

BLUES TRUST

Minutes of the meeting of the Blues Trust Board held at 7.00pm on Thursday 27 January 2022 via Zoom video conference.

In attendance: Cliff Horrocks (CH) (Chair), Pete Bull (PB), Neil Cottrell (NC), Richard Docker (RD), Paul Kelsall (part) (PK), Bruce Kyte (BK), Linda Magner (LM), Rob Simpson (RSi) and Richard Stanley (RSt). Guests: Jane Hughes (JH) and Amanda Jacks (AJ) (both from the Football Supporters Association).

Agenda Items

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Karim Adab (KA), Liam Hindley (LH) and David Squires (DS).

PART A

3. Fan Led Review - Next Steps & Lobbying Campaign

CH introduced this item and thanked JH and AJ for their attendance, and also the support that the Trust continues to receive from the FSA. In response AJ thanked the Trust for the invitations to attend the meeting and, on behalf of Kevin Miles, Chief Executive of the FSA, paid tribute to the work of the Trust regarding the FLR. She explained that the Trust's contribution had been of the very highest calibre and also extremely influential in shaping outcomes.

CH explained that the Trust was keen to start its lobbying campaign and to raise the profile of the FLR with supporters as its expected consideration by Parliament approached. AJ asked that any lobbying campaign be delayed slightly so that it could be coordinated with a national campaign being organised by the FSA. Guidance on this would be issued shortly and it was currently expected that the campaign would be launched at the end of February. In discussion it was agreed that a coordinated campaign would be very important.

A general discussion followed, with JH and AJ responding to questions from Board members. Several key points were noted, including: Tracey Crouch MP is confident that the Review continues to enjoy cross party political support, which will greatly assist with its passage through Parliament; it is expected that the FLR will be included in the Queen's Speech to Parliament on 18 May 2022, and it is also expected that budgetary provision will be made

by the Chancellor in March to support the introduction of the Independent Regulator's first year of activity; support from the various elements of the football community is mixed, with the EFL generally aligned, the FA split (between those newer members of the Board who are generally supportive and those more longstanding members who are generally not), and the Premier League divided; at this juncture the Trust can begin priming supporters about the FLR and the FSA can provide "bite size" material for the Trust to use to keep momentum building in preparation of the national lobbying campaign; FSA is also very happy to review any material to be used by the Trust if required; a joint approach to publicity involving the Trust and the football club would be a very good idea if the club was prepared to do so; the FSA does not expect any watering down of the recommendations, even though it is expected that there will be pressure from some Premier League clubs to do so; Tracey Crouch MP has made it very clear that the recommendations stand or fall as a complete package; the FSA is happy for the Trust to use its images, with due acknowledgement, to support any promotional activity.

JH and AJ were thanked for attending the meeting and for their excellent contributions. They left the meeting at 7.55pm.

In further discussion, the request to delay commencement of the lobbying campaign was noted and it was agreed that it would of course be honoured, but that further information to promote the FLR and make clear the Trust's position should be published as a matter of urgency ie within the next 24 hours. This was considered crucial given the reaction on social media the day before to a member article which commented on the ownership of the football club. In discussion, it was agreed that the reaction had been completely unwarranted, both in its general content and tone, but that the Trust should respond to address and correct many of the inaccuracies that had been made.

PART B

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 December 2021 were noted and approved. There were no matters arising. The action list update was also noted and board members were asked to ensure agreed actions were not lost.

5. Chairs Report

CH explained that he had recently met [REDACTED] for a general catch up and had also attended the recent special meeting, together with other invited supporter group representatives and journalists, organised by the club. The supporter meeting had been open and frank, and generally

positive. CH had also undertaken a podcast with Chris Skudder to discuss the current situation at the club, and had agreed to be a guest, along with NC, for an edition of the Tilton Talk Show. CH explained that he had recently received an update from [REDACTED] but that not much progress had been made to date which was disappointing. Finally, CH confirmed that he would be attending a meeting of the Safety Advisory Group at St. Andrew's at the beginning of March.

6. Financial Report

PB introduced his report with reference to the financial update paper circulated prior to the meeting. The financial position was noted. PB explained that he and RD would shortly be meeting a company called Love Admin to discuss alternative management of the Trust membership system. PB reminded everyone that the Trust would be celebrating its 10th anniversary on 21 February. In discussion, it was again agreed that the anniversary presented an excellent opportunity to promote the Trust and ideas were required from all for consideration.

7. Other Officer Updates

(i) Research and Technical - RSt explained that there was nothing to report at the moment;

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

(iii) Projects Management - NC drew attention to the recently produced three month activity plan, which had been circulated prior to the meeting, and encouraged feedback from board colleagues. In discussion it was agreed that the plan would feature as a standing item on the agenda for all future meetings of the board. RD to action. NC explained that discussions with the Newcastle United Supporters Trust regarding the contributions scheme were ongoing;

(iv) Membership - LM summarised recent activity, including the publication of the latest member newsletter. LM also suggested that consideration be given to amending the Trust logo with the inclusion of a small indicator to commemorate the 10th anniversary. The idea was generally welcomed and it was agreed that it should be reviewed. RD and PB to consider;

(v) Fan Unity - PK explained that he has commenced work on the fan unity programme. He confirmed that it was tough going at the moment, with a reluctance from some other parties to respond to requests for dialogue, but that he was working on a specific proposal using the FLR as an opportunity for a meeting;

(vi) Influential Supporters Programme - RSi confirmed that he has identified an initial list of potentially influential supporters and had started to reach out to them;

(vii) Marketing and PR - RD explained that there had been no recent activity undertaken by the Marketing Group;

(viii) IT and Website - PB&BK explained that there was nothing to report;

(ix) Without Portfolio - nothing to report.

8. Any Other Business

(i). Activity Summary - RSt explained that it was proposed to include an historical Trust activity summary on the website, alongside some of the other corporate information that was now available for public viewing. The purpose of the summary, and also a possible library for the storage of key documents, would help to make clearer what the Trust was involved with and had achieved. RSt and RD to action;

(ii). Member Forum - board members were reminded of the arrangements for the Member Forum to be held on Thursday 3 February via Zoom video conference call, to consider and discuss the FLR.

9. Date of Next Meeting

- The date of the next meeting was confirmed for Thursday 3 March 2022 at 7.00pm via Zoom video conference.

The meeting finished at 9.23pm.