

SWANSEA CITY SUPPORTERS TRUST

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Thursday, 7th February 2019 at the Liberty Stadium, Swansea, commencing at 5.30pm.

Present:

Phil Sumbler (*PS*), Stuart McDonald (*SMcD*), Andrew Godden (*AG*), Sian Davies (*SD*), Andrew Cude (*AC*), Barbara Cook (*BC*), Nigel Hamer (*NH*)

By Conference Call:

Andrew McGlashan (*AMcG*), Dave Dalton (*DD*), Rupert Thomas (*RT*), Cath Dyer (*CD*).

Apologies:

Viv Brooks (*VB*), David Little (*DL*), Lisa Clement (*LC*), Roger Goodwin (*RG*), Tim Bull (*TB*).

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 14th January, 2019 had previously been approved.

1. Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes

2. Chairman's Report

The Chairman's report was combined with the Shareholding & Mediation Report.

3. Supporter Director's Report

SMcD reported that he has been in discussions and at a Club Board meeting regarding restructuring and appointment following the departure of Chairman Huw Jenkins, these discussions are ongoing, as the Club looks to ensure that both the structure and any appointments made are comprehensively thought through, with any changes critical to the rebuilding of the Club as we look to move forward. Although there is an intention to act quickly, what is most important is that the right decisions are made.

There has also been much discussion about the January transfer window, the resignation of Huw Jenkins, and the lessons to be learned from events of that window.

Regarding the Wall Of Fame, arranging it in advance has proved difficult due to our successful FA Cup run, with FA Cup dates clashing with scheduled home League fixtures. We have provisionally arranged it for Saturday, 6th April at our home match against Middlesbrough, but, of course that is dependent on the outcome of our fixture against Brentford on the 16th February.

4. Treasurer and Finance Sub Group Report

SMcD gave an update on the Trust's current financial position.

SMcD reported that the Finance Sub-Group have had access to the Club monthly Management Accounts which are reasonably detailed, and which, as far as we are able to scrutinise, give no evidence that the Club is currently being mismanaged. There is no doubt that significant cuts and savings needed to be made following relegation. Where we are at odds with the Club is regarding the amount of details that they are prepared to provide to us so that we can make a judgement on the forecasts for the next two years and our opinion and suggestions for any alternative or additional cuts. This is the impasse that we are at, which is now tied in to the Shareholder negotiations.

5. Membership Sub Group Report

SD reported an increase of 178 members since the January meeting, current members are 1496 against 1272 for the same period in 2017/18. The vast majority of the increased membership have come in from the 1st February. Of those members joining from the 1st February some 60% were new members and some 45% were under 39 years old.

Update since last meeting.

At the time of writing this report, only **SD** and **TB** have volunteered to distribute membership Flyers before the Millwall fixture. This is very disappointing given the current situation. If we are seriously trying to increase our membership numbers we should be taking advantage of opportunities such as this. We need support by all Board members.

DD has made contact with *Swans Supporters Groups* across the globe to formally introduce them to the *Trust* etc.,... Contact with *Stateside Jacks* resulted in the e-mail of 5th February in which they shared with us their letter to *Chris Pearlman*.(COO)

The last meeting of the *Membership Sub-Group* (14th January) concentrated on strategies to increase membership numbers for the 2019/20 season. Following discussion, and review of demographic data, the *Group* propose the following actions for discussion by the Full Board at the next Board meeting.

- Revisit the website profile and update content re: Membership.
- Improve the use of Social Media to raise the profile of the Trust. We have some 11,550 'General' Facebook members (in addition to those on the Members Only Facebook Page) and about 8,000 Twitter followers.
- Tap into local and overseas Supporter Groups to encourage them to join the Trust.
- Explore the possibility of a joint membership with the Travel Club.
- Give one year's free membership to those young people who have completed the Trust's Welsh Baccalaureate Challenge.
- Extend the age range of Junior Membership to 18 (instead of 16).
- Review the membership pricing structure for 2019/20, £5 Adults and Seniors, £1 Junior Members.
- Explore the concept of a Junior Trust with one Co-opted Junior Members to attend full Board Meetings (for restricted Agenda items).

The above suggestions will be openly discussed at future Board Meetings.

6. Website and Social Media Report

DD summarised the Swans Trust website and social media stats for January 2019.

The total number of page views in January were 2937 (compared to 1177 in December) which is slightly higher than the seasonal average for the site. 69% of visitors to the website came from the UK while 27% were from the USA.

AdSense income (from impressions and direct clicks to a displayed advert on our Trust web pages) has generated income of £103.86 since implementation on 13th February 2017. Estimated earnings for January are expected to be in the region of £1.50 (compared to £0.46 in December)

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

1. Trust AGM Agenda = 648 (22.06%)
2. Trust Homepage = 562 (19.14%)
3. Trust Board & AGM Minutes = 429 (14.61%)
4. Meet the Trust Board = 122 (4.15%)
5. Join the Trust = 105 (3.58%)

Postings and links to relevant articles and content on the *Facebook Trust member's* page continue with last month's topics focusing primarily on the forthcoming AGM and the Shareholders situation. The total number of members to this page has reached 251. The number of members on our *public Facebook* page has also seen an increase to 11,732. *Twitter* saw us increase to our highest number of 7,895 followers by the end of January.

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

info@swanstrust.co.uk = 28 (compared to 2 in December)

communications@swanstrust.co.uk = 2 (compared to 0 in December)

A total of 17 members have joined (or re-joined) the Trust via our website facility during January (compared to 2 in December).

2 emails were sent out to all current Trust members during January while 2 news articles were posted up on our Trust website.

7. Schools' Initiative Report

SD reported that the recent *Welsh Baccalaureate* work for the *Supporters Trust with Dwr-Y-Felin Comprehensive School* in *Neath* has been recognised and adopted as a *Case Study* by *Qualifications Wales*, the organisation that regulates non degree qualifications in *Wales* and the qualifications system in *Wales*. The article can be found on the *Qualifications Wales website* through the following link:

<https://www.qualificationswales.org/english/qualifications/welsh-baccalaureate/case-studies/>

Planning continues with a group of pupils from *Dwr Y Felin* re:face painting which is scheduled for the *FA Cup* fixture against *Brentford* on the 16th February. Again the *Club* has been very supportive with this initiative. On Thursday, 31st January, *Gowerton Comprehensive School* pupils made their *Welsh Baccalaureate* presentations at the School, to a panel consisting of *Roger Goodwin*, *Sian Davies*, *Lee Trundle* and *Leon Britton* as well as the course Tutor. Both *Lee* and *Leon* listened to their presentations with interest before quizzing them about their ideas in more detail.

8. Shareholding and Mediation Report

AMcG updated the meeting in respect of the on-going legal issues with the current Owners and the Selling Shareholders (**SMcD** was not present for this update).

9. Disabled Supporters Association

CD reported that Season Ticket renewals have commenced with Supporters who don't meet the *Automatic Criteria*, required to submit further supporting evidence. These applications are reviewed by a panel at the *Club* for additional approval. As per the bi-annual policy any eligibility documentation must be dated within the last 2 years, and all the documentation needs to be scanned for uploading.

The *DVLA* and *IDPD (International Day of Persons and Disabilities)*, the *Disabled Supporters Association*, *Swansea City FC*, plus *Club Ambassadors Lee Trundle* and *Leon Britton* attended the *DVLA Ability Group* event as part of the *IDPD*. At the event the *DSDA* informed people of the work we undertake, and the excellent events we hold, the *Club* provided information on accessibility facilities, providing signed photos, key rings and badges.

Catering Sales/Hotdog Sales – unfortunately due to lack of uptake for the pre-order service which had led to a decline in sales and wastage, the service has been discontinued.

Plans are underway for *Level Playing Fields Weeks of Action 2019*, which is to be held this year between 2nd-17th March. The *Club* and *DSA* are working in partnership, and further details will be announced shortly.

10. Governance

Due to priority being given to a number of other issues **AC** had informed the Board that he, **TB** and **BC** had been unable to review the Trust Governance prior to the meeting. It was agreed that this should be put on the agenda for the next Board meeting.

11. Wall OF Fame.

Possible fixture congestion could make this difficult to arrange before the end of the season.

12. AOB.

SMacD suggested that we arrange another *Trust Board* member meeting with *Graham Potter* and *Kyle Macaulay*.
SMacD would speak to both to arrange a suitable date.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 7.05pm.

Next Board Meeting Monday 11th March 2019 at the Liberty Stadium, Swansea at 5.30pm.