

BLUES TRUST

Minutes of the meeting of the Blues Trust Board held at 7.00pm on Thursday 7 July 2022 via Zoom video conference.

In attendance: Cliff Horrocks (CH) (Chair), Pete Bull (PB), Richard Docker (RD), Paul Kelsall (PK), Bruce Kyte (BK), Linda Magner (LM), 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), Neil Cottrell (NC), Liam Hindley (LH) and Frank Oxley (FO).

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 May 2022 were noted and approved. It was agreed that PK, LM and RD would attend a zoom meeting with representatives from HerGame Too to discuss how the two organisations might work together. It was agreed to invite Craig Courtney, Trust member and a presenter from the Tilton Talk Show, to the next Board meeting in August to discuss a range of ideas for the Trust to consider. The results of the recent Member Survey were noted and it was agreed that all Board members take responsibility for actioning those elements relevant to their own portfolios.

4. Chairs Report

CH updated the meeting on his understanding of the current position with regard to the change of ownership at the club and explained that he had recently been involved in a number of conversations concerning the club's future. CH also confirmed that he had requested a further meeting with Ian Dutton at the club and was awaiting a response.

5. Financial Report

PB introduced his report with reference to the latest set of accounts circulated prior to the meeting. He confirmed that the overall financial position of the Trust remained healthy. The accounts were noted. Membership, on the other hand, was declining and this was noted with concern. It was agreed that further work was required to promote membership and reverse the decline. PB confirmed that a deposit account had been opened for Blues Fan Rescue

Ltd with signatories identified and given access to internet banking. He further confirmed that an exemption had been secured regarding the need to produce consolidated accounts.

6. Trust Branding Discussion

RD introduced this item with reference to the current mission statement that was published on the website, given its importance as a starting point for any branding review. The statement and aims, as they stand, were reviewed.

In discussion it was agreed that some revisions to the statement and aims were required to modernise the language and plug gaps, not least around services to supporters and the external liaison with key stakeholders. The absence of a clear and concise vision statement was also identified. It was agreed that RD would take the lead on redrafting the various statements, in consultation with colleagues, with a view for further consideration at a future meeting of the Board. It was noted and agreed that the work needed to tie in with the results of the recent ideas brainstorming task led by RS.

7. Podcast Development Proposal

CH introduced this item and updated the board on a recent meeting that had been held with Mark Watson, Trust member and producer of the Fat Lads Go In Goal (FLGIG) podcast. The meeting had been arranged to explore the possibility of the Trust becoming involved in the development of podcasts going forward, for the purposes of raising the Trust's profile, sharing information more widely and growing membership. The meeting had gone well and it was now proposed that the Trust support the development and promotion of the FLGIG podcast as an associate partner. The nature of the Trust's engagement was explained, together with potential reputational risks if the podcast became too radical. CH explained that Mark understood that concern and had given assurances that that would not happen. In discussion the proposal was welcomed by all and it was agreed to further engage with Mark and his team so that production could commence to coincide with the start of the new season. The reaction of Trust members and others would be monitored to determine the success of the venture. It was agreed that a communication plan would be developed to ensure that the podcast received support from the Trust on the website and across all social media platforms.

8. Bordesley Station

LM introduced this item. She explained that there was a possibility that Blues Trust, in partnership with Tilton Talk Show, could sponsor Bordesley Station. The station operators were open to the idea and there would be no costs involved. Bordesley Station is only used infrequently, but it does provide a limited service on match days. In discussion there was broad agreement that the idea should be explored and LM, RSt and PB agreed to form a working

group to do so. The working group would report back to a future meeting of the Board but would also share any developments in the meantime.

9. Other Officer Updates

(i) Research and Technical - RSt explained that the share certificate for Blues Fan Rescue Ltd had been issued. He also explained that RSt and NC were in the process of producing a document on Financial Fair Play. Finally, RSt asked all present to review the results of the brainstorming ideas exercise that he had circulated recently;

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

(iii) Projects Management - in the absence of NC no report was given;

(iv) Membership - LM explained that she had been extremely busy with family matters of late and had nothing to report on this occasion;

(v) Fan Unity - PK explained that a proposal to hold a meeting of supporter group representatives, as a replacement for the meeting recently cancelled by the club itself, was still under consideration. If it goes ahead, organised in part by Blues Trust, it was likely to happen on a virtual basis;

(vi) Influential Supporters Programme - RSi confirmed that renewed focus was being given to the task but there was nothing to report at the moment. He did ask that consideration be given to the "offer" that the Trust might make to high worth influencers;

(vii) Marketing and PR - RD explained that there had been no recent activity undertaken by the Marketing Group but that the corporate branding review was being developed during the close season. He also explained that the website and social media platforms continue to be developed with fresh articles that were stimulating engagement from Trust members and other supporters;

(viii) IT and Website - PB explained that things are currently running smoothly on the website and the Blues Trust Forum site on Facebook is continuing to attract new participants. BK confirmed that his employment circumstances have now changed and he would have more time to assist with activities;

(ix) Without Portfolio - nothing to report.

9. Any Other Business

(i). LM explained that the club appeared to be in breach of EFL rules given the latest cancellation of the supporters meeting which PK had referred to

previously. In discussion, it was agreed that this was a cause for serious concern and the club should be challenged with the EFL to be informed. CH and LM agreed to take this forward.

10. Date of Next Meeting

- The date of the next meeting was confirmed for Thursday 25 August 2022 at 7.00pm via Zoom video conference.

The meeting finished at 8.57pm.