

BLUES TRUST

Minutes of the meeting of the Blues Trust Board held at 7.00pm on Thursday 8 December 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) and Richard Stanley (RSt).

Agenda Items

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting, the first of the new governance cycle following the AGM on 16 November 2022.

2. Apologies for Absence

Karim Adab (KA).

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 October 2022 were noted and approved. The Action List from the meeting was also noted.

4. Appointment of Officers

The following Officer appointments were confirmed following unanimous approval in each case:

- Chair - CH (but with the proviso that he would be looking to step down as Chair at the AGM in 2023)
- Vice Chair - NC
- Secretary - RD
- Treasurer - PB

5. Discussion of Priorities, Roles and Responsibilities

In discussion it was agreed that a series of tasks be undertaken during the period January to June 2023 to (i) grow membership, (ii) strengthen fan unity, (iii) improve fan engagement and (iv) promote implementation of the FLR. Each element was identified as a immediate priority for the Trust going forward.

The draft schedule of Officer Portfolio's was considered and some minor amendments made. In discussion it was agreed that NC and RSt would again be required to work closely because of the potential overlap and linkages between their two Portfolio's. It was further agreed that the SLO role

needed to be refined to give clarity for LM. It was also agreed that PK should liaise with [REDACTED] regarding work to identify influential supporters and that RD should do the same with [REDACTED] in respect of electronic media. In conclusion, everyone was reminded that as individual portfolio holders they were free to act as they thought fit, reporting back to the board for information or approval if necessary. The revised Officer Portfolio schedule was approved.

With regard to board membership, it was confirmed that the 9 elected members would solely act as the Board with additional co-opted members only being sought in exceptional circumstances. It was noted that Rob Simpson and David Squires would, subject to their agreement, continue to support the Board as Associate members but would not necessarily attend board meetings as a matter of routine. [REDACTED] interest in media support was noted and NC was asked to make contact with him to discuss a working arrangement.

6. Board Meeting Dates

The schedule of board meeting dates, circulated previously, was noted and approved.

7. Chairs Report

CH raised the question of fan protests in the light of the recent withdrawal by Maxco from the potential investment opportunity with the club. CH sought views on the role that the Trust might play, if at all, in protesting against the ongoing ownership concerns surrounding the club. In discussion there was agreement that there was a role for the Trust but that the nature of the protest will determine the Trust's approach. Indeed, it was argued by some present that the Trust must play a part in moving things forward, albeit that protests must be within the framework of the law and non violent at all times. There was broad agreement that the Trust should consider organising some activities and should start to use the #BSHLOUT. It was agreed that the matter be considered again early in the New Year when board members had had an opportunity to reflect and generate ideas for consideration.

8. Financial Report

PB introduced his Financial Report which had been circulated previously. It was noted that the Trust's finances continued in good order. PB explained that the annual financial return to the FCA was still to be submitted, pending the completion of required signatures, but that this was not a cause for concern. With regard to membership, PB confirmed that numbers were still reducing and that 15 members had been lost over the course of the year. The report was noted.

9. Portfolio Updates

PK confirmed that he was planning to organise a Trust led forum for supporter groups representatives early in the New Year. Details would be shared with board colleagues once arrangements were confirmed. The proposal was welcomed by all present.

NC explained that the FLR White Paper is expected before Christmas, and he will confirm the details if it is. NC also confirmed that he will prepare and circulate a revised project plan form in the light of discussions regarding priority tasks.

RD confirmed that professional advice was to be explored to support the development of a new logo for the Trust. It was agreed that Trust business cards were to be produced as a matter of urgency to support the membership drive which was to commence at the home match vs Reading. An urgent social media announcement was also agreed to announce the presence of Trust board members outside the ground prior to kick off.

BK explained that he needed access to the Gmail account. PB agreed to organise this.

10. Any Other Business

(i). LM raised the matter of a Memorandum of Understanding and asked if one exists with the club? In response it was explained that a Supporters Board is a more appropriate vehicle for engagement now, and that Terms of Reference had been submitted to the club by the Trust regarding the formation of a fans board;

(ii). RD confirmed that agreement had now been reached with #HGT regarding the completion of a formal partnership arrangement, as previously circulated, and that arrangements would be made early in the New Year to formally sign and launch the partnership;

(iii). BK raised the question of using Microsoft Office to support Trust activities, and asked if it should be explored? It was agreed that it should and BK was asked to investigate;

(iv). BK explained that tables for the club's annual awards evening would soon be advertised and asked whether the Trust should consider taking a table to use for promotional purposes, perhaps with invited guests? The idea was welcomed, subject to cost implications, and CH was asked to take it forward for future decision by the board.

11. Date of Next Meeting

- The date of the next meetings was confirmed for Thursday 26 January 2023 at 7.00pm via Zoom video conference call.

The meeting finished at 9.05pm.