

## SWANSEA CITY SUPPORTERS TRUST BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Monday, 24th November 2014 at the Liberty Stadium, Swansea commencing at 5.35pm.**

### **Present:**

Phil Sumbler, Will Morris, Huw Cooze, Duncan Thomas, Ron Knuszka, Jim White, Viv Brooks, Alan Lewis, Andrew Godden, Gwyn Hughes, Barbara Cook, Nigel Hamer. (Secretary).

### **Apologies:**

Ian James, Cath Dyer, Viv Williams, Stuart Macdonald..

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014 were approved.

### **Supporter Director Report:**

#### **HC reported:**

As a part of my *Supporters Liaison Officer* role at the *Club*, I attended a two day seminar in London on the 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> November at *Somerset House*, *Club* employee, *Lucy Norman* attended with me. *Ofcom* talked about televised football and the potential impact on grass roots football in the UK.

*Everton FC* have a theme *Our Day To Shine* their representative presented a number of interesting topics.

*Technology* was another major topic discussed, in particular beacons, basically a spot where information is beamed to a smart phone, i.e. prices of merchandise, or, where there is less of a queue for refreshments.

*Arsenal* have a fan group campaigning against *wifi*, regarding fan use of smart phones and *iPads* as an unnecessary intrusion into matchday experience. *Manchester United* have banned *iPads* 5G will be with us in 18-24 months, reports are that *wifi* will become less and less needed.

*Away Fan App* is very innovative and worthy of downloading giving traffic problems, weather reports, parking and hotel accommodation or where to find a fan friendly pub.

Attendance at matches is up to an average of 36,695 with a 95% occupancy, the league is as popular as ever, season ticket sales are up 3%. Average way attendance is up 2.8%.

I have attended previous *SLO Seminars* around the Country, the *Etihad Stadium*, *Amex (Brighton)*, *Cardiff City Stadium*, *Wembley*, *Central Liverpool* and *Central London*. The Group asked about future Seminars, on behalf of the *Club*, subject to *Club Board* approval, I offered the use of the *Liberty Stadium* for the next Seminar.

*Under 10* and *Under 17* teams from *OSS Netherlands* will be with us in February and April

### **Treasurers Report:**

The Board were notified of recent payments made for Counsel Opinion and for Due Diligence carried out on the American Investors.

### **TBM125/08 Centenary 2012 & TBM162/13 History of the Swans Trust**

HC reported that book sales were ongoing. Additional books had been requested by the Club Shops.

### **TBM 127/08 Disability Issues:**

No report.

### **TBM 172/14 Membership Renewal 2014/15.**

**AL** suggested that we forward letters acknowledging membership to those members who do not have e-mail addresses. Thanks to *Mrs. Becky Townsend* for completing the data input of members into our Membership database.

### **TBM 173/14 Racism at Football Stadia.**

**HC** had not had the opportunity to discuss this further.

### **A.O.B.**

The **Supporters Trust** has accepted an invitation from the *Department For Culture, Media and Sport* to join it's *Expert Group* looking at Fan involvement at Football Clubs. The Trust will join representatives from *Portsmouth, AFC Wimbledon, and Wrexham* whose Clubs are all run by Supporter Groups. *Chairman, Phil Sumbler* will represent the Trust at the meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> November at Wembley Stadium.

**London Fans Forum** – London Welsh Centre, Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December. Agreed that any profit will be donated to *Swansea Bravehearts*.

**David (Dai)Thomas** – **NH** reported that a letter of condolence had been sent to the widow of former *Swansea Town* footballer, who had passed away recently.

**First World War Memorial Plaque** – the unveiling of the copper plaque was held on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> November prior to the *Arsenal* home fixture. The plaque was unveiled by *Board Member, Viv Brooks*. A good number of fans were represented at the Ceremony, *Kevin Johns* undertook the religious part of the ceremony.

**American Investment** – **PS** re-confirmed that *Shareholders* of the *Club* had been in discussion with *American Investors* since the 28<sup>th</sup> October who were considering taking a minority stake in the *Club*. The *Trust's* position remains the same, that we do not believe that there is a need for the *Club* to change ownership. The *Trust* have made it clear to the other *Shareholders* that our 21.1% Shareholding is not for sale.

A sub-group, including **PS, HC** and **DL** met with one of the *Investors* today in London to let them know that our interest is the long term protection of the role that the *Trust* has in the running of the *Club* with a new *Shareholders Agreement* required should new *Investors* become involved.

We have carried out *Due Diligence* on the potential *American Investors* which has not shown anything untoward that they would not pass the 'Fit & Proper Person' test of the *Premier League*.

We have instructed an independent specialist law firm in London to advise us on potential investment, We are not linked to any Law Firm engaged by the other *Shareholders*, therefore separate legal advice is necessary.

We have also engaged the services of independent *Legal Counsel* to advise on certain legal aspects of the proposed transaction to ensure it's members interests were protected.

We cannot block the sale as our shareholding is not large enough at 21.1%, the offer price is too great for the *Trust* to purchase shares under pre-emption rights.

It was agreed that we will consult with our Members at the appropriate time.

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 7.55pm.

Next Board Meeting date to be confirmed.