

## **Exeter City AFC Supporters Society Ltd**

### **Trust Board Meeting Minutes Part A**

#### **Meeting held in the RGB Legends Lounge**

**Date: 14 November 2022**

**Trustees present:** Nick Hawker, Will Barrett, Julen Beer, Steven Chown, Mark Cordell, , Nick Edwards, Pete Ferlie, Clive Harrison, Richard Knight, Jamie Pelmeur,

**Apologies:** Kayleigh Jade West, Doug Gillard

**Officers present:** Steve Chudley (Finance Officer), Phil Burden (Secretary), Pete Cordwell (Minutes Taker)

**Apologies.** none

Members present: Jed Penberthy, Jonathan Tipper, Tom White, Alistair Yates, Chris Penny.

#### **Part B Summary**

Under Part B of the Trust Board meeting, the Trust Board:

1. Discussed sponsorship of next season's shirt
2. Heard feedback from the appointment of the new manager
3. Considered appointment of Club Board Directors

#### **Election of Trust Chair**

NH said it had been an honour and privilege to serve as Trust Chair. He had tried to put a plan in place which celebrated 20 years of the Trust but was also mindful of the fact that these are difficult times for people. He hoped people would vote for the agenda, not the person.

**Proposal** NH to be re-elected as Trust Chair

Proposer Nick Edwards, seconded by Will Barrett

**Passed** unanimously

NH said it had been a tough twelve months. Still work needed for all of us on Comms and in particular, shouting from the rooftops how good we are. Groups need to be even more active. Very important that for the first time the Club is leading on a membership drive.

#### **Nomination of Group Leads and Club Board Directors.**

##### **Group Lead, Ownership and Membership Working Group (OMWG)**

**Proposal.** Richard Knight to be re-elected as Group Lead.

**Passed** unanimously, no abstentions

##### **Group Lead, Community Working Group Proposal.**

Doug Gillard to be re-elected as Group Lead

**Passed** unanimously, no abstentions

##### **Group Lead, Finance and Governance Working Group (FGG)**

**Proposal.** Steve Chudley to lead Group

**Passed** unanimously, no abstentions

### **Communications Working Group (Comms)**

**Proposal.** Julen Beer to lead group.

**Passed** unanimously, no abstentions

### **Approval of Minutes from Meeting**

Approval of Part A minutes proposed by Pete Ferlie, seconded by Clive Harrison

Approved. Two abstentions (not present at October meeting)

### **Matters Arising**

Veryconnect has had problems with processing standing orders, but that is now fine. Waiting for whole system to be put together. Should be operational by end of November.

Jamie from Big Step (against gambling sponsorship) has been invited to next meeting. He'll join by Zoom.

### **Update of Part A matters from Chair.**

I am continuing to work on a Club marketing strategy with Rob Mulholland and Carrie Gillam. This follows a post code penetration analysis of our gate. I am hopeful that the strategy will be in place for the new year.

Richard and Clive will update on the membership drive – the One Club scheme.

The deployment of the VeryConnect membership platform is, I hope, nearing completion. It stalled through the import of standing order payments from members – a bug bear of mine for years! I hope we have now resolved this and am awaiting further information from VeryConnect about go-live. I'm pleased to say that we have procedures in place which I hope will successfully migrate both Trust members and Junior Grecian members data to the new platform. Likewise, Steve has arranged the linking of GoCardless and STRIPE, the subscription payment handling solutions. Once live, we will no longer offer standing orders as a payment option but instead direct debit facilities via the solution. Likewise, we will redirect new members to the new solution rather than offering payment via SPEKTRIX.

Our AGM passed in relative comfort. I have to revert to John Kanefsky around the technical composition of SCMP (Salary Cost Management Protocol). Although commonly expressed as a % of turnover, the EFL are quite prescriptive around what constitutes turnover. I must revert to a member on why the club would not allow the local CAMRA branch to hold the beer festival at its premises this year. Having looked into this, it seems the costs of clearing up were too high to make it viable.

### **Any Other Part A business**

Feedback from 2022 Election and AGM

Once again we were made very welcome by the Phoenix. A thank you to them.

Nick Hawker's address to AGM can be found on the Trust Website, Julian Tagg's on the Club website.

There were 60 people attended and, of course, we would like more. The Trust resolution to convert the donation to a loan was approved with three abstentions.

In the election, there were 3,286 electronic votes and 143 on paper. The turnout was about 33%. The online hustings peaked at about 40 people and it had received 167 views on YouTube.

Views of members were that it went “swimmingly”. One member raised 7 questions through trustees and suggested candidate order should be randomised alphabetically. One exiled member said the “info was great and it was easy to vote.”

### **Seniors Christmas Party**

Same day as players visit to Bramble Ward. Calendar signing in Centre Spot would follow.

**Proposal.** The Trust should contribute £250 to the Seniors Christmas Party.

Proposer. Richard Knight, seconded by Pete Ferlie.

Approved unanimously.

### **Merchandise Proposal (MC)**

#### **The Trust and the Terrace Store**

As agreed at the Trust Board meeting in October I have reached out to the Terrace Store in order to establish a link to sell Trust branded merchandise. This would be with a view to getting some stock set up ahead of Xmas and if it goes well to give us a platform to sell merchandise specific to our 20 year anniversary. This would be subject to the contract being reviewed and sample images being reviewed first.

#### Key Questions Answered

- Is there a minimum sale that you require to continue a partnership? No
- How does the commissions and payments work? You would receive 25% of every sale after VAT
- What control do we have over the style and range of items you sell? All items are approved by you before live, you would steer the direction for product designs
- Do you have availability to design items or would we need to provide files? Our in house design team can handle it all for you
- Should either party be unhappy with the agreement is there a notice period? You can end the agreement anytime with 30 days' notice
- On the occasions we may have a bespoke product available to us, do you offer a distribution service for a fee per item? We can hold your stock for you, charging a £1 fulfilment fee + shipping for any item

#### Proposed Items

1. A white mug with the supporters trust logo on it (with the wording “proud to be supporter owned”) underneath it.
2. A bar runner as below but with the Trust Logo



3. A bottle opener, plain in colour but with the Trust Logo
4. A cushion, potentially with the Stagecoach Adam Stansfield stand with Trust advertising on the boardings.
5. A plain T-shirt with the Trust Logo
6. A mouse mat with the Trust Logo
7. A mug with Teletext score result for the first game under Trust ownership.

I continue to believe that the logo we should use is the separate Trust logo.

### **There were no objections to this proposal**

Nick in the Club Shop doesn't want us to include the Club Crest.

The quality seems to be good. A member had bought lots of stuff from the Terrace. It had been good quality. A similar supplier in Newton Abbot was mentioned.

Would need a policy regarding frequency of promotion on socials

### **Working Group Updates**

It was agreed that the minutes of these groups should be published as part of these minutes.

### **Finance and Governance Group**

Update provided in the pack.

### **Ownership and Membership Group**

Please remember anyone can join this group.

The publication of the survey has been slow

The commercial team is ahead of the budget.

### **Community Working Group**

Minutes of meetings within the pack.

## **Communication and Engagement Group**

Hasn't met this month. Working on:

Requests from History Group. Arthur Chadwick; anniversary of tour of Amsterdam to [play Ajax; anniversary of first promotion.

The proposed comms campaign on Trust plans for parity did not get underway.

Considering a redesign of the newsletter.

Club are working on better infographics. Justin wants to do a year end fans' forum.

A member (AY) suggested Plymouth Argyle as a good example of infographics.

### **Any Other Business**

Trust window. Well-received. Signage needed.

Fans' forum 22<sup>nd</sup> November. PF and NE organising. Help needed, all welcome.

Clive Bawden will present Risk Register for the Club.

Watching Twitter developments (Elon Musk) carefully. Twitter is main form of communication with members.

Cans for City. Signs needed for pubs keen to take part. (NE)

Proposal from member. Tom White, member, outlined an idea to help members with loneliness and the cost of living. He suggested that some regular supporters may have lost their job or be struggling financially. The Trust, he said, was not just about 90 minutes of football. Members may need support with other wider issues.

### **Tom's proposal in full.**

#### **Background**

Loneliness is affecting more and more of us in the UK and has had a huge impact on our physical and mental health during the pandemic. Our connection to other people and our community is fundamental to protecting our mental health and we need to find better ways of tackling the epidemic of loneliness. We can all play a part in this [Mental Health Awareness Week 2022 - Loneliness | Mental Health Foundation](#)

Exeter City being a Supporters Owned club and was recently described going to SJP as "just more than 90 mins of football it's a big social occasion, we meet friends we've known for a long time".

For many working age individuals going to SJP is their only or main highlight of the weekend.

I am concerned with the cost of living crisis particularly combined with other personal crisis's when families and or individuals review their budgets that going to watch Exeter City may be high on the agenda as first things that maybe cut and causing a detriment to their mental health and wellbeing combined with the new circumstance as well as ECFC losing a regular active supporter (even if they remain passive)

#### **Proposal**

Will ECFC Supporters' Trust be interested in running a support scheme e.g. a grant scheme to support those who have experienced new financial hardship e.g. redundancy, bereavement, separation, illness or other short term or permanent disability support to attend home games for a certain period of time around season ticket renewal time.

This should give them enough time (to access benefits, Citizens Advice or other support agencies) to access external support and reevaluate their personal circumstances. I'm happy to work with members of the Trust to fine tune this proposal and or help administrate it.

### **Risks**

Support given e.g. match/season tickets must only be for individuals who have been approved and meet the criteria and not transferable or resaleable.

Individuals should be already known to the club e.g. on club database and/or trust membership

Creating a method where supporters or friends/relatives can apply but circumstances are only shared with those on a strictly need to know basis.

It should be clear from the outset my proposal is for short term support not indefinite and after agreed period of time the individuals should be able to support themselves to attend matches.

Review criteria around games that are potential sell outs if demand outweighs capacity.

NH thanked Tom for taking the time to raise the issue. It will be discussed at the OMWG to which Tom would be invited.

Social media If any new trustees want to introduce themselves on social media, please contact Jed. Also please try to create a more constant and consistent stream of info for social media.

JH. Fully supported Tom White's proposal.

JH OneClub campaign. Could we ask Trust members what form of communication they use or would like to use. Could they indicate this on Veryconnect.

From member (AY)

1. Evening with Brian McDermott (see October minutes) 50/50 fundraiser. Date needed. Would go to an independent City venue if it can't be arranged at the Club.

2. Felt it was a mistake to make a charge to watch World Cup matches.

AY also raised a couple of personal matters which will be considered by the Trust outside the meeting.

### **Date of next meeting:**

12th December 2022 at 18.00