

BLUES TRUST

Minutes of the meeting of the Blues Trust Board held at 7.00pm on Thursday 3 March 2022 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), Linda Magner (LM), Frank Oxley (FO), Rob Simpson (RSi) and Richard Stanley (RSt).

Agenda Items

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting, and in particular Frank Oxley who was attending his first meeting since being unanimously approved (by email exchange) as an Associate Board member.

2. Apologies for Absence

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

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 January 2022 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. The three month activity plan was noted, but it was agreed to consider it in more detail later in the meeting.

4. Chairs Report

CH explained that he and NC had recently attended a meeting of the Senior Management Team at BCFC and had made a presentation on the Fan Led Review (FLR). The meeting had gone well and a number of ideas had been discussed. The club was now in the process of developing some of those ideas and would be in contact with the Trust again for views and comments before firming them up.

CH confirmed that he and NC would be guests on the Tilton Talk Show on Monday 7 March to discuss the FLR. CH explained that he had attended a virtual meeting of the St Andrew's Safety Advisory Group today, 3 March, the first of four scheduled meetings each year. The meeting had been interesting and informative and, in his view, representatives of the club had presented very well and had made a series of encouraging responses when challenged about outstanding issues at the ground. It was agreed that CH's membership of the group should be shared with Trust members.

CH explained that he and LM would be attendees, along with other supporter representatives, at a meeting with the MP for Ladywood, Shabana Mahmoud on 11 March to discuss matters of concern at the club. CH confirmed that he would be raising the FLR. CH also explained that he had recently contributed to an article in Birmingham Live concerning safe standing. Finally, CH confirmed that he had recently met with [REDACTED] to discuss matters of mutual interest.

5. Financial Report

PB introduced his report with reference to the financial update paper circulated prior to the meeting. The financial position was noted. PB also confirmed the current membership statistics. PB explained that he and RD had recently met a company called Love Admin to discuss alternative management of the Trust membership system. The meeting had been useful but, disappointingly, additional information promised by the company had not yet been received. PB and RD would continue to explore the opportunity. In discussion, RSt raised the status of Blues Fan Rescue Ltd and the need for a separate banking arrangement. It was agreed that the company directors should meet to discuss, confirm and action outstanding matters.

6. Fan Led Review

CH introduced this item with reference to the discussion with the FSA representatives that had take place at the last Board meeting. Progress with the Review was outlined, but it was noted that the Trust is still awaiting details from the FSA regarding the timing and approach to be adopted for the national lobbying campaign. It was agreed to contact the FSA as a matter of urgency to establish what the Trust can do and when. RD to action. Information from the FSA concerning its recent meeting with government bodies was also to be requested.

7. Other Officer Updates

(i) Research and Technical - RSt explained that he had created an excel spreadsheet to facilitate information about the new company, BFRLtd. It was agreed that the spreadsheet should be shared with Anthony Collins, solicitors, for comment. RD to action;

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

(iii) Projects Management - NC drew attention to the three month activity plan. The plan was discussed and updated. Specific actions agreed were: (i) NC's notes from recent discussions with Newcastle United Supporters Trust to be circulated for information. RD to action; (ii) spruce up campaign has been picked up by the club itself so LM to close it down with Trust members in next

newsletter; (iii) LM to write to club if any remaining match day ticket issues are found to be outstanding. LM to consult Trust members first; (iv) Trust's 10th Anniversary to be added to the plan;

(iv) Membership - LM summarised recent activity and explained that material was required for the next member newsletter to be published later in the month. LM also asked whether the Trust should re-classify "members" as "shareholders" to make clearer their status and avoid confusion with group members on Facebook. In discussion it was agreed that "members" is the constitutionally recognised term and there was no great appetite to change that. However, RD agreed to research what else might be possible in case further discussion was required at a later time;

(v) Fan Unity - PK sought clarification on what could, and could not, be shared publicly about Trust activities with members and other supporters because he was concerned that opportunities will be lost if too much business is shrouded in secrecy. It was agreed to discuss the matter later as an item of AOB. PK explained that he was planning a Zoom meeting with representatives of other Blues supporters groups and to discuss the FLR. The idea was warmly welcomed and it was agreed that it should proceed as a matter of urgency, with input from other Board members as appropriate. Agreed PK to facilitate and RD to arrange the date;

(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. He confirmed that a number of messages been sent but responses had not, so far, been forthcoming;

(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). 10th Anniversary - CH raised the idea of a social gathering to mark the anniversary with members, press, Trust supporters and officials from the club being invited. The idea received favourable support although some concerns were identified including appropriate timing, location and costs. It was agreed to establish a small sub group to develop the idea, with the sub group to comprise CH, LM, RD and anyone else interested. RD to produce a short briefing note to inform discussion and planning;

(ii). Information Disclosure and PR - further to the issue raised by PK (and others) earlier, the extent to which the Trust should share information with members and other supporters was discussed. Concern was expressed that although some aspects of meetings undertaken by the Trust needed to remain confidential, every opportunity should be taken to assure members that activities were indeed taking place. It was agreed that the FLR was one such opportunity. It was further agreed that everyone needed to contribute more to news items, opinions and features on the website, and the sharing of information through emails with members. As a starting point it was agreed that all Board members would, in turn, contribute with an article for the website. Clear branding was required. RD to prepare a roster;

(ii). Information Cards - PB explained that the Trust will soon need to reprint A5 general information cards, and asked if a redesign should be undertaken before doing so? It was agreed that that would be appropriate. RD was asked to consider and it was further agreed that the question of branding should be included as an agenda item for the next Board meeting.

9. Date of Next Meeting

- The date of the next meeting was confirmed for Thursday 14 April 2022 at 7.00pm via Zoom video conference.

The meeting finished at 9.27pm.