



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

### **Trust Board Meeting 17 February 2020 Minutes Part A**

**Meeting held at:** The Trust Suite, St James Park

**Date:** 17 February 2020

**Trustees present:** Nick Hawker (Chair), Jon Beer, Mark Cordell, Pete Martin, Clive Harrison, Will Barrett, Peter Holding, Neil Le Milliere, Elaine Davis, Yasmin Western, Richard Knight, Doug Gillard

**Officers present:** Steve Chudley, Phil Burden (Secretary), Simon Larkins (Minute Taker)

**Apologies:** Alice Cooke (Trust Press and Media Manager)

**Guests present:** Justin Quick (Club Chief Operating Officer), Matt Taylor (First Team Manager)

#### **Talk from first team manager**

Matt Taylor updated the Trustees on player contract situations, potential playing budget for next season, injuries and how staff are looking at the current player-recruitment model to help in terms of getting cash-windfalls into the club through player sales. Matt then took questions from Trustees on a wide-range of subjects including the benefits of Leasing.com Trophy, young players and player contracts.

Approval of the minutes of the last meeting was proposed by Elaine Davis and seconded by Will Barrett.

#### **Matters arising from the previous minutes**

Richard Knight noted that he had not been put down as one of the Trustees present at the last meeting when in fact he was. It was agreed that this would be added to both minutes.

Yasmin Western also said she had met with Will Barrett with regards to helping with the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of the Supporters' Trust which had not been reflected in the minutes of the previous meeting.

#### **Update from the Chair**

The Chair gave an update on a query raised by a member at the AGM in terms of directors' remuneration and how it complies with company law and how it will comply with new IR35 legislation to be introduced by HMRC in April. The Chair told the meeting that there are three directors who currently get remuneration in lieu of them doing work for the Supporters' Trust/Club. He has passed all the info with regards to this to Stephen Scown Solicitors to get their advice. The Chair said he is still waiting for the full extent of their advice.

The Chair added that the Footballers Supporters' Association seminar at St James Park, for Supporters' Trust from across the South West to attend, had now been scheduled to take place on July 26.

## **Election of deputy chair**

Peter Martin told the meeting that he had been filling in as deputy chair for the past two years but wasn't intending to put himself forward again for the role. A discussion was had about the importance of the role and if it was needed and Trustees felt that it was. Trustee Neil Le Milliere said he would fulfil the role if needed, but felt that it would be better if one of the Trustees living in Exeter took up the responsibility. It was stated that if anybody would like to put themselves forward for the role of deputy chair to contact the Chair.

## **Electronic voting trial update**

Will Barrett gave an update on the trial of the electronic voting system. There are 33 plausible options but only one that has precedent in Election Runner as it is what Newcastle United Supporters' Trust used. Will added that they are going to set up a free trial on this system, of 20 people, involving a number of different operating systems as well as Trust members overseas.

## **Feedback from the Election Management Group**

Secretary Phil Burden gave an update on the election feedback. The Trust has had feedback from most of the candidates and 50 or so members. There was a general theme in terms of improvements looking at electronic voting, which would be introduced following a successful trial and a plea to members to send in up-to-date email information, and timings.

Phil stated that as soon as the fixture list for the 2020/21 season is announced, a date for the AGM and the election timescale would be set. The hustings would also be put at the start of the election process and it would professionally-filmed and available on the club's YouTube channel.

## **Trust Board Updates**

### **Finance and Governance Group**

Trustee Peter Holding said that the last meeting of the FGG had been postponed but they hoped to meet in the next couple of weeks. Trustee Yasmin Western had also corralled some information together on strategy and The FGG is still confident that it will get its reports together for the end of March. Richard Knight has also joined the FGG group.

Steve Chudley brought up Essence Membership Renewal and if it was worth renewing at a cost of £80. Trustees agreed that it was not of use to the Trust and it was agreed not to renew.

### **Ownership and Membership Group**

Elaine Davis gave an update on the STARS campaign and since the last update, two weeks ago, the fundraising campaign had seen an increase of a £1,051, but a £1,023 came from Trust events - £700 from the dinner and £323 from the music quiz – which means only £28 came from members and supporters. Elaine appealed for Trust Board members to keep the campaign alive by raising the publicity of the STARS campaign. The STARS campaign still has £500 to come from the Supporters' Club and there is still the fun day and the bucket collection. The current figure is at £9,750. It is hoped the campaign will get to £12,000 but plenty of work still to be done.

Elaine Davis also gave an update on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations at the Salford match. The group working on this have come up with a long list of things the Trust are doing for this game which was agreed would be sent to all Trust Board members. This list includes a chance to win three pairs of hospitality tickets – thanks to RGB Building Supplies – for the Salford match which is going to be raffled off. So, for £10 entrants can win a pair of tickets to be a sponsor for the match against Salford and all the perks that come with that.

## **Family Fun Day**

Clive Harrison updated the board that the family fun day would be held on July 12, which is the day of the European Championship 2020 Final.

## **Community Working Group**

Trustee Doug Gillard gave an update on the Community Working Group. He is currently looking at rewording the webpage for the Community Working Group and is also continuing with its outreach programme looking at the Trust's relationship with smaller football clubs in the area, such as Exmouth Town who give discounts to Trust members for attending their games when Exeter City are not playing.

Elaine Davis said that Justin Quick (CEO of the club) and Jamie Vittles (CEO of City Community Trust) had been contacted by CoLab, who are launching an alternative giving solution to unlock finance and stop begging in the streets through the charity Exeter Homeless Partnership. The idea is that they will be boxes throughout Exeter, which are 'wifi' enabled, and you can donate to help tackle homelessness through the box. They are approaching businesses in the city to host these boxes – with John Lewis and Mark and Spencer's having already signed up – and they would like two boxes at Exeter City. The boxes costs £400 each. When the money is donated through the box, it will be distributed by a panel, where people who have experienced homelessness themselves will sit as well as advisors. People in need will get the money through an application. The Trust Board agreed that it would be a good idea to do it, through its charity donation. Trustee Mark Cordell proposed that £200 should be given from the Trust, with £200 coming from supporters' groups, £200 from the club and £200 from CCT to make up the total cost of £800. That was seconded by Richard Knight, with the vote being carried by Trust Board Members.

## **Communications Working Group**

Trustee Pete Martin said the Communications Working group had not met since the end of October, due to various reasons, but was meeting this coming Thursday and an update would be provided from that for the next Trust Board meeting on March 9.

## **History Working Group**

Will Barrett gave an update on the History Working Group. He said the photographic exhibition in the Centre Spot had been well attended and the response had been very positive.

A total of 34 players also came to the former players day and the Trust 20 exhibit will be ready in time for the Salford home match on March 14.

## **Any other business**

### **FSA and £5,000 bond to AFC Wimbledon**

Chair Nick Hawker told the board that the Football Supporters' Association had decided to buy a £5,000 bond from AFC Wimbledon to help with the cost of their new stand. Exeter City Supporters' Trust is a member of the FSA and the Chair said he is certain nobody from the FSA came to ask if ECST was happy with this. It was agreed, by Trust Board members, that feedback should be given to the FSA that ECST was unhappy with this as a member of the FSA.

### **Trust merchandise**

Justin Quick told the meeting, that following the last Trust Board meeting where discussions were held with Spike Sussex with regards to producing merchandise to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Trust, he had spoken to the Terrace – a company the club deals with quite closely – and there is a commission route there that comes at no risk that could be explored as an option.

### **Priority ticketing scheme**

Trustee Clive Harrison brought up the issue with regards to the sale of priority tickets for the game against Plymouth Argyle at Home Park on Monday, March 23.

He said the whole point of launching the priority ticketing scheme was to encourage fans to join the Trust and allowing gold members to buy four tickets for the match had been a mistake because it wasn't priority at all as anyone who wanted a ticket, who knew a gold member, could just get one of theirs.

Justin Quick added that every time the priority ticketing system is actually needed there is always refinements and learning points. He suggested getting a party together to look at this issue and discuss the points that have been raised, which was agreed by Nick Hawker.