

SWANSEA CITY SUPPORTERS TRUST

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Monday 11th October 2020 17h30 – MS Teams videoconference.

Present	Apologies
Julian Winter (<i>JW</i>)	
Andy Godden (<i>AG</i>)	
Stuart McDonald (<i>SMcD</i>)	
Dave Dalton (<i>DD</i>)	
Ceri Stone (<i>CS</i>)	
Cath Dyer (<i>CD</i>)	
Rupert Thomas (<i>RT</i>)	
Terry Sinnett (<i>TS</i>)	
Sian Davies (<i>SD</i>)	
Roger Goodwin (<i>RG</i>)	
Adam Lewis (<i>AL</i>)	
Paul Barrett (<i>PB - Secretary</i>)	

Agenda

	Item	Lead
1	Introduction of Julian Winter to the Trust Board	AG
2	September Minutes and Matters Arising	All
3	Legal/Shareholding update	AG
4	Finance / Supporter's Director update	SMc
5	Membership & Fundraising (report received)	DD
6	Website/Social Media (report received)	DD
7	PR/Comms	AG
8	DSA	CD
9	AOB	All

Introduction of Julian Winter to the Trust Board

1. AG opened the meeting by welcoming Julian Winter to the club, and introducing him to the Trust Board. JW is happy to be part of this meeting on a regular basis.
2. Some of the main points from JW's presence, which lasted an hour are as follows:
 - a. JW was asked what attracted him to the club; good fan base, playing style, facilities, and the opportunity to take it forward.
 - b. JW looking to implement a strategic business plan at the club over the next 2/3 years, aligning with shareholders' requirements.
 - c. Brief discussions took place on the transfer window status.
 - d. We indicated to JW that communication with the fans is something that is of critical importance, which was agreed and will be progressed.
 - e. JW advised that it's too early to discuss stadium reopening due to WAG restrictions on any trials etc. JW is already talking to local councillors and Senydd politicians. He indicated the club is ready for a trial, date tbc; numbers (eg start with 1000, build upwards), and other factors such as stewarding, catering, economics all need consideration.

- f. JW was asked for his priorities; transfer window, meeting with his senior staff, balance of time between the 3 locations, working with his team to establish priorities.
- g. Balance of discussions takes place locally and with the USA.
- h. JW was questioned about the recent misunderstanding with the manager over the Petersen departure; it was a storm in a tea cup and Steve Cooper was completely on board with the decision to sell Peterson.
- i. JW was asked about his Community aspirations; he outlined his background from player, further education, community officer at Grimsby, his roles at Watford and Huddersfield (inc Breakfast Clubs Initiative). He will work closely with the community officer, the supporters' director and the club commercial manager at the Liberty to ensure the community trust becomes central to how the club thinks. JW highlighted the natural affinity between the Supporters & Community Trusts.
- j. The decision to downgrade the Swans Academy from Category 1 to 2 was raised. JW stated that the cost / benefit indicated that the financial realities of the club's position meant that the significant additional cost of maintaining Cat 1 status could not be justified and that what is most important is to continue developing high quality players. The Academy Manager has been tasked with conducting a detailed review of the Academy for the past 9 years, including cost/benefit analysis of all the players who have passed through it.
- k. Finally, JW was asked to ensure that best value for player transfers was continued, particularly with the impending sale of Joe Rodon.
- l. JW was thanked by everyone for his time and presence, and agreed to attend future meetings, and also to ask Rebecca Edwards-Symmonds if she would also attend some meetings.

September Minutes and Matters Arising

3. Last month's minutes have been completed and the minutes redacted before being published on the Trust web site.

Supporter's Director update

4. SMcD and CD attended the recent club board meeting.
5. SMcD stated his intent at the start of the meeting to vote against the proposed board changes (which were grouped together). As all other directors voted in favour, then the action passed. There's still no response on the Kaplan resignation.
6. SMcD and AG plan to meet with Silverstein.
7. JW has made a good impression on the senior staff.

Membership and Fundraising (see report)

8. The sub-group meeting took place ahead of this meeting
9. Current Trust Membership is almost 1,400. This is an increase of c 100 since the beginning of September.
10. A successful trial test has been carried out on Stripe, PayPal is now history.

Website/Social Media

11. A new page has been added to the website, with snippets of cuttings, eg matchday pages.
12. An FAQ page may be produced for the Trust website. The legal stuff will be edited for public consumption.

PR / Comms update

13. TS and CS continue to prepare the Trust section for the matchday programme, and the monthly update.
14. The podcast article from Stuart James (The Rise & Fall of Swansea City) was shared by AG.
15. A BBC Article has been under discussion with Chris Wathan (Media Mgr).
16. A members Q&A took place on FB in the week following the meeting.

DSA Update

17. CD advised that not much activity took place last month; comps for members, birthday cards, membership for DSA renewal is free for 2020/21.

AOB

18. Invitations to the Trust Board meetings; need to determine how often we invite JW, Becky or Gareth.
19. Re-raise the plan for naming the east stand the Alan Curtis Stand (SMcD / AG).
20. 3rd kit sales have been slow; 1st kit sales mainly older fans; 2nd kit, sales to mainly the younger element.
21. RG has had a few informal conversations with schools; we still have stock of some books and booklets available for use in prize draws at schools.
22. PB has offered to give some limited training on the use of MS Teams software. This will obviously be limited due to Covid.
23. AG mentioned the club has agreed to partner with the Gambling with Lives project (for 14-18 year olds) with the Community Trust. Announcement is planned in the coming weeks. RG invited to become involved.

Membership & Fundraising Sub-Group Report – October 2020

Main notes & actions from Sub Group Meeting held via Teams at 4pm on Monday 12th October

In attendance: Dave Dalton (DD), Sian Davies (SD), Terry Sinnett (TS), Ceri Stone (CS), Rupert Thomas (RT), Adam Lewis (AL)

SD reported that as of 8th October the total number of Trust members recorded on our database for 2020/21 was 1400, an increase of 126 members since the last meeting.

The total number of members at the end of 2019/20 was 1114 so an encouraging increase of almost 300 new members over the past 10 weeks.

A total of £1029 had been received as online/cheque donations so far this season and SD had emailed a “Thank you” to all members.

SD also confirmed that work continues to contact all members who automatically renew year on year by standing order and offered a full refund should they so wish? No members have taken up this option to date.

TS & DD reported that our Twitter/Facebook activity and engagements continued to be busy and plans to set up an online Facebook Q&A session with current Trust members are being finalised

AL had been asked by DD to take over the lead role on our Trust Instagram account and had already begun interacting with followers. After the meeting concluded AL would run through a presentation to outline all of our Social Media accounts and how we could use them to possibly interact further with our supporters. A copy of this presentation will remain on our Teams page for future reference.

SD would check our members database to see what our male/female ratio split currently is and also how many under 16s we have as current members. It would be useful to see how we can offer them something more than what they are being given at present and also help in forming a strategy for recruiting new female and junior members.

Note: DD has subsequently emailed a couple of proposals to the sub group as follows:

TS suggested we could use our social media platforms to announce new Trust members as seen recently on the Norwich City Twitter account he had emailed out to sub group members earlier. After a general discussion it was felt something like this could work at particular milestones and also run alongside maybe a monthly draw of new and existing members where winners could receive a book or an item of Swans merchandise, signed shirt etc. DD would make enquiries with the club to see if they would be willing to support the idea by providing free or cut-price merchandise etc

DD confirmed the new Stripe payment processing system was up and running and working well. Work to introduce a system for taking automatic renewals from members at the beginning of each season rather than the largely manual system in place at present will take place in Spring 2021.

The previous suggestion by CS where we look at Trust clothing and possibly other types of Trust merchandise had not been progressed? This will be looked at again by DD who would update the sub group on or before the November sub-group meeting to maybe coincide with Christmas and our 20th anniversary year/season?

In the meantime, TS confirmed we still have some car windscreen stickers and pin badges in the Trust Pod that could be given out to new members but we will probably wait until we see spectators returning to the Liberty so as not to incur any postage costs.

The next scheduled meeting of the M&F sub group will be on Monday 9th November 2020.

Dave Dalton

Swans Trust Membership & Fundraising Sub Group

19th October 2020

Swans Trust Website & Social Media Summary – October 2020

The following table summarises the Swans Trust website and social media stats for October 2020 and the previous three months for comparison purposes.

	Website Visits	Website Updates	Gen Trust Emails Received & Replied	Twitter Followers	Instagram Followers	Facebook Public Group	Facebook Private Group	Facebook Trust Members Only	Online Member Signups	Emails to Members
July	1913	2	27	8305	247	12149	2122	187	1	2
August	7414	6	43	8362	271	12524	2356	194	134	7
Sept	6254	6	21	8391	284	12512	2824	203	136	3
October	5280	7	12	8402	306	12531	2851	231	90	5

Another very busy month across all our website and social media platforms with activity and engagement since the beginning of the season remaining very high. We added almost 2 articles per week to our “Latest News” pages and the new “Supporter Updates” section created recently to add extracts of our members updates and match day programme pages is showing very encouraging visitor numbers.

The marked increase in direct interactions between board members and supporters/Trust members through emails, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram continues and the online Q&A for our Trust members on Facebook earlier in October proved very successful. We are aiming to run a similar event in the near future which, if technology allows, will allow supporters who are not Trust members to also participate in some capacity.

Our recently created Trust Instagram account is also gathering momentum and we hope to develop this still further with relevant pictures, videos and links in the lead up to Christmas.

Most of the social media discussions in October have revolved around the transfer window and the sale of Joe Rodon as well as the “Big Picture” project. The ongoing share sale issue also continues to engage debate. The increase in direct interaction still seems to be broadly appreciated by the majority of supporters/members and we will look to continue with similar engagements in the coming months.

The detailed figures are contained in a separate summary of website and social media statistics which are available upon request from dave.dalton@swanstrust.co.uk.

If you have any further questions then please let me know.

Dave Dalton
Swansea City Supporters Trust