

SWANSEA CITY SUPPORTERS TRUST BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Monday, 3rd November 2016 at Liberty Stadium, Swansea commencing at 5.40pm.

Present:

Phil Sumbler, Will Morris, Stuart McDonald, Alan Lewis, Cath Dyer, Andy Godden, Ian James, Barbara Cook, Viv Brooks, Viv Williams, Huw Bowen, Ron Knuszka, Nigel Hamer (Secretary).

Apologies:

Jim White, Duncan Thomas, Dai Little.

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd October, 2016 were approved.

Before the meeting started, due to the resignation of *Huw Cooze* as our *Supporter Director* and *Trust Board Member* an election of a replacement *Supporter Director* was required. There had been two eligible *Board Members* who had put their names forward for the post - *Will Morris* and *Stuart McDonald*, both had submitted their written submissions for the post. Each applicant was given a further opportunity to put their case forward and to be questioned by members of the *Trust Board*. A secret ballot was undertaken with *Stuart McDonald* elected to the post of *Supporter Director* until the original term expires in July 2017.

Chairman *Phil Sumbler* placed on record the good work undertaken as our *Supporter Director* and *Trust Board Member* *Huw Cooze* over the past 10 years as SD, and 14 years as *Board Member*.

Chairman Phil Sumbler on behalf of the sub-group informed the Board that as a result of the meeting with *Counsel* on the 5th October a Members Forum had been agreed to take place on the 20th October, (the full address is on our website).

PS reported that *Club Chairman Huw Jenkins* had requested a meeting with him on the 4th November followed by a meeting with new *Chief Operating Office Chris Pearlman* later the same day.

NH reported that the *Premier League Trust Group* had made reference to our recent Statement regarding our concerns with the *American* takeover. It had reached the possibility of being discussed at *HM Government* level with the *Department of Culture Media and Sport*. There is an interesting comment by the *Premier League Trust Group* which relates to us – *Supporter Shareholders* being 'squeezed out' under Articles of Association and Company Law should have been discussed and considered at the *Department of Culture, Media, Sport Expert Working Group* which the *Trust* and *Supporters Direct* sat on.

Board Members requested that the *Working Sub-Group* working on our behalf and the *Americans* provided the *Trust Board* with more open and frequent feedback and communication. **PS** took this on board.

Supporter Director Report:

HC had submitted his report prior to his resignation as *Supporter Director*. In his report he stated that there had been no *Club Board* meeting since the 19th August, the next is the 13th December. He had sent an e-mail to the *Directors* requesting more frequent *Board Meetings*..

- *Attended the DSA Social evening on the 18th October, arranged for Bob Bradley to attend. Arranged for Bob Bradley to meet with Trust Board Members.*
- *Met with Chris Pearlman, new Chief Operating Officer to discuss his vision for the future.*

- Met with Customer Services and Equality Manager, Lucy Norman, regarding Supporter Liaison matters and progress on the Sensory Room.
- Attended the Mel Charles funeral on behalf of the Club and Trust.
- Winners of the raffle – Tour of Fairwood & Landore Training facilities, along with Board member Alan Lewis chaperoned the winners who were Trust Members from East Sussex..
- Attended with Board Members Jim White, Stuart McDonald and Legal Affiliate Dai Little with Counsel in London on the 5th October to discuss our legal position regarding our shareholding.
- Attended Supporters Trust Members Forum at the Stadium on the 20th October (full report on our website).
- Extensive Meetings, e-mails and telephone calls regarding the protection of our Shareholding with the Trust sub-group.
- Looking into the setting up of a Fans Park on land adjacent to the Stadium, as well as an open training session on the Liberty Stadium playing surface. Also looking into Safe Standing on behalf of the Club.(Full report submitted).
- Community Trust meeting attended.
- Asked to guide the Premier League in a working group format. Proposal made at the Fans Group was to set up a working group, made up of Premier League, Club and Fan Representatives. The aim is to discuss the recommendations and agree standard guidelines as to how Clubs take Structured Dialogue forward and apply it to their own meetings. The main thrust is agreeing common ground for selecting, or, electing Fan Representatives, what goes on the Agenda and what level of detail is included.
- Other involvements on a monthly basis include –Ticketing, Away ticketing initiatives, SSMC Meetings, Stadium Business Summit meetings, Equity, Diversity and Unconscious Bias (a PL directive), Disability issues, Customer service, Community work on behalf of the Club/Trust, Charitable work on behalf of the Club/Trust.

Treasurers Report:

SMac reported that we had incurred legal charge for work undertaken in discussions with the new American shareholders which are ongoing. The significant legal fee outlay in the last couple of months has been covered by Raffle and Membership monies received.

Sponsorship payments had been made to the *Swansea Junior League* and *Swansea School Foundation*.

Current Bank and Building Society balances amount to £876,238.

TBM 127/08 Disability Issues:

IJ reported that *Club Ambassador, Lee Trundle* and players *Alfie Mawson* and *Mark Birighitti* had attended the *Disabled Supporters Association Q&A Session* at the Stadium on the 18th October. The highlight of the evening for those present was unexpected appearance of *Manager Bob Bradley* who sat on the panel answering questions and then took time getting to know *DSA Members* by chatting to them and posing for photographs. Around 70 *DSA* members came to the event which included a raffle, the Group were appreciative of the *Club* providing refreshments on the evening. *David Enstone* and *Denise Ruffell* from the *Stadium Ticket Office* also attended and answered members ticketing queries. The *DSA* thanked the *Club* and *Supporter Director, Huw Cooze* for attending and being supportive of their committee. The *DSA* hold two social events during a season, the age range is between 5 and 90 years, it's great to see the members, young and old mixing together, it is the *DSA's* intention to make the match day experience an enjoyable one.

TBM 172/14 Membership & Media

AL reported that Standard Membership numbers recorded to date were 1605, the split of members is 1025 Adult, 547 Seniors and 33 Junior members. Reminder e-mails will be sent out with the current membership including many new members, there are still a number of members who have not re-joined this year.

TBM 179/15 International Honours Board

The format of the *International Honours Board*, no final decision has been taken.

Also under this section were the Wall of Fame recipients for this year. It was not possible during the autumn to select a suitable home fixture to add names to the Wall Of Fame. It was decided to review the addition of names until the new year.

TBM 186/15 Swans Trust Website Stats

DT had submitted a report of the *Website* and *Social Media* stats for October 2016. The stats indicate the top 5 most visited for the month were: *Trust Members Forum Address, 30.86%, Trust Reaction to change in Management at Swansea City, 20.82%, Homepage 14.04%, Trust Statement Regarding the Supporter Director, 6.96%, Join The Trust 6.22%*.

Given the Members Forum Address and the nature of the Statements released by the Trust during the month, there has been a 494% increase in the number of visitors to the Trust website in October. There has been a 662% increase in the number of fans joining the Trust online.

Random fact of the month – almost 10% of visitors to the Trust website in October came from the USA, with the UK accounting for 77% of visitors.

Social Media presence figures – 6,226 members in our *Facebook group*, 1,724 Likes on the *Facebook Page*, with 6,276 *Twitter followers*.

TBM 188/15 Football Club Financial Information

The *Finance Sub-group* had not been in receipt of Management Accounts for this period. Our newly appointed *Supporter Director, SMcD* has arranged to meet with the *Club Finance Manager* over the next few days.

TBM 189/15 Fans Forums.

No further information regarding a *Fans Forum*.

TBM 191/15 & TBM 192/15 Codes of Conduct for Officers & Trust Board Members

WM reported that these are now on our website.

TBM 194/16 Former Players Association.

No further meetings have taken place since the last Board meeting.

A.O.B.

AL and **NH** had attended *Aberfan* on the 21st October to lay a wreath at the *Memorial Garden* on behalf of the *Supporters Trust* and *Supporters of Swansea City Football Club*. **AL** spoke with *Prince Charles* who noticed the wreath **AL** was holding on our behalf.

Agreed to purchase a wreath from the *Royal British Legion* to be placed on the *First World War Plaque* on Sunday, 13th November.

IJ informed the Board that he had decided to stand down from his position as *Disability Liaison Officer* of the *Football Club* as it would be a *Conflict Of Interest*. **IJ** mentioned an advertisement had been placed for the post of *Disability Liaison Officer*. **IJ** will remain as Chair of the *Disability Supporters Association*; the Club have indicated that there will still be a close working relationship with the *DSA*.

AG expressed concern that former Directors and Shareholders were continuing to enjoy the hospitality of the Boardroom and Directors Box on match days at home and away fixtures. **SMcD** would liaise with the new *Chief Operating Officer* to suggest that feelings were running high amongst the Supporters.

AG look at contract phones.

AG requested that additional moderators be appointed to monitor the *Facebook Group*.

Agreed to look at Insurance cover for Board Members.

AGM agreed to be held on the *5th December*.

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 8.43pm

Next Board Meeting Monday 5th December, 2016 at 5.30pm at the Liberty Stadium.