

Exeter City AFC Supporters Society Ltd

Trust Board Meeting Minutes Part A

Meeting held in Trust Suite

Date: 8 November 2021

Trustees present: Nick Hawker, Will Barrett, Julen Beer, Mark Cordell, Elaine Davis, Nick Edwards, Pete Ferlie, Doug Gillard, Clive Harrison, Richard Knight, Neil Le Milliere,

Apologies: Kayleigh Jade West

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

Apologies. None

Members present

Alistair Yates

Part B Summary

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

1. Discussed the process of consultation about Cliff Hill Training ground redevelopment. Feedback was positive.
2. Heard that costs for the erection of the big screen had increased dramatically
3. Received feedback from a positive Club Board meeting

As the first meeting following the 2021 AGM PB welcomed new trustees and opened the meeting.

Election of Trust Chair

NH spoke in some detail of his Resume (full text at Meeting Pack, 20211108-TB Agenda.pdf. Pages 12-17). In particular, of changes to the structure of Club Board, and to Trust Chair becoming Club Chair.

Proposal

NH to be re-elected as Trust Chair

Proposer Doug Gillard, Seconder Neil Le Milliere

Passed. In favour 9. Abstention 1

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.

Proposer Mark Cordell, Seconder Will Barrett

Passed unanimously, no abstentions

Group Lead, Community Working Group

Proposal. Doug Gillard to be re-elected as Group Lead

Proposer Richard Knight. Seconder Neil Le Milliere

Passed unanimously, no abstentions

Group Lead, Finance and Governance Working Group (FGG)

Proposal. Steve Chudley to lead Group

Steve asked for some time to consult. Agreed. Defer to next meeting

Communications Working Group (Comms)

Proposal. Julen Beer to lead group.

Proposer Will Barrett, Seconder Pete Ferlie

Passed unanimously, no abstentions

Club Board. Director of Supporter Engagement

Proposal. Clive Harrison to be re-elected

Proposer Mark Cordell, Seconder Julen Beer

Passed unanimously, no abstentions

Director of Community Engagement

Proposal. Elaine Davis to be re-elected

Proposer Richard Knight Seconder Will Barrett

Passed unanimously, no abstentions

Club Board Director of Finance and Governance

Jeremy Tipper to take on the role and to be invited to Trust Board meeting

Approval of minutes from October Meeting

Approval of October Part A minutes proposed by Richard Knight, seconded by Doug Gillard

Approved. Four abstentions (new trustees not present at October meeting)

Matters Arising

Appraisals to start, now that elections have been completed

Match day rota for Trust Office has gone out. Grand opening, possibly Boxing Day with player present to sign autographs.

Update of Part A matters from Chair.

See above

Any Other Part A business

Feedback from 2021 election and AGM

Thanks to Phil, John Street and Celia.

Potential Improvements

Change some of deadlines now the process is digital e.g. 6 weeks for nomination forms

Timing of hustings. Only 4 present but couldn't really have worked with 8

Turnout down a little. Could be because there was one less weekend to vote.

Look to encourage people to join working group before taking the big step to trustee

AY. Need to advertise hustings more. Suggestion, hustings on zoom was successful in pandemic year.

PB was asked to put together a small team to review election and AGM.

Feedback from Cliff Hill Training Ground Vote

It was worth paying for event to be filmed. It informs people and it can be seen there is no bias. Need to check if it has been posted on Club website.

AY. Delighted with voting process. Shirt voting especially successful.

Matter of environmental issues has once again been raised. Reminder that all environmental improvements have a cost but we may need to look again at this,

Trust Board Working Group Updates

Finance and Governance Group

The revised Articles and Governance Manual have been agreed (see email from Phil Burden. Bos 61358. FGG report. 5 November 2021)

Important. Trust will approve any sponsorship deals. Trust can dismiss any director.

Still some tidying up needed.

SC Trust Finances. Accountant has confirmed there is no corporation tax owing this year.

AY asked for information about members and how many have been lost.

3,849 members inc Junior Grecians. Average subscriptions £48 per annum per member.

Ownership and Membership Group

Dramatic increase in membership recently, probably due to engagement opportunities of recent polls.

Next meeting is 17th November

Congratulations to Clive Harrison for his contribution to record attendance at City Women v PA FAC.

Next season, could we provide poppy shirts to be auctioned to raise money for British Legion?

Christmas Seniors' Party under discussion

OMWG Aims

Increase membership

Explore "rewards"

Encourage increased donation element of subscriptions

Make greater use of member skills

Encourage family audience

Match day experience

Supporter Experience Committee

The SEC met to further consider the Project 6000 strategy document. The document is to be broken down for feedback/input from departmental managers/directors as we seek to refine the document and expand its ownership throughout the business. There are sections of the Strategy that can be taken forward without delay, particularly around supporter experience. Discussions included:

A potential bonus structure for the Commercial team as well as a more general staff reward system. This features in the P6000 strategy document and a benchmarking exercise for key staff will be undertaken to help us understand how we compare with other businesses and form the basis of future Board discussion.

Planning an "Ethos" Workshop

Recruitment continues for commercial positions. Two offers have been accepted.

There is a lot of interest in commercial possibilities around the redevelopment of the Cliff Hill Training Ground. It has been suggested that a corporate event is held, perhaps at the beginning of December, when these opportunities can be offered to sponsors.

Community Working Group

Meeting Thursday

Wednesday, hosting ECI at game.

Jonathan Tipper has donated 3 tickets to ECI

South West Supporters' Trust met. One of clubs has asked for minutes to be confidential. Useful

Hoping to discuss possibility of food bank. Could be after Christmas.

AY. Are we putting fliers in new housing packs? It's a good way of getting people involved.

Read Easy, an organisation which helps adults with literacy problems (especially in prisons) is looking for volunteers.

Communication and Engagement Group

Will Barrett is stepping down as group lead.

Achievements of the past year

Created and subsequently delivered all key requirements of the Trust Communications Strategy 2020-2025, including an increase in content volume across all platforms

Development and delivery of new Trust website, which has seen user numbers increase by 400%

Driven impressions and engagements on social media from less than 500k in the previous year to more than one million in the first six months of 2021

Collaborated with colleagues and members to test and implement online voting for three elections and the CHTG proposal vote

Delivered key elements of the One of Our Own Cup, including promotional materials, the match itself, and the media packages for the players

Helped to encourage supporters to help us win the Football Shirts FC Trophy by producing promotional content and collaborating with the Club's media team

Areas of Focus for 2021/22

Implement Trust Mission Statement and Values for website.

Integrate with the work of the SEC and the club to help drive project 6K.

Enhance our presence outside of 'the bubble', particularly within the city.

Identify and target sections of the c.90% of residents within the population of Exeter who don't attend games with promotional material... this should also be applicable to the club's approach with surveys.

Better promotion of the Trust Match Day Office and utilisation of the Engagement Hub.

Recruit more volunteers and contributors to support engagement activities and to produce content – operate less by committee and more by work-flow... for the comms group, this will allow group lead and deputy to focus on and produce urgent content without losing track of our baseline comms plan.

Seek to appoint a Trust Media Officer to replace Alice - focus on external comms, match day activities, and events such as forums, hustings and AGM.

Improve, within reason, comms equipment and resources so that Trustees and volunteers don't have to continue paying for it out of their own pockets – the recent cost of the CHTG forum film should provide some indication of how reasonable the prior request for funds earlier this year was – this is something that I would be happy to discuss/debate further at any time!

More support from other Trustees in the production of content, and a minimum of one annual feature per Trustee – we all write our manifestos and then never refer to them again publicly.

A touch more collective effort in replying to the media call out email to the board via this email group... I have given up on this now but hope that someone will pick it back up in the near future.

A key suggested action is that TED's and Group Leads appoint a Trust comms rep within their groups.

Production of content that focuses on the behind the scenes at the club – single most requested item in my time on the comms group - and more of the mechanics in easy to read/view form as the view/download rates for meeting minutes are almost negligible.

In reference to the above, a much clearer explanation of how the club/Trust works... many of the staff at the club have no idea, so something needs doing on this front if members and potential members are going to have a chance!

The Price of Football Series (use infographics – inspired by our new colleague, Nick Edwards, at the hustings).

Regular Q&A opportunities outside of forums and GM's for members in person and online.

Comms team to lead on content for marketing campaigns for Trust membership with input from Trust Board and other working groups – campaign schedule created to run each season.

Add to the comms strategy a strategic approach to convert increased online engagement into memberships – collaborate with membership secretary and the OWMG on this front.

Creation of content for the club media team, particularly in relation to promoting the club's USP of supporter ownership... if we produce it, they will publish it.

Most important – it is the communications and engagement group but we often neglect the latter. To improve on this, provide two to four votes of the membership each season on matters related to the club. The scoreboard would have been a perfect opportunity to exercise this, and this level of engagement would increase both the sense of we own our football club and would attract interest from external parties e.g., non-members and the wider football community (admittedly this one was written prior to this week's events, but the point still stands).

We should also look to work with the club and community trust to hold and support more live and in-person events and help supporters and supporter groups to meet their heroes on a more regular basis... they are the stars of the show and the single biggest draw that we have in terms of turning the public into supporters and supporters into members.

In relation to the above, turn the One of Our Own Cup into a live community tournament on an annual basis

Any Other Business

Covid plaque displayed. Thanks to Signs Express.

PF is happy to be involved with Green Audit

Question. Will moving to Living Wage still be viable after recent increase? Looking at differentials at the moment.

Trust sponsored game with Northampton. ED to look at guest list and discuss with MC

Should we look at meeting on same day of week each month?

AY Could we have more details about meetings and engage with more people, please?

AY My resolution was misrepresented at the AGM meeting. It was purely to investigate looking at property.

Comments were made without reading the details in full

NH. The entire resolution was on the screen and people were allowed ample time to read it. I emphasised it was an investigation.

You could have sent a representative.

AY. I did send a representative. I don't want to say who it was.

NH. There is no evidence that there was a misrepresentation.

Date of next meeting:

Monday 13 December 2021