

SWANSEA CITY SUPPORTERS TRUST

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the Board Meeting held on Monday, 13th May 2019 at the Liberty Stadium, Swansea, commencing at 5.30pm.

Present: Andy Godden (AG) (*Chair*), Andrew Cude (AC), Stuart McDonald (SMcD), Sian Davies (SD), Roger Goodwin (RG), Dave Dalton (DD), Cath Dyer (CD), Tim Bull (TB), Nigel Hamer (NH).

By Conference Call: Andrew McGlashan (AMcG), Rupert Thomas (RT).

Apologies:

Phil Sumbler (PS), Barbara Cook (BC), Viv Brooks (VB), Lisa Clement (LC), Dai Little (DL).

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 8th April, 2019 had been circulated.

1. Matters Arising from the Minutes

TB requested the removal in the Secretary Post that he was to provide a Job Description of the role.

2. Chairman's Report

Due to the overlap between this agenda item and Agenda Item 8 it was agreed to combine these agenda items and discuss under Agenda Item 8

3. Supporter Director's Report

SMcD reported that there is certainly an air of optimism in the way that the Club is being managed on a local basis with our new *Chairman, Trevor Birch*, looking to engage with us. I have been meeting him regularly during this month, and he has also had meetings with both our Chair (PS) and Vice Chair (AG). The initial signs are promising, and it is significant that Club staff across the Departments, even with the cloud of redundancy hanging over them, speak highly of his character and approach. We must hope that these early signs augur well for the development of a meaningful, open and transparent relationship with our new Chairman.

The home fixture against *Hull City* on the 27th May saw the unveiling of the last batch of names on the *Robbie James Wall of Fame*, at a ceremony that was conducted by our *Chairman, Phil Sumbler*. It was a well attended event, and was much appreciated by those players (or, their representatives) who were able to attend, particularly with the hospitality subsequently offered.

The *Annual Awards Dinner* took place on Sunday 28th April, another event that elicited positive feedback from those that attended. There was a different structure and set up to the logistics of the event which worked particularly well. The disappointment of course was the increasing marginalisation of both the *Trust* and *EFRC* in organising the event, with it now being far more of an in-house *Club* organised event.

I attended that quarterly meeting of the *Safety Advisory Group (SAG* – under the *Safety at Sports Grounds* legislation), which although a bit technical in parts, can also be very interesting and informative. *John Perkins*, the *Area Manager* for the *Sports Grounds Safety Authority*, was, as always extremely complimentary about the management team at the *Liberty Stadium*. There was long discussion, led by *South Wales Police*, about the issues surrounding the policing of the *Bristol City versus Swansea City* fixture on the 2nd February – suffice to say that there are lessons to be learned from the day, such that there will not be a repetition next season of the problems encountered at *Bristol*.

It was confirmed that *Jason Gibbs* has now retired as *Police Liaison Officer*, and he was invited to the *Boardroom* for the *Swans versus Derby County* match to mark his retirement.

4. Treasurer and Finance Sub Group Report

S McD gave an update on the Trust's current financial position, and there were two significant outgoings during the month, the Trust's Liability Insurance Cover premium and Annual Awards Dinner sponsorship of the Lifetime Achievement Award.

SMcD reported that the Finance Sub-Group continue to have access to the Club monthly Management Accounts which are reasonably detailed, and are in line with budget. Our new Chairman, Trevor Birch, continues to lead the drive to reduce our operational costs, which is a necessity as we face up to the financial impact of relegation from the Premier League.

5. Membership Sub Group Report

SD reported on current membership numbers of 1,596 against total membership for 2017/18 of 1,278.

The development of an online system whereby pupils completing the *Welsh Bacculaureate Challenge* can apply for free membership is under development with an estimated completion date of 1st July, 2019.

The Sub-Group is currently discussing the preparation of Membership packs to go out to all members in July, possibly including the Voting Forms for Board member elections. After discussion it was agreed to keep them separate.

6. Website and Social Media Report

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

The total numbers of page views in April were 1,619 (compared to 3,387 in March) which is around the usual seasonal average. Half of these views came directly from links we had placed on our social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook and Instagram). 63% of visitors to the website came from UK while 32% were from the USA).

AdSense income (from impressions and direct clicks to a displayed advert on our Trust web pages) has generated income of £116.41 since implementation on 13th February 2017. Estimated earnings for April are expected to be in the region of £0.80 (compared to £2.49 in March).

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

1. Trust Homepage = 385 (23.78%)
2. Latest additions to the Robbie James Wall of Fame = 236 (14.58%)
3. Trust News = 66 (4.08%)
4. Meet the Trust Board = 63 (3.89%)
5. New Chairman Appointment = 56 (3.46%)

Postings and links to relevant articles and content on the members Facebook pages continue with April's topics focusing primarily on the late push to the playoffs and player contracts/transfers speculation.

The total number of members to our Trust members Facebook page has increased to 267 by the end of April. The number of members on our public Facebook page has fallen slightly to 11,949.

Twitter saw us continue to increase followers to 8,108 by the end of April with impressions and engagements remaining high.

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

info@swanstrust.co.uk = 3 (compared to 19 in March)

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

A total of 1 member has joined (or re-joined) the Trust via the website facility during April (compared to 4 in March).

An update to Members e-mail was sent out to all current Trust Members during April, while 4 News articles were posted up on our Trust website during the month featuring the Match Day programme notes for our home matches.

7. Schools' Initiative Report

SD reported that a group of pupils from *Dyffryn Taf School, in Whitland*, will start the *Challenge* on the 16th May, 2019 by visiting the *Liberty Stadium*. The launch will take place in a *Hospitality Box* overlooking the pitch followed by a guided tour of the *Stadium*. The pupils will then work on the *Challenge* in School, completing it in time to make their presentations on Tuesday, 11th June with Board members in attendance.

RG and **SD** recently attended a meeting of the Carmarthenshire Welsh Baccalaureate Co-ordinators group to introduce them to the Challenge, which was very positively received. A number of schools, including *Ysgol Bro Dinefwr* and *Ysgol Maes Y Gwendraeth* have indicated that they would like to use the challenge next year.

The Membership group is taking forward the development of an on-line system whereby pupils completing the *Welsh Baccalaureate Challenge* can apply for free membership. The estimated completion date is 1st July.

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 *Mobiloo* are in attendance at every match, but, not being used much as fans who have attended the Stadium for years wouldn't think of looking at the web page. The *Changing Places* facility will be promoted further in the next few months, in preparation for next season.

The *DLO* match day team receive key 'match day key information' notes with information regarding key timings, *Mobiloo*, *Autism Spectrum Disorder*, general and impairment specific awareness, visiting Supporter requests, audio headset requests. This is to help ensure that Supporters have the best matchday experience that they can.

The *Disabled Supporters Association* donated 50 *Easter Eggs* to the *Swansea Sound Easter Egg Appeal* and presented them to our *Lifetime President Kevin Johns*.

The *Disabled Supporters Association* receive many queries via Social media, emails etc., and we pass these on to the *Club Disability Access Officer, Mark Phillips*. The communication and working together really helps our Members.

10. Governance

This group has reformed with **AC** and **BC** being joined by **AG** and **CD**. **TB** has stood down from this Group. It is hoped that some progress can be made by the June Board Meeting as the work needs to be completed prior to the new Trust membership year.

11. Awards Dinner Update

CD reported that the evening had been a great success, the additional stage areas at each end of the room with *Leon Britton* and *Lee Trundle* in attendance worked very well, the meal and service was very good and the evening flowed really well. The *Trust* and *EFRC* were in attendance at all meetings leading up to the Dinner taking place, all comments had been positive about the evening. There were 560 in attendance. Our *Lifetime Achievement Awards* were presented to *Trust Secretary Nigel Hamer* and to *Football Club Secretary Jackie Rockie*.

12. Secretary Post.

NH reported that there had been two expressions of interest in the post of *Secretary*. **NH** would contact them to have a general conversation and explain in more depth the role of the *Secretary* to the *Trust Board*. **NH** offered the continued use of the *Registered Office* address going forward in the event of an alternative not being sorted in time.

13. Wall of Fame.

There were a few errors on the plates which will require alterations in due course.

14. Annual Board Elections.

NH announced the sequence of dates for the upcoming annual Board member elections. This was circulated to Board Members on the 1st April. There will be SIX vacancies with the following Board Members period of Office ending – *Sian Davies, Cath Dyer, Andy Godden, Stuart McDonald, Barbara Cook and Andrew Cude.*

Dates as follows:

- 10th June** – Announcement of Election. Nomination Forms available on our website.
- 24th June** – Nomination Forms to be returned to Registered Office.
- 4th July** – Voting Forms to be sent to Members.
- 25th July** – Voting Forms to be returned to registered Office.
- 29th July** – Announcement on Website for applications for C-opted Members.
- 30th July** – Announcement of Elected Board Members on our website.
- 5th August** – Receive applications for Co-opted Members.
- 8th August** – Decision on election of Co-opted Members.
- 12th August** – First Board Meeting of new Trust Board Year. Election of Officers.

AoB

AC raised on behalf of the late *Terry Coles* the previous promise of a *Plaque* to be placed at the *Vetch Field*. **SMcD** agreed to take this forward with the *Club*.

SMcD announced that there would be a *Structured Dialogue Meeting* taking place on the 30th May, more details of the event would be posted on our internal email group.

TB had produced a paper on *Governance Review and Reflections of a Newly Elected Trust Board member based on his experiences to date*.

Due to the lateness of this being seen by Board Members, this could be discussed further at the next Board meeting.

NH thanked the *Board Members* for nominating him for the *Lifetime Achievement Award* presented to him at the *Annual Awards Dinner* on the 28th April. It had been an honour and privilege to have represented the Trust since its formation in August 2001.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 7.10pm

Next Board Meeting Monday 10th June 2019 at the Liberty Stadium, Swansea at 5.30pm.