

# SWANSEA CITY SUPPORTERS TRUST

## BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February, 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), Nigel Hamer (NH) (Secretary).

Andrew McGlashan (AMcG) joined the meeting via phonenumber.

### Apologies:

Andy Godden (AG), Viv Brooks (VB), Lisa Clement (LC), Roger Goodwin (RG), Rhys Thomas (RT), Dai Little (DL).

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 8th January, 2018 were approved.

### Chairman Report:

The AGM had passed off successfully, the *Model Rules 2016* version were adopted at the meeting.

NH will submit these to the *Financial Conduct Authority* for approval.

Agreed to meet with representatives from *Swansea City Supporters Alliance (SCSA)*, with SMcD.

Volunteered to sign into the *Supporter Direct Webinar on General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)*, which we are obligated to adopt. DD has agreed to take ownership of this, AC would also look into the impact of the *Regulation*.

### Supporter Director Report:

SMcD and Associate Director, Alan Lewis, attended a *Football Club Board Meeting* on the 30<sup>th</sup> January. There was inevitability about it being a stop-start meeting, with telephone calls, re: transfer dealings necessitating breaks in the conduct of Board business. There were presentations made to the Board by various Department Heads, covering the areas of *Stadium Lease* acquisition and expansion, Finance, Football operations, Media, Marketing and International strategy.

SMcD reported last month that the finalisation of the agreement for the Club to take on the *Lease* of the *Liberty Stadium* had not yet been completed but is still imminent, with the *Club* of the view that securing certainty over the long term management of the *Stadium* is vital in plans to develop both the *Club* and the *Stadium*.

There has been much debate amongst *Fans* about the *Club's* transfer dealings, and the belief that there is a significant surplus arising from such dealings. In discussions with our *Majority owners*, it was decided that it would be beneficial for the *Club* to publish details of their transfer financial dealings since they took over in the summer of 2016, as there is a widely held, but false, perception that transfer proceeds have not been re-invested in the playing squad. This interview was duly carried out with journalist *Stuart James* of the *Guardian*, and published on the 9<sup>th</sup> February.

As reported last month, 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. Also, the "Give a Jack a Jacket" initiative was the winner of the *Best Club Marketing Initiative (Premier League)* at the *2017 Football Business Awards*.

The revenues generated by *Marketing*, *Sponsorship*, *Merchandise* and *Media* continue to produce results in a difficult market climate, with all areas performing strongly against targets, and in the *International Market* place, interest from the *United States* is, predictably, very high and very encouraging.

The *Half Time Flyer* has been re-launched following a significant drop in revenues generated this season, which are given to the *Swans Community Trust*, and it is hoped that the next few games will see that re-launch come to fruition.

I took up the issue of the ticket allocation chosen by the *Club* for the *Brighton* away match to be played on the 24<sup>th</sup> February. Whilst the *Club* followed a totally logical process in deciding on the number of

tickets they would commit to, (1850), they accept that in hindsight they got it wrong, and have assured fans that they have learnt lessons from this occasion.

The recently formed *Swansea City Supporters Alliance* held a public meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> February at the *Cwmfelin Club, Swansea*. Along with *Alan Lewis, Chairman*, we accepted invitations to attend, and we had an interesting and informative evening listening to the views of the 100+ Swans fans in attendance.

### **Treasurers Report:**

**SMcD** reported that our total cash balances in our Bank Account and Building Society Accounts was £827,000. 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*

The *DSA* met with the *Club Disability Access Officer* and *Ticket Office* staff to discuss the balloting for away match tickets. The *DSA Committee* proposed to keep the balloting system in place as it is a fairer, more secure system which everyone is familiar with. Re, *Sensory Rooms* at *Premier League football Stadia* – grants are available from the partnership between the *Shippey Campaign, BT, the Premier League* and the *Lords Taverners*. The *Club Disability Liaison Officer* and the *DSA* are in continuous discussions around a *Sensory Room*.

The *DSA* web page, [www.swanseadsa.org.uk](http://www.swanseadsa.org.uk), has currently been updated, and the *DSA* also have a *Facebook* page.

Currently working with the *Club* planning the *Welsh DSA Forum* which will be held at the *Liberty Stadium* this *Spring*.

### **TBM 172 /14 Membership & Media**

**AL** had e-mailed his report, current membership is 1,242 members.

**SD** reported from their sub-group meetings that consideration had been given to three issues:

- A). initial steps to facilitate regular and appropriate communications to *Members* between *Board Meetings*.
- B). the drop in Annual membership post August.
- C). Age distribution of those who have renewed being heavily biased towards the older age groups.

### **TBM 186/15 Swans Trust Website Stats.**

**DD** summarised the *Swans Trust* website and Social media stats for January 2018. The total number of page views in January were 6,815 compared to 17,151 in December. The top 5 pages in January were – *Update on proposed Sale of Trust Shares* 1,211 (17.77%),-*Trust Homepage* 1,191 (17.48%),- *Detailed Trust Response to Huw Jenkins interview* – 1,140 (16.73%),- *Trust Board Minutes* 588 (8.63%),- *Notice of Annual General Meeting* 490 (7.19%).

Monitoring of the global location of visitors to the *Trust website* over the past 3 months with the *USA* at 18% in January, *UK* at 77% with the remaining 5% of visits located throughout the rest of the *World*. *Social Media presence figures* – 10,900 on our *Facebook Group*, 2,359 like on *Facebook page*, 7,293 *Twitter followers*.

**RT** submitted the following *Age* and *Gender* breakdown of the *Facebook Group* with 21.6% *Female* and 78.3% *Male*, the largest *Age Group* at 19.9% is 25-34, closely followed at 19% by 18-24 years.

There has been concern regarding some of the comments on the *Facebook Group* which have been very personal. It has been mooted that a separate *Facebook Group* for *members* only be considered, **RT** reported that 1,200 e-mails have already been sent out to *Members* inviting them to join the new *Group*..

### **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** mentioned that if we are adding names to the *Wall Of Fame*, he would seek an alternative Firm to add the additional 20 names previously discussed.

**VW** had received the photo of the last recipient of the *Lifetime Achievement Award* which will be placed on the Board in the *Riverside Lounge*.

### **TBM 199/17 Schools Initiative!**

**SD** reported that discussions are continuing with *Olchfa Comprehensive School, Swansea* regarding piloting the *Challenge* and a number of *Schools in Neath Port Talbot* have expressed an interest in joining the *Pilot Phase*. A meeting is being arranged to explore this further.

**RG** and myself have met and put together notes to aid discussions with *Schools* regarding the implementation of the *Challenge*.

During the *Pilot Phase* we would like the best one, or, two ideas in each *School* to be invited to the *Liberty Stadium* to pitch their ideas to a panel consisting of *Trust Board members* and perhaps *Community Trust* representatives.

### **TBM 208/17 Annual Awards Dinner**

The first meeting of the *Group* arranging the *Annual Awards Dinner* has been arranged for the 21<sup>st</sup> February. **SD, CD** and **NH** would represent the Trust at the meetings.

### **TBM 209/18 Travel Group.**

**CD** as the *Trust* representative on the *Travel Group Committee* reported that the *Group* had received over 800 responses on the *Travel Survey* that was recently undertaken, these responses are now being checked and will be discussed further at our next meeting. The additional comments to the *Survey* that *Supporters* made are also being reviewed. There are also ongoing discussions to establish the location for *bike storage* for those *Supporters* who wish to cycle to the *Stadium*.

**A.O.B.**

### **Supporters Direct Premier League Trust Group & Football Supporters Federation Premier League Fan Group.**

**DL** had submitted a report as the *Trust* representative at the *Supporters Direct Premier League Trust Group* meeting in *Manchester* on the 8<sup>th</sup> February followed by the *Football Supporters Federation Premier League Fan Group* meeting on the same day.

The **SD** meeting generally discussed *Supporter* engagement at *Premier League Clubs* along with a suggested *Memorandum of Understanding on Structured Dialogue* between a *Supporters Trust* and the *Football Club*. This is not relevant to our *Trust* as we have a *Director* on the *Club Board*. Should we rely only on *Structured Dialogue* we would have far less access to important information such as *Club accounts* than we get now.

Regarding the potential merger between *Supporters Direct* and the *Football Supporters Federation*, **DL** will continue to monitor and update the *Trust Board* on developments over this year.

At the *Football Supporters Federation* meeting there were representatives from the *FSF, SD* and 18 *Premier League Clubs*.

Main topics at the meeting were :

1). *VAR*. 2). *Restricted Views at Stadiums*. 3). *Structured Dialogue*. 4). *Broadcast Deal & Associated Risks*. 5). *Safe Standing Update*. 6). *Kick Off Times*. 7). *Guidance on General Data Protection Regulation*.

### **Action Points:**

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

### **Governance & Policy Documents:**

**AMcG** requested that we further discuss at the next *Board meeting* the *Governance & Policy documents* relevant to the *Model Rules*.

### **Board Member e-mails:**

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

### **Guest Speakers at Board Meetings:**

**DD** enquired whether we are still considering invites to *guest Speakers* at our monthly *Board meetings*. As there have been more important matters to discuss at *BM's* this is put on hold.

### **Community Projects:**

**VW** enquired whether we were able to look at various *Community projects*. It was mentioned that we do undertake *Football in the Community* projects by sponsoring the *Swansea Junior League* and *Swansea Schools Foundation*. **NH** commented that we would need to check if we are able to involve ourselves

in such projects.

There being no further business the Meeting closed at 7.53pm.

**Next Board Meeting Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2018 at 5.30pm at the Liberty Stadium.**