

# SWANSEA CITY SUPPORTERS TRUST

## BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2018 at the Liberty Stadium, Swansea, commencing at 5.30pm.**

### **Present:**

Andy Godden (AG), Stuart McDonald (SMcD), Sian Davies (SD), Andrew Cude (AC), Viv Brooks (VB), Cath Dyer (CD), Barbara Cook (BC), Dave Dalton (DD), Roger Goodwin (RG), Tim Bull (TB).

### **By Conference Call:**

Lisa Clement (LS),

### **Apologies:**

Phil Sumbler (PS), Nigel Hamer (NH) (Secretary), David Little (DL), Rupert Thomas (RT), Andrew McGlashan (AMcG).

Due to technical difficulties **RT** was unable to join the meeting by Conference Call and hence his apologies were recorded.

In the absence of **PS** and **NH**, **AG** chaired the meeting and **SD** took responsibility for the minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018 had previously been approved.

### **1. Matters Arising from the Minutes**

**RG** thanked **SD** and **SB** (Stadium tours) for arranging the Gowerton visit to the Stadium to commence work on the Welsh Bac Challenge and gave an update on the visit.

**SD** reported that, in order to ensure that the new plaques were consistent with the old, Viv Williams had requested permission to remove one of the current plaques. This was agreed. He also asked that someone from the Board ensure that the work was completed on the Friday before the Reading game. **AG** reported that, due to the unavailability of a number of people, the unveiling has to be postponed, with a target date of 24<sup>th</sup> November (Norwich game). **SD** to report back to Viv Williams.

### **2. Chairman's Report**

The Chairman provided an update on the current status regarding the Trust shareholding. The fans forum went well and, as ever, each question was answered honestly and in the best way possible. **PS** thanked **SMcD** for sharing the answering duties along with JHW whose presence was very valuable. An online Q&A will be scheduled with **SMcD** soon. Kevin Rye has also been contacted and asked to review Board communications.

### **3. Supporter Director's Report**

During his regular meetings with CP **SMcD** expressed the Board's disappointment that the Trust had been excluded from the recent meetings of the Fans Focus groups. This was, apparently, an administrative error and CP assured **SMcD** that the Trust will be included in future and will be sent a detailed report of the previous meetings. It is not clear how the wider membership of these groups was selected.

The matchday programme page is now a regular feature with the third article scheduled for 6<sup>th</sup> October. In order to start the programme of speakers attending the monthly Board meetings it was agreed with **SMcD** to invite Andrew Gwilym and Chris Wathan for a future meeting. **SMcD** to arrange.

**SMcD** has raised the issue of 'flags' with CP. Flags can be put up as long as they don't cover the advertising wording. **DD** stated that stewards are not being consistent with stopping people covering adverts with flags. **AG** noted there are very few spaces in the stadium where there is not advertising wording.

#### **4. Treasurer and Finance Sub Group Report**

**SMcD** reported that Football Club Management Accounts for July have been received, which the Finance Sub-Group will review. **SMcD** also gave an update on the Trust's current financial position. **AG** requested the production of a forecast for the year to be reviewed by BMs. Issues remain re the financial information requested from the club.

#### **5. IT Sub Group Report**

**DD** summarised the Swans Trust website and social media stats for August 2018. The total numbers of page views in August were 8643 (compared to 3095 in July) which is approximately 35% above the seasonal average for the beginning of the season. 78% of visitors to the website came from UK while 17% were from the USA. AdSense income (from impressions and direct clicks to a displayed advert on our Trust web pages) has generated income of £88.46 since implementation on 13th February 2017. Estimated earnings for August are expected to be in the region of £6.00 (compared to £1.17 in July)

The top 5 pages (in terms of page views) in August were:

1. Chairman's Update = 2022 (23.39%)
2. Trust Statement on Transfer Window and New Board Appointments = 1907 (22.06%)
3. Trust Homepage = 1225 (14.17%)
4. Join the Trust = 1085 (12.55%)
5. Supporters Trust Members Forum = 524 (6.06%)

Postings and links to relevant articles and content on the new Facebook Trust member's page continue with last month's topics focusing primarily on the new Chairman's Update and the Transfer Window Statement. The total number of members to this page has risen to 241 with a further slight increase to 11493 on our public Facebook page.

Twitter followers increased to 7485 followers by the end of August.

The total number of emails received and responded to in August via our @swanstrust.co.uk addresses were:

[info@swanstrust.co.uk](mailto:info@swanstrust.co.uk) = 8 (compared to 5 in July)

[communications@swanstrust.co.uk](mailto:communications@swanstrust.co.uk) = 6 (compared to 2 in July)

A total of 329 members have joined (or re-joined) the Trust via our website facility (compared to 6 in July). This compares to 216 who joined online for the corresponding August in 2017, a 53% increase.

**AG** and **DD** discussed the need to review the Trust's IT landscape and will discuss further before the next board meeting.

## **6. Membership Sub Group Report**

**SD** reported on current membership numbers. A target by the end of October has been set together with individual BM targets.

Due to members' holiday commitments the group hadn't had an opportunity to meet face to face so has been communicating via e-mail.

Activities completed to date included

- Page in matchday programme 'Introducing the Trust'
- Flyers prepared and handed out at the home game v QPR 29<sup>th</sup> September.
- Contact with established Swans supporter groups

Short term activities planned

- Continue to distribute flyers. **SD** emphasized the need for Trust Board members on the ground and appealed to BMs to help distribution at the next home game on 6<sup>th</sup> October
- Current members to be e-mailed thanking for joining and asking to recruit friends and family
- Those who haven't rejoined to be e-mailed asking 'Why'. Those without e-mail addresses to be contacted by phone. Board members to take a proportion each.
- Continue contact with established Swans supporter groups locally and further afield
- New membership leaflet (welsh and english) – based on flyers – a more appealing A4 sheet
- Membership form to be put on website – Welsh and English
- Flyer article to be put on the website – English and Welsh
- Matchday programme articles to be put on website
- Article in Evening Post – 'Introducing the Trust'
- Explore the viability of a day/half day pop up in the Quadrant Swansea
- Explore the viability of a presence in the square in Neath town centre, also Aberafan Shopping Centre, Llanelli on a one off basis
- Explore the possibility of items on Swansea Sound, Radio Tircoed, Radio Ceredigion etc

The group has agreed that longer term activities need further discussion and will report to the Board in the November meeting.

**AG** expressed some concern about contacting members by phone. After discussion it was agreed to continue with this action but keep under review.

The Membership Group felt that much of their work fell into the category of communication and, as such, that the Membership and Communication/PR Group should be combined. Following discussion, it was decided that the two should remain separate however each sub-group should have responsibility for preparing communications if the subject relates specifically to their area. **TB** suggested that each of the Board sub-groups should have Terms of Reference.

## **7. Community Sub Group Report**

**CD** asked for clarification as to how reports from the new Community sub group were to be presented – combined as one report or separately. It was agreed that they should be reported separately.

### Disability Supporters Association

**CD** reported that there has been a reduction in seasonal parking passes for Disabled Supporters who are blue badge holders for this current season 2018/2019. The concessionary rate is £170 and entitles supporters to all League and Cup games featuring Swansea City AFC. The match by match price remains at £10 per vehicle and disabled supporters are able to book (subject to availability) up to 2 weeks before a home fixture.

To assist and improve communication pre-match within the Disability Liaison Officers matchday team, they now receive MATCHDAY KEY INFORMATION notes with information on.....key timings. additional facilities including mobiloo and ASD. awareness -- general and impairment specific,

visiting supporter request and audio headset requests. The DLO team also feedback any access issues during their post match briefing.

Swansea City AFC has begun the process of becoming a dementia-friendly football club with help and support from the Alzheimer's Society. The aim is to increase dementia awareness among SCFC employees and its supporters. The club is aiming to run dementia-friends' sessions and host dementia-friendly events such as a Sporting Memories evening which will allow supporters to use sport and Swansea City to connect and further understand the issues. Swans V QPR on September 29th was designated dementia-friendly fixture where there was an Alzheimer's Society stall bucket collection and a programme feature to raise awareness.

The club and DSA are delighted that The Mobiloo has returned this season as part of matchday facilities and therefore a changing places facility will be provided at all Swansea City AFC home fixtures. The Mobiloo is located near the South-East corner of the stadium adjacent to the Jack Zone.

Aspiring TV presenter Alex Manners, who is passionate about raising autism awareness through his "Autism in Football campaign" will be visiting Fairwood training ground soon to discuss his project, and the club will be inviting Alex to provide feedback on how to make the stadium tours more ASD - friendly. We are proud that CD has been asked to join Alex along with her autistic daughter.

The Swans AFC DSA held their first social event of the season on 12th September, and over 80 DSA members attended. We were joined on the evening by Leon Britton, Lee Trundle, Connor Roberts and Joe Rodon. There were refreshments, a quiz, "Q and A" session and a game of heads and tails. The DSA communicate with its members through Welsh, English, Widgeit and sign. Club representatives also came along and enjoyed the evening. Hearing our DSA members comment that our events are "home from home" and "we are one big happy family" makes the DSA feel very proud. The evening was sponsored by Green Hat Consulting.

**VB** raised the issue of empty car parking spaces on matchday. Car park attendants can no longer sell free car parking spaces to fans on matchdays, which was very helpful to disabled supporters. **SMcD** to raise with CP.

### Schools' Initiative

**SD** reported that the 'retrospective' launch of the Challenge in Dwr y Felin Comprehensive School went very well. Lee Trundle and Leon Britton visited the school and talked to the pupils' about their ideas and displays. A representative of WJEC was also present and tweeted about the visit, which was good publicity for the Trust. Leon Britton also tweeted that he hoped to see some of the ideas in the club soon.

Fourteen pupils from Gowerton School, Swansea visited the Stadium on 27<sup>th</sup> September. Pupils spent some time in a hospitality box during which time they were briefed about the Trust before beginning to work on the Challenge. This was followed by a tour of the stadium.

Unfortunately Methyr PRU has had to postpone the stadium visit, and hence introduction of the Challenge, until the new year due to transport issues.

Arranging the visits and stadium tours for Gowerton and Merthyr PRU have been problematic with dates being changed and cancelled but personnel at the club have been extremely helpful and understanding.

## **8. Comms/PR Report**

**PS** statement following the Fans Forum has been posted on the website. **AC** reported that the article on membership prepared by **RT** and **SD** appeared in the matchday programme for the Nottingham Forest game on 15<sup>th</sup> September and subsequent articles have been prepared by the Comms/PR group for the QPR game on 29<sup>th</sup> September and Ipswich on 6<sup>th</sup> October, including updates on the work of **SD** and **RG** for the schools. **AG** reported that an update to members regarding the Shareholding position was being prepared and should be sent this week.

A review by Kevin Rye of how the Trust can improve communication had been received just prior to the meeting. Consequently, as there had not been enough time for BMs to digest the report, the report will be reviewed offline and put on the agenda for the next meeting.

## **9. Shareholding**

**AMcG** updated the Board on the latest position. (**SMcD** was not present for the update)

## **10. Governance**

**AC** reported that he and **TB** would review the Trust Governance documents as soon as possible.

## **11. AoB**

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 7.30pm.

**Next Board Meeting Monday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at the Liberty Stadium, Swansea at 5.30pm.**