

# BLUES TRUST

Minutes of the meeting of the Blues Trust Board held at 7.00pm on Thursday 13 October 2022 via Zoom video conference.

In attendance: Cliff Horrocks (CH) (Chair), Pete Bull (PB), Richard Docker (RD), Paul Kelsall (PK), Linda Magner (LM), Rob Simpson (RSi) and Richard Stanley (RSt).

Invited guests: Emily Drakeley and Helena Banks (both #HerGameToo).

## Agenda Items

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting, and in particular Emily Drakeley and Helena Banks from #HerGameToo.

### 2. Apologies for Absence

Karim Adab (KA), Neil Cottrell (NC), Liam Hindley (LH), Bruce Kyte (BK), Frank Oxley (FO) and David Squires (DS).

### 3. #HerGameToo - Presentation and Discussion

CH explained that Emily and Helena had kindly agreed to attend the meeting to explain the purpose and objectives of #HerGameToo, and to look at possible areas for cooperation and joint working between the two organisations. CH invited Emily and Helena to make their presentation. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is attached.

A lengthy discussion followed. Blues Trust made clear its complete agreement of the need to tackle sexism and other forms of discrimination in football and reaffirmed its commitment to support #HGT at every opportunity. A number of specific ideas for joint working were identified and considered, and it was agreed that dialogue would be ongoing. The possibility of Blues Trust becoming an official partner of #HGT was raised and Emily and Helena agreed to give this consideration in discussion with their colleagues nationally.

CH thanked Emily and Helena for their attendance at the meeting and for the stimulating presentation and discussion. CH wished #HGT continued success going forward and confirmed Blues Trust's commitment to support the organisation in any way that it could. Emily and Helena left the meeting at this point.

#### 4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 25 August 2022 were noted and approved. The Action List from the meeting was also noted. Given the absence of NC, no Activity Plan was tabled.

With regard to Matters Arising, a discussion confirmed that there was no appetite to sponsoring ██████████ as raised as an idea by ██████████. Rather, the Trust's view was that different supporter organisations should mutually support each other, including with promotional opportunities. ██████████ to be informed of this decision. The discussion also identified the possibility of the Trust's website incorporating a resources page which could be of value to all Blues supporters, with information about travel arrangements, away ground car parking and so on being included. The idea was well received and it was agreed that steps should be taken to develop it.

#### 5. Chairs Report

CH updated the meeting on a number of recent developments. He confirmed that he has been invited, and will be attending, the next meeting of the Safety Advisory Group to be held on 7 November. CH explained that he had recently emailed Ian Dutton at the club requesting an opportunity to meet for an update discussion on a number of outstanding matters. Ian Dutton had confirmed that a Fans Forum is in the process of being arranged, although no confirmation of a date or arrangements had been received to date. CH further explained that he had been in touch with Shabana Mahmood, MP for Birmingham Ladywood, who had agreed to ask questions in Parliament about progress with the Fan Led Review. CH expressed concern that the FSA appeared to be watering down its stance on the need for regulation. He confirmed that he would be having further contact with them to encourage a stronger line. Finally, CH updated the meeting on his understanding of the current situation regarding the takeover of the club. He confirmed that things do still seem to be progressing and his contact at the EFL had been quite positive about the exchange of required information. Any delays are currently with the EFL and/or the club and not the Richardson/Lopez group.

#### 6. Financial Report

PB introduced his report with reference to the latest set of accounts circulated prior to the meeting. He confirmed that, currently, the surplus is £393 and the reserves stand at £2329. There have been no big items of expenditure recently. PB confirmed that the Annual Accounts are ready for presentation to the AGM. In terms of membership, PB explained that numbers have again reduced slightly, which remains a cause for concern. PB then went on to explain the additional information that he has obtained regarding the Raileasy proposal outlined at the last meeting. Following discussion, and subject to any additional comments that NC may have, the decision was taken to

proceed and to make the facility available on the Trust's website together with notification about similar rail ticketing services. It was further agreed that the facility should be free of any charge upon introduction, although the Board may wish to review that arrangement in the future. Further discussion followed about the Trust website being developed to include a services page for fans, with other supporter groups being encouraged to contribute.

In conclusion, PB explained that he had again put himself forward for membership of the Board given that his current term ended at the AGM. However, he indicated that this could be the last time that he did so and advised that a succession policy for his role be explored. This was unanimously agreed.

## 7. AGM

RD introduced this item and explained the arrangements for the AGM being held on Thursday 3 November. It was noted that no resolutions for discussion at the meeting had been received from members by the due date. Also, that only three valid nominations had been received to fill four vacancies on the board, so a ballot of members was not required. RD circulated a draft agenda for the meeting which was considered and agreed. In discussion, it was further agreed that the Trust should continue to seek a guest speaker to support the event and encourage greater participation from members. Some names were identified for consideration, and CH agreed to follow this up in time for advance notification to members.

## 8. Portfolio Updates

RSt explained that he remained keen to pursue the idea of Trust involvement with Bordesley Railway Station and would be taking things forward in discussion with the rail authorities [REDACTED].

PK confirmed that he was exploring the possibility of arranging another Trust led fan group review in the near future. This was warmly welcomed by all present. PK also identified the need for the Trust to establish a match day presence at St. Andrew's for the purposes of raising profile and driving membership growth. A discussion followed which was wholly supportive of the idea. Some specific initiatives were identified including the distribution of promotional leaflets about the Trust, the availability of a pop up stand to facilitate discussion with supporters, social media posts after every game and even arranging to meet Trust members from opposition clubs visiting for matches. It was agreed that PK and LM would lead on this development, but that all board members would be required to play a part on match days once ideas had been firmed up. CH agreed to contact Ian Dutton at the club to get authority for the Trust to be present within the curtilage of the ground on match days.

RSi explained that he was due to have dinner with [REDACTED] in the near future and would be taking the opportunity to engage with him about the Trust.

#### 9. Any Other Business

(i). RSt raised the matter of the Independent Regulator of Football and suggested that given CH's comments earlier about the FSA, the Trust needed to remain proactive and robust about the importance of this development. This was agreed by all present and CH agreed to develop options for more engagement on the matter;

(ii). RSt asked if work should continue on the development of a three year development strategy for the Trust? It was unanimously agreed that it should, particularly now that the revised Vision and Mission Statement had been finalised and posted. RSt agreed to take things forward.

#### 10. Date of Next Meeting

- The dates of the next meetings were noted for (i) AGM on Thursday 3 November 2022 at 7.00pm and (ii) Board on Thursday 8 December 2022 at 7.00pm, both via Zoom video conference call.

The meeting finished at 9.21pm.