

BLUES TRUST

Minutes of the meeting of the Blues Trust Board held at 7.00pm on Thursday 9 December 2021 via Zoom video conference.

In attendance: Cliff Horrocks (CH) (Chair), Pete Bull (PB), Neil Cottrell (NC), Richard Docker (RD), Paul Kelsall (PK), Bruce Kyte (BK), Rob Simpson (RSi), David Squires (DS) and Richard Stanley (RSt).

Agenda Items

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Karim Adab (KA), Linda Magner (LM) and Liam Hindley (LH)

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 October 2021 were noted and approved. There were no matters arising.

4. Appointment of Officers

The following appointments of Officers for 2021/2022 were all unanimously approved: Chair - Cliff Horrocks; Vice Chair - Neil Cottrell; Secretary - Richard Docker; Treasurer & Resources - Pete Bull.

5. Appointment of Co-opted Members

RD introduced this item and confirmed that three expressions of interest to become co-opted members of the Board had been received from Paul Kelsall, Rob Simpson and David Squires. RD reminded the meeting that an email exchange had taken place with all elected Board members prior to the meeting to seek agreement of appointment in each case. RD confirmed that this had been unanimously received and, accordingly, Paul Kelsall, Rob Simpson and David Squires were appointed as co-opted members of the Board for 2021/2022.

6. Officer Portfolio's

RD introduced this item and referred to the schedule of Officer Portfolio's which had been updated and circulated prior to the meeting. The Board discussed the schedule, noted the identified lead officers for each discipline and considered the roles and responsibilities in each case. There was broad agreement and the schedule was approved, although it was noted that operational circumstances and priorities may change during the course of the

forthcoming year which could necessitate amendment. This would happen at Board meetings if required. CH reminded everyone that portfolio holders were free to act as they saw fit within the terms of their brief, and without the need to seek Board approval beforehand unless guidance was required, but that it was important to involve other portfolio holders if appropriate and to keep the Board informed of activities.

7. Board Meeting Dates 2022

RD introduced this item and made reference to the schedule of Board meeting and AGM dates for 2022 circulated previously. The dates were noted.

8. Chairs Report

CH explained that he had recently participated in a Zoom conference call with Tracey Crouch MP to discuss the FLR following its publication in November. The discussion had gone well and it does appear that there is widespread support for the recommendations made, although the strength of the expected pushback from the Premier League is still to be determined. CH also confirmed that he had again met with [REDACTED] and discussed a range of issues from match tickets to the FLR. The club was expected to hold its next Fans Forum in February and the FLR was likely to feature on the agenda, with the Trust hopefully playing a part in a presentation of this. CH has also been invited to present separately to the Senior Management Team at St Andrew's.

CH further explained that other recent activities undertaken by him included an interview with students at Birmingham City University regarding St Andrew's, contact with [REDACTED] which has resulted in an invitation to review building progress with Connect Church ahead of possible match day use by the Trust and the presentation to Margaret Decker of the gift in recognition of her service to the Trust. CH also confirmed that he had recently been appointed to the [REDACTED] regarding the BCFC stadium, with assurances given concerning the need to maintain the confidentiality of the group.

In discussion, NC acknowledged the progress being made in re-establishing a working relationship with the club. CH commented that he was more hopeful than at any other time because it did appear that there was now a genuine push from within the club to improve things and engage with supporters; the situation was encouraging but there is still more work to be done.

9. Financial Report

PB introduced his report with reference to the financial update paper circulated prior to the meeting. At 30 November the accounts were showing

an operating surplus of £582 with reserves of £1761. PB confirmed that the annual return to the FCA is being finalised but will be submitted before deadline. He also confirmed that an agreement with Go Cardless is now in place and that banking mandate signatories are confirmed as PB, CH, RS and RD.

10. Fan Led Review of Football Governance

CH introduced this item, although it was acknowledged that the matter had been mentioned a number of times already during the meeting. In discussion, it was agreed that the Trust should now carefully plan its activities for the new year and beyond in support of the Review if, as expected, it made its way through Parliament early in 2022. Key tasks were identified as being (i) engaging with the club and getting it on board, (ii) communication with members and fans and (iii) developing a lobbying campaign ie MP's, Lords etc. It was agreed that the campaign should be launched in mid/late January following the next Board meeting. It was also agreed to extend an invitation to the meeting to a representative from the FSA to discuss the next steps and to ensure that the Trust was in close step with that organisation. RD to action. It was further agreed that a Zoom conference call with Trust members should be arranged to discuss the FLR after the Board meeting in January.

11. Other Officer Updates

(i) Research and Technical - RSt explained that he had recently received a response from Anthony Collins Solicitors regarding the ACV and the land registry. It had been explained to him that there is an impending change but that the registry is currently experiencing a backlog of cases. RSt also confirmed that there are a number of outstanding actions regarding Blues Fan Rescue Ltd but that these matters would be addressed in the coming weeks with input from PB and RD ;

(ii) Press - in the absence of KA no report was given;

(iii) Projects Management - NC confirmed that progress is continuing to be made with regard to Plan X and the development of an acquisition fund. However, this work will be scaled down in the short term given the priority now being attached to the FLR;

(iv) Membership - in the absence of LM no report was given. However, RD explained that LM had asked for some matters to be raised for consideration which would be done under AOB;

(v) Fan Unity - PK explained that he has commenced work on the fan unity programme. A stakeholder map is being developed and introductory emails

have been sent to a number of other Blues supporter groups to encourage dialogue;

(vi) Marketing and PR - RD explained that there had been no recent activity undertaken by the Marketing Group but that work would recommence in the new year;

(vii) IT and Website - PB explained that routine services were continuing to be delivered. BK explained that because of work commitments he would have limited availability until March;

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

12. Any Other Business

(i). Honours Board - in discussion it was agreed to establish an on-line Honours Board in recognition of those people who have given exceptional service to the Trust. The Board should commence with Margaret Decker and not be retrospective. PB and RD to action;

(ii). Arthur - a discussion took place regarding the recent case of Arthur and the dreadful circumstances of his death and, specifically, how the Trust might honour him going forward. There was full agreement that the Trust should recognise Arthur in some way but there was also a desire to avoid any short term "bandwagons". It was agreed that the Trust's contribution should be meaningful and long standing, perhaps involving a charity partner and the establishment of a foundation. All to consider ideas for further discussion at the next meeting;

(iii). Match Day Carer - RD raised this matter on behalf of LM who had been approached regarding a member who needed assistance to attend matches. LM wanted to know if it would be ok to put out an appeal? It was agreed that it would be. LM to action;

(iv). Member Forum - RD raised this item, following a previous discussion with LM, and sought views on a Member Forum being held to discuss football matters only, and with an invite being sent to [REDACTED] to participate and take questions. The idea was fully supported. RD to action;

(v). Member Communication - RD raised this matter on behalf of LM. Correspondence had been received from a member, [REDACTED] regarding continuing problems with ticket refunds and advocating the commencement of legal proceedings against the club because of the delay. How should the Trust respond? In discussion it was agreed that legal proceedings should only

be considered as a very last resort and that it would not be timely to do that now. However, in the meantime, the Trust should gather evidence of outstanding concerns from other members with a view to taking those forward to the club. LM to action;

(vi). Ground Repairs - NC raised this matter and expressed concern at the complete lack of communication from the club regarding progress, if any, with the outstanding stand repairs at the ground. The absence of information was causing much concern with supporters and generating rumours. It was agreed that CH would take the matter up with [REDACTED] as a matter of urgency and that consideration should be given to the production of an article on the Trust website regarding the issue;

(vii). Spruce Up St Andrew's Campaign - in discussion it was agreed that supporting a tidying up of St Andrew's with input from Trust members and other supporters was an excellent idea. It was further agreed that the Trust needed to make a specific proposal to the club, and probably on a small scale to enable things to start. The situation could be reviewed once some form of activity had been completed. CH and LM to action.

13. Date of Next Meeting

- The date of the next meeting was confirmed for Thursday 27 January 2022 (rearranged) at 7.00pm via Zoom video conference.

The meeting finished at 9.03pm.