

SWANSEA CITY SUPPORTERS TRUST BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Monday, 8th February 2016 at the Liberty Stadium, Swansea commencing at 5.30pm.

Present:

Huw Cooze, Barbara Cook, Stuart Macdonald, Alan Lewis, Viv Brooks, Andy Godden, Ron Knuszka, Viv Williams, Cath Dyer, Ian Howells, Phil Sumbler, Nigel Hamer (Secretary).

Apologies:

Jim White, Ian James, Will Morris, Duncan Thomas, Dai Little.

Due to the late arrival of the Chairman and the unavailability of the Vice Chairman, Huw Cooze chaired the meeting.

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 11th January, 2016 were approved.

Supporter Director Report:

HC in his report took us through changes on the football front and the Football Club in general, as usual a lengthy discussion took place amongst Members present. He then highlighted a number of Events and Meetings he had organised, and, or, attended.

- *Attended a meeting with Club Chairman Huw Jenkins in the new Third Floor classroom block at Landore and a number of Trust Board members where a full and frank discussion took place on general matters on and off the field.*
- *A successful Charity Night took place at the Champion brewers in Morriston in aid of Help the Heroes. Lee Trundle joined HC for the Raffle Draw along with a few Welsh Guards soldiers, many of whom were at the game the following day against Crystal Palace.*
- *Attending meetings for the upcoming visit to New Jersey where a Seminar has been set up where two Swansea City Coaches will give practical and technical demonstrations. 40 Delegates are expected to attend the two day Seminar. HC will be in New Jersey co-ordinating the event from February 18th-21st.*
- *Liaising with North Shore United, Wisconsin for their trip top Swansea in March, there will be 80 in their tour party, 4 matches have been arranged for the Boys and Girls Under-13 teams, along with a number of training sessions, sightseeing trips and shopping, quite an extensive itinerary.*
- *Visit Football, Disabled Fans a debrief meeting. This is a mystery shopper type experience starting with the journey from a Disabled Fan perspective. The Club/Stadium was scored on ticket sales pitch, (via e-mail and a phone call to the ticket office), ticket office staff scored on helpfulness and being informative, loop for the hard of hearing, commentary for Blind and partially sighted Supporter, entrance signage (visibility and contrast), inter-active Stewards, toilets (cleanliness), viewing, access maps, Youtube guide, wheelchair ramps, Lifts, Club Shop staff friendliness, matchday programme, food quality and choice (signage again and allergy information, entry to Stadium, low counters for wheelchairs, bus routes in and out of the Stadium, signage for High Street Railway Station, were the Stewards helpful before and after the match.*
- *Visit Football is high on the Premier League agenda and this is the second debrief, the visits are all unannounced, we get six per season. It is carried out with 2 Home, 2 Away, a Hospitality and Disabled Fans perspective and are all extremely in-depth, we have scored a lot higher than we did when we entered the Premier League, but, there is still plenty of room for improvement. There will be another debrief meeting from a Home fans perspective on the 24th February, we have had an Away fan debrief meeting last November, it is good to get this feedback so that we can continue to improve as a Club.*
- *Will be attending the first Awards Dinner Meeting for this season on the 12th February.*
- *Interviewed by Radio Five Live with a follow up Times newspaper article.*

Treasurers Report:

SMac reported very little change from our last Board Meeting on the 11th January. There were no large outstanding bills for payment, receipts were due for book sales and e-newsletter advertising. Agreed to discount the three books we have available and offer them at all 3 for £20. Club Shop to be notified also our website.

TBM 127/08 Disability Issues:

No report.

TBM 172/14 Membership & Media

AL will be e-mailing a February Newsletter and would appreciate news items. Agreed that another reminder to Standard members who have not re-joined. Another e-mail to be sent out our e-members. It was agreed that we would undertake our campaign for memberships beginning in June. **AL** and **JW** would send out a new Survey to our *Standard Members* highlighting what they would like us to do with our financial resources. Current Standard Membership is 1257.

AL, **AG** and **JW** are currently moderators our *Facebook Group*, agreed that we consider a monthly Q&A session.

BC, **IH** and **CD** agreed to act as Monitors for the *Facebook Group*.

TBM 178/15 Annual Award Dinner 2016.

NH reported that the first *Annual Awards Dinner* meeting will take place on the 12th February. **NH**, **WM** and **CD** to represent the *Trust Board*.

TBM 179/15 International Honours Board.

It was agreed that **NH** would forward the Honours Board list prior to the next Board Meeting.

TBM 186/15 Swans Trust Website Stats.

DT had submitted a report of the *Website* and *Social Media* stats for January 2016 which showed usage had surpassed that of the same period the year before - during the takeover saga of early 2015.

The stats indicated that the top 5 pages on the website for the month were: *Where do we go from here part 2 with 5,572 visits (59.23%)*, *Homepage with 1,172 visits (12.46%)*, *Trust in rallying call to Swans fans 1,026 visits (10.91%)*, *Trust Minutes 425 visits (4.52%)* and *Trust tribute to Leon with 274 visits (2.91%)*.

Over 23% of visitors to the site in January were between the ages of 25-33 - this was the highest visitor % of all of the age ranges. Fan websites accounted for 24% of all 'referral' traffic to the Trust website.

Social Media presence figures – 5,160 members in our *Facebook group*, 1,265 Likes on the *Facebook Page*, with 5,382 *Twitter followers*.

TBM 188/15 Football Club Financial Information

The Finance sub-group continue to review the *Club Management Accounts* for the previous month and provided assurance to the *Trust Board* that they were comfortable with the information provided.

TBM 189/15 Fans Forums.

The last *Fans Forum* for this season, the *London Fans Forum* will take place on or around the 6th/7th May with the away fixture against *West Ham United* that weekend.

TBM 190/15 Premier League Trusts & Supporters Direct Meetings.

DL informed us that the final report of the *Football Supporter Ownership and Engagement Expert Working Group* can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-expert-working-group-on-football-supporter-ownership-and-engagement which was released on the 19th January at a press release at *AFC Wimbledon*. The *Expert Working Group* was formed after the recommendation in the *Government's 2013 response to the 2011 Football Governance Review*. Initially to look at barriers and incentives for supporter ownership but with a remit extended to include supporter involvement and engagement. **DL** and **PS** had represented the Trust at the meetings over the past 12 months.

DL attended the *Premier League Trust* meeting in *London* on the 28th January. Representatives from *Tottenham Hotspur Trust*, *Swans Trust*, *Spirit of Shankly Trust (Liverpool)*, *Manchester United Trust*, *Foxes Trust (Leicester City)*, *Crystal Palace*, *Chelsea*, *Canaries Trust (Norwich City)*, *Aston Villa* and *Arsenal*. *Supporters Direct* and *Football Supporters Federation*.

Main topics included a discussion paper regarding the future role of *Premier League Trusts*, where it was felt there was a lack of representation of *Premier League Trusts* on *Supporter Director Councils*, with more involvement in *Supporter Direct governance*. Agreed to put forward the proposal of *Premier League Trusts* on the *Supporters Direct Board* at the next *Supporters Direct Board* meeting. Agreed that a *Policy Group* would be formed regarding the implementation of *EWG* recommendations. Date of the next meeting was set for Thursday, 21st April with a venue to be decided.

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

NH and **DL** continue to review and report back to the Trust Board meeting in March.

TBM 192/15 Strategy Sub-Group

WM, **RK**, **AG**, **BC** and **PS** formed the sub-group to develop a three year strategic plan for the *Trust* which will review what our aims are and how we look to operate and manage ourselves.

TBM 194/15 Landore Social Club.

NH to draw up a Rota of Board Members to be present at the Club pre-match.

TBM 196/15 Football Supporters Federation

NH advised that we had rejoined (Free membership) the *FSF*. The *FSF* have called a meeting for representatives of all *Premier League Supporter* organisations on Friday 19th February starting at 6.30pm until 9.00pm. The meeting is to discuss the continuation of the *Twenty's Plenty for Away Fans* initiative along with the call for an end to *match categorisation* and more *concession for young Adults*. There is a need to convince at least 14 Clubs to vote in favour of the two topics. At the last *Premier League Shareholder* meeting a secret ballot ? indicated 12 Clubs voted in favour of a £30 price cap on away match tickets. The next *Premier League Shareholder* meeting will be held in March. **DL** is hoping to be able to attend the meeting on the 19th February on our behalf.

A.O.B.

Fans Zone –

SMac suggested consideration of a *Fans Zone*. Main problem a lack of an acceptable parcel of land. **HC** mentioned the plot of land between the *South Stand* and the main road which the *Club* have purchased. Worthy of further discussion.

Mel Nurse

AL mentioned that we had received an e-mail asking us to support a campaign aimed at recognising in a tangible way the efforts of *Mel Nurse* back in 2001 in helping the *Club* in another of it's darkest hours. Issues around the *Stadium* ownership and stand sponsorship etc.,, were recognised as obstacles, but, it was agreed that we would add our support in principle to ideas such as naming the road running outside the *Stadium*, or, the *Bridge* over the *River Tawe* if the campaign group then pursued with the Council. The naming of our proposed *International Honours Board* in recognition of *Mel* was also thought worthy of further discussion.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.20pm.

Next Board Meeting Monday 7th March, 2016 at 5.00pm at the Liberty Stadium.