS is to create this document within the next few weeks and then ask Directors to declare any conflicts so that the document can be populated.</p> <p><i>'Thank you' gifts for Miranda Clark and Victoria Shin:</i> IB is to arrange for suitable gifts to be sent to Miranda and Victoria.</p> <p><i>Incorporating the ladies' section into the Club:</i> RM is aware of one other club where the women's teams are not incorporated in the club and will circulate a note on this.</p> <p>It was noted that all other 'in progress' and 'outstanding' items were to be considered later on the agenda.</p>	<p>TS</p> <p>PS</p> <p>IB</p> <p>RM</p>

<p>4.0</p>	<p>Chair's update</p> <p>IB stated that he was pleased with the outcomes from the recent meeting with the FSA and the completion of the Trust's first mural. It was also noted that there has been an increase in followers on X (formerly Twitter) and a few new members.</p>	
<p>5.0</p>	<p>Secretary's update</p> <p>It was noted that PB and PM had provided a short bio each. TS is to upload these to the Trust's website.</p> <p>It was noted that James Silverwood and Jenni Smith (both former Board members) have recently expressed interest in returning to the Board. TS stated that James had provided some 'quick thoughts' for an 'action group' on a short document and that Jenni could be willing to help the Trust in a communications support capacity. TS is to follow this up.</p>	<p>TS</p> <p>TS</p>
<p>6.0</p>	<p>FSA update</p> <p>It was noted that the EFL had acknowledged receipt of the email from the Trust, dated 1 October 2023, following the Trust's meeting with the FSA on 30 September 2023.</p> <p>PS stated that a non-member had provided a document which provided some commentary regarding the forthcoming Independent Regulator for English Football (IREF) and the potential impact for the Club. The document was noted as a helpful summary for the Trust's records.</p>	
<p>7.0</p>	<p>Diversity / inclusion update</p> <p>BP stated that the SWFC Women's Supporters Group formed at the end of the 2022-23 season and have monthly meetings. It was noted that the group raises money for Mums In Need and recently set up a fundraiser for the Bradley Lowery Foundation following the home match against Sunderland. BP also mentioned the processes that are in place to report discrimination on match days.</p> <p>BP stated that the group's members have identified that they want to support Anti-Bullying Week, Mental Health Awareness Week and looking to work with the Club regarding an event to support International Women's Day. In addition, BP stated that the group has also worked with Sean Graves from the SWFC Community Programme.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Trust would look to support the Women's Supporters Group where possible (e.g. bucket collections on match days), and vice versa.</p> <p>DL suggested that CB could be asked to provide some guidance on diversity and inclusion generally. DL is to draft a note for sending to CB; BP offered to assist with this.</p> <p>In response to a question from RM, BP stated that Lauren Allen had been in contact with David Higgins (Chair at SWFC Ladies) a couple of months ago with a view to the Supporters Group and SWFC Ladies working in collaboration. A brief discussion followed regarding the integration of SWFC Ladies with the Club and the potential opportunities this presents given the growth of the women's game.</p> <p><i>RM left the meeting</i></p>	<p>DL</p>

<p>8.0</p>	<p>Treasurer's update</p> <p>PB provided the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During August, there were 4 new members and 40 renewals, leading to a surplus of £295 in the month (£468 YTD). • Cash reserves stand at £11,366 at 31 August 2023. • The September update is nearly complete, with a loss of £1,012 during the month, mainly due to c£900 paid for the Jose Semedo mural. • There were 5 new members in September and 9 new members in October to date. • The handover of Treasurer duties from Matthew Millward is nearly complete and PB has full control of the bank account. PB is to arrange for some of the signing responsibility to PS (i.e. payments over £100). • PB is to arrange for a debit card for the bank account and let TS know when this has been done (so that the existing card in Steve Walmsley's name can be destroyed). • PB is now in full control of the PayPal account. <p>PB is to arrange for a list of new members (from recent months) to be sent to DL so that pin badges can be issued to the new members.</p> <p>PM proposed that a lower membership fee could help to increase numbers and that an 'associate' or 'e-member' option could be introduced at no cost. PM is to do some research on this and make a formal proposal to the Board.</p>	<p>PB</p> <p>PB</p> <p>PB</p> <p>PM</p>
<p>9.0</p>	<p>Communications update</p> <p>TS stated that he is due to meet with the individual that has offered to help the Trust do a website refresh, which will include a member log-in area.</p> <p>The results of the recent member survey were considered, noting that there had been 127 responses, which gave support to further murals, a member log-in area on the website and communication with members at least once a month. TS is to contact Paul Wells regarding his offer to sponsor the creation of a Fred Spikesley mural through his company. In addition, DL is to contact the 13 members that have expressed an interest in helping with the match day stalls.</p> <p>TS is to consider options for recruiting someone to produce content for the Trust's social media platforms.</p>	<p>TS</p> <p>DL</p> <p>TS</p>
<p>10.0</p>	<p>Community update</p> <p>Regarding stalls at home match days, DL stated that estimated costings are c£2k per stall. With DL's help, PB is to draft some more precise costings for approval by the Board. IB stated that he had been in touch with the owner of Beer Off (near the Kop End) regarding storage for the stalls.</p> <p>TS stated that the Beres factory (on Herries Road) and another party have expressed interest in doing a mural. It was noted that the Beres opportunity is at ground level, off-road and has a fence around it.</p> <p>Regarding an 'Evening With...' event, IB stated that The Railway is comfortable with the Trust hosting events (at no cost, but with a minimum number of attendees c75-100). IB is to provide a proposal for the next Board meeting.</p>	<p>PB</p> <p>IB</p>

11.0	Next meeting It was agreed to hold the next meeting via Zoom on Tuesday 7 November 2023 at 7:30pm. IB is to invite Adam from the SWFC Armed Forces Supporters Club to the meeting. The meeting closed at 10pm.	IB
-------------	---	----