

SWANSEA CITY SUPPORTERS TRUST

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Monday 19th March, 2018 at the Liberty Stadium, Swansea commencing at 5.30pm.

Present:

Alan Lewis (*AL*), Stuart McDonald (*SMcD*), Cath Dyer (*CD*), Viv Williams (*VW*), Ron Knuszka (*RK*), Sian Davies (*SD*), Andrew Cude (*AC*), Dave Dalton (*DD*), Will O'Kelly (*WO'K*), Viv Brooks (*VB*), Roger Goodwin (*RG*), Andy Godden (*AG*), Rhys Thomas (*RT*), Nigel Hamer (*NH*) (Secretary).

Apologies:

Lisa Clement (*LC*), Dai Little (*DL*), Andrew McGlashan (*AMcG*)

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 12th February, 2018 had previously been approved.

Chairmans Welcome:

AL informed the Board that he and **SMcD** had been interviewed by a *Financial Times* reporter in relation to our involvement with the *Club*. Spent over an hour with the *Journalist* covering a wide range of Trust/Club issues, the article is due to appear in the *FT Magazine* early in April.

AL had received an invitation from *Swansea Sportsmans Club* to their annual *Awards Dinner*. *Leon Britton* is due to receive an award.

Have been involved in dealing with the *GDPR data protection rules* due to become effective in May 2018. We need to check if we are required to be formally registered to hold members data. Agreed that we would retain data on the last 2-3 years membership plus the current year. The *Club* have offered us the opportunity to check aspects of the new legislation with its *Data Protection Officer*.

Discussed with **SMcD** supporters concerns of charges made for cash transactions on ticket purchases. Agreed to take this matter up with the *Club*.

Reminder to Board Members to complete their *Profiles* for the website.

Supporter Director Report:

SMcD reported with the *Club* now having taken on the lease of the *Liberty Stadium* from the *City & County of Swansea*, the process is well under way to integrate the *Stadium* operations into the administrative functions of the *Football Club*. Also, the consideration of expansion plans is gathering some pace. The *Club* is in the process of setting up a *Stadium Expansion Group*.

The *Club* has been pleased with the feedback from fans regarding the newly set up partnership with *Zeelo*, who offered coach travel from several areas for the recent *West Ham United* and *Tottenham Hotspur* fixtures. This sort of initiative is particularly welcomed, as any expansion of the *Stadium* will need to see a co-ordinated travel plan work in tandem with an increase in match day attendances and transportation demands.

The *Club* recently held a *Structured Dialogue Forum* at the *Liberty Stadium*, with representatives from a cross section of our *Supporters* base, including fanzine editors, regional groups and season ticket holders, given the opportunity to raise issues with senior management of the *Club*. It was an open discussion that covered a wide range of topics, including community, commercial, player recruitment, and expansion, with pertinent points raised by those attending, and was seen as a worthwhile exercise by all those involved following on from the first meeting last March. One initiative was for *Community* visits to the *Fairwood Training* complex.

Despite the difficult selling market due to the uncertainty of which *Division* we will be playing in next season, the *Media* and *Marketing* departments continue to perform admirably, with the *Club* reaping the rewards of the investment in upgrading the website, apps, and social media functions. Revenue growth is strong as *Marketing*, *Sponsorship*, *Merchandise* and *Media* continue to produce results in both the national and international markets, with the additional staff and support resource introduced to these areas now coming to fruition.

Attended the *Swans Community Trust Awards* evening on the 15th March, and it is heart warming to see how much work the *Community Trust* does. The *charity* is now in its tenth year, and has worked with

8000+ participants this year in the community and schools, and is thoroughly deserving of the support of all *Swans* supporters.

The *Half Time Flyer* has recently been re-launched following a significant drop in the revenues generated this season, and feedback received by the *Club* suggests that many have stopped buying due to feelings of negativity surrounding the *Club* in recent times. This is disappointing, because all of the proceeds, after prize money and selling costs are given to the *Swans Community Trust*, with the *Club* taking no profit whatsoever from the draw.

Treasurers Report:

SMcD reported that our total cash balances in our Bank Account and Building Society Accounts was £830,577. There is one Invoice due to be paid for Legal Fees of £7,400.

TBM 127/08 Disability Supporters Association

CD who is also *Secretary* of the *Disabled Supporters Association (DSA)*, updated the *Board* on a number of things being worked on by the *DSA*

There was a trial of the *Sensory Room* at the *Sheffield Wednesday FA Cup* fixture when 3 young people from a local school were invited to attend, the trial was successful and it was good for the 3 teenagers to experience a football match. A hospitality box was used for this fixture, a safe and workable location is not readily available without some alterations. **BT** offer grants of £5,000 for *Sensory Room* equipment, but only for *Premier League Clubs*.

(A Sensory Room is a special room designed to develop a person's sense, it can be used for children with limited communication skills.)

Plans are underway between the *Disabled Supporters Association, Swansea City Football Club and Level Playing Field* for the forthcoming *Welsh Regional Forum* to be held at the *Liberty Stadium* on the 2nd May.

The *Club* has recently purchased a small stock of ear defenders for *Supporters* with *Sensory* needs which are available to order in advance of each Home Fixture.

The *DSA* web page, www.swanseadsa.org.uk, has currently been updated, and the *DSA* also have a *Facebook* page.

TBM 172 /14 Membership, Marketing & Communication.

AL had e-mailed his report, current membership is 1,249 members.

RG had submitted the report of the sub-group with the following bullet points.

1. *Members e-mail* – changes to Trust communications, members asked views on improving communications.
2. *Trust Wear* – making Trust Board members more visible on matchdays.
3. *Members only Facebook Group* – under the control of **RT** and *Graham Lucas*.
4. *Co-ordinating Twitter and Facebook* – controlled by **RT** and **AG**.
5. *@swanstrust email addresses* – ten BM's now have their own "name@swanstrust.co.uk" e-mail address, with info@swanstrust.co.uk managed by **AL** and **NH**. communications@swanstrust.co.uk managed by **DD**. We also have a payment@swanstrust.co.uk address set up for future use.
6. *Revamp and managing of Website* – **DD** and **RT** would be looking to discuss further with site controller.
7. *New Membership leaflet* – **VB**, **SD** and **RG** to work on preparing a new leaflet which would incorporate a membership application.
8. *Regional Groups* – **DD** looking to send out an e-mail of the two *West Wales Groups* encouraging them to join the Trust.
9. *Summer Newsletter* – re-introduction of our Summer Newsletter.
10. *Car stickers and or Pin Badges* – **DD** checking prices.

TBM 186/15 Swans Trust Website Stats

DD summarised the *Swans Trust* website and Social media stats for February 2018. The total number of page views in January were 2,072. Top 5 pages in February were – *Trust Homepage* 1,191 (34.07%),- *History of Swansea City FC* – 187 (9.03%),- *Notice of Annual General Meeting* 96 (4.63%), *Trust Shares* -87 (4.20%), *Meet the Trust Board* 85 (4.10%).

Social Media presence figures – 11,126 on our *Facebook Group*, 2,382 like on *Facebook page*, 7,302 *Twitter followers*. More detailed analysis that of the 11,126 members of the original *Trust Facebook* page, only around 7% of these are current members of the *Trust*, the *UK* has just over 9,000 members, *Nigeria* has the next highest number with 225 followed by the *USA* with 196.

RT reported that applications to join the *Trust Members only Facebook page* were slowly being received.

TBM 188/15 Football Club Financial Information

SMcD reported that the *Finance Sub-Group* continues to review the *Football Club Management Accounts* as they become available, and are able to provide assurances to the *Trust Board* that they are comfortable with the information provided.

TBM 197/17 Riverside Lounge. & Wall of Fame

VW presented a quotation for the addition of a further 20 names to be added to the *Wall Of Fame*. The quote was accepted with hopefully the 20 names approved and announced at the *Awards Dinner* in May. **VW** suggested that we wait for the next recipient of the *Lifetime Achievement Award* so that 2016/2017/2018 photos will be placed on the Board in the *Riverside Lounge*. **AG** to arrange for the recipient of the 2016 Lifetime Achievement Award.

TBM 199/17 Schools Initiative.

SD reported that discussions are continuing with *Olechfa Comprehensive School, Swansea* regarding piloting the *Challenge* and **RG** will speak to the *Welsh Bac Co-ordinators* group in *Swansea* later this month. Three schools in *Neath Port Talbot* have expressed an interest in joining the *Pilot Phase*. A meeting has been arranged with *Dwr-Y-Felin Comprehensive School* to explore this further. **RG** and **SD** have met and put together a briefing paper regarding the implementation of the *Challenge* which is currently in draft form.

TBM 208/17 Annual Awards Dinner

Meetings of the *Group* arranging the *Annual Awards Dinner* have met on three occasions since the last Board meeting. A provisional date has been agreed, however, we are awaiting the date of the re-arranged fixture with *Southampton*.

TBM 209/18 Travel Group.

CD as the *Trust* representative on the *Travel Group Committee* reported that the *Group* had discussed a proposal for the re-opening of *Landore Station*. A trial has taken place with *Zeelo*, a private bus company in order to help fans to travel to the Stadium. Over 120 fans recently used the service and the feedback was good. There was more difficulty leaving the Stadium, but, this is being looked into for future matches. The bike storage plan is also being carefully considered for those who cycle to matches.

TBM 210/18 Action Points:

AMcG agreed to create a list each month of various *Action Points*.

TBM 211/18 Governance & Policy Documents:

AC agreed to review the current Governance & Policy documents relevant to the *Model Rules* for a report at the next Board Meeting..

TBM 212/18 Board Member e-mails:

DD reported that those Board members who had requested personal e-mails have all been set up for use.

A.O.B.

Trust Books:

SMcD reminded us that we have the use of a storage facility for *Trust* merchandise. There is a need to promote the books on our website.

Signed Shirts:

RK reminded the Board that we had 4/5 signed shirts by the late *John Charles*.

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 8.10pm.

Next Board Meeting date and venue to be confirmed.