

BLUES TRUST

Minutes of the meeting of the Blues Trust Board held at 7.00pm on Thursday 30 September 2021 via Zoom video conference.

In attendance: Cliff Horrocks (CH) (Chair), Pete Bull (PB), Neil Cottrell (NC), Margaret Decker (MD), Richard Docker (RD), Bruce Kyte (BK), Linda Magner (LM), Rob Simpson (RSi), Liam Hindley (LH) and Paul Kelsall (PK).

Agenda Items

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and in particular Liam Hindley and Paul Kelsall who were attending their first meeting as Associate Members of the Board.

2. Apologies for Absence

Karim Adab (KA), Mark Holland (MH), Richard Stanley (RSt), Chris Street (CS) and David Squires (DS).

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 August 2021 were noted and approved.

RD confirmed that redacted minutes of meetings are now being posted on the website as a matter of routine.

4. Chairs Report

CH introduced his report and began by confirming that he had still not received a single response from the club following emails he had sent regarding various issues. LM also confirmed that she had not received a response to an enquiry about match tickets. In discussion, board members expressed complete frustration at the club's complete disregard for any form of engagement and the contempt being shown to the Trust, its members and supporters in general. The Board then discussed whether or not its approach to dealing with the club should change given the club's stance. CH noted the comments made and agreed to write to Edward Zheng and Ian Dutton one more time ahead of reporting matters to members at the forthcoming AGM on 4 November.

CH updated the meeting on progress with [REDACTED], and on correspondence exchanged with [REDACTED] regarding the ownership model

proposal discussed at the last meeting. It was noted that an invite was still to be sent to [REDACTED] for the next meeting of the Plan B working group.

5. Financial Report

PB introduced his report with reference to the financial update paper circulated prior to the meeting. He confirmed that the annual accounts have been finalised and were ready for presentation to the AGM, and also that Trust credit cards had now been obtained as previously agreed by the Board.

6. AGM 2021 Update

RD introduced this item and summarised the progress that had been made in making preparations for the AGM on 4 November. He confirmed that no member resolutions had been received for consideration at the meeting. MD confirmed that 6 valid nominations for Board membership had been submitted for approval at the meeting, with no election process required because the number received was fewer than the number of vacancies (8).

PB explained that the number of attendance registrations received from members to date was approximately 50.

RD confirmed that the final notification for the meeting would be emailed to Trust members on 21 October, together with all papers.

7. Other Officer Updates

(i) Research and Technical - RSt had previously submitted his apologies for the meeting so was not in attendance to make his report. However, he had prepared a note summarising recent activity which RD shared with the meeting. In particular, it was noted that RSt had received yet another “holding” response from the City Council which had not inspired confidence;

(ii) Press - in the absence of KA no report was given. RD was asked to follow up the outstanding press contacts list which KA had previously agreed to provide;

(iii) Projects Management - NC referred to a presentation circulated prior to the meeting and outlined ideas that had been developed for a contribution scheme to support possible activities associated with acquiring an interest in the club. The idea had its origins in a similar scheme that has been introduced by Newcastle United Supporters Trust. In discussion the Board supported further development of the idea, although with some reservations about likely start up costs, and agreed that the Plan B working group be asked to consider it in more detail. PB reminded the Board of the availability of resources from the FSA and wondered whether a football community fund had ever been created which might be appropriate for seed funding such an

activity. It was agreed that this should be explored in consultation with the FSA.

(iv) Membership - LM updated the meeting on recent membership activities. She noted that September had been quiet in terms of new membership additions although 94 people had joined since the beginning of the calendar year. LM also drew attention to a club ticket enquiry she had attempted to resolve on behalf of [REDACTED] which had resulted in complimentary remarks about the Trust being made on Radio WM. The idea of a member enquiry service was again supported by the Board and it was agreed that it could form the basis of a future email to members and an article on the website.

(v) Marketing and PR - RD explained that due to holiday commitments there had been no further marketing sub group activity since the last meeting, although a discussion had been held with Paul Champ just prior to his resignation concerning the development of a promotional brief to inform local businesses about the role and purpose of the Trust. This would be revisited when the marketing sub group next convened.

(vi) Fan Unity - CH explained that PK had kindly offered to take on the Fan Unity portfolio. This was welcomed by all present and it was agreed that an introductory meeting be held at the earliest opportunity involving CH, LM, RD and PK. RD to arrange;

(vii) IT and Website - PB confirmed that progress had been made in creating the Facebook Group previously discussed, and that it would be launched in the very near future. PB, LM and RD would be the administrators of the site in the first instance. PB would share further details with Board members in due course.

LM asked about the possibility of creating a central “library” on the data base for the storage of all general correspondence sent by board members. PB explained that our existing database is already capable of doing that for members and followers and agreed to demonstrate this facility to LM;

(viii) Without Portfolio - MD, RSi and LH explained that there was nothing specific to report at this point.

8. Any Other Business

(i) CH explained that the club had made contact with him about a “supporter of the month” proposal and requesting that the Trust participate in the identification of suitable nominations. In discussion it was agreed that CH should respond positively to the request despite the absence of contact from the club on all other matters;

(ii) CH drew attention to the recently reported incident of racist abuse by supporters of the club at the match against Peterborough United. It was agreed that the Trust should do more to make clear its support of diversity in football and to stand against abuse of any kind. Board members were asked to consider this issue in preparation for a discussion at a future meeting about how the Trust can improve its contribution to the fight against racism and other forms of discrimination within football.

(iii) NC explained that BCSH had very recently published accounts which showed better than expected results with a small profit being made. Whilst this was welcomed by the Board, it was agreed that more research of the figures was required with RSt being requested to write to the stock exchange seeking clarity.

9. Date of Next Meeting

- The date of the next meeting was confirmed for Thursday 28 October at 7.00pm via Zoom video conference.

The meeting finished at 8.55pm.