

# BLUES TRUST

Minutes of the meeting of the Blues Trust Board held at 7.00pm on Thursday 30 March 2023 via Zoom video conference.

In attendance: Cliff Horrocks (CH) (Chair), Pete Bull (PB) (part), 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.

### 2. Apologies for Absence

Karim Adab (KA), Neil Cottrell (NC).

### 3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 January 2023 were noted and approved. It was confirmed that a table for the club awards evening was to be booked. There were no other matters arising. The Action List from the meeting was discussed.

### 4. Chair's Report

CH explained that he had been liaising with Shabana Mahmood, MP about the White Paper since it's recent publication. Shabana will continue to make representations in Parliament. CH has also been liaising with the FSA about the ongoing ownership issues at Blues, including the EFL investigations, but there was no progress to report at the moment. CH had recently been interviewed by Midlands Today regarding the ownership situation at the club and had also undertaken a podcast with Blues Focus. CH had also met with the club again to discuss the development of a Fan Advisory Board but, unfortunately, progress from the club remains slow with only limited progression so far. A further meeting is planned. Finally, CH explained that he had recently met with [REDACTED] to discuss the potential takeover by a new consortium. The discussion had been interesting and illuminating and it does appear to have substance. More developments are expected in the very near future.

### 5. Financial Report

In PB's absence RD drew attention to the Financial Report previously circulated on 3 March 2023. The latest accounts were noted. It was also noted that membership numbers continue to disappoint, with little evidence of improvement as a result of the January/February matchday activities

campaign and further non renewals by existing members during the key months of February and March. All present were asked to give this matter serious consideration going forward.

#### 6. Priority Tasks List

The list was considered and progress to date was noted. It was agreed to continue actioning the tasks identified as appropriate.

#### 7. Protests & Supporter Groups Campaign

PK introduced this item and updated the meeting on recent progress. He explained that, overall, the current situation was disappointing. There had been a lack of contact from, and engagement by, the other supporter groups who had pledged support to the campaign. There were very few active contributors and after the initial burst of interest, there was now a general air of apathy for further action. It was agreed by all present that it was disappointing that the Trust was having to take the lead with the campaign, but it was also acknowledged that the campaign is very important for the future well being of the club so the effort was worth it. A number of ideas for further action were raised for consideration, including the possibility of encouraging the non-renewal of season tickets, following up contact with Mike Wiseman, a further communication with all supporter groups being asked to sign, contacting the 3500 petition signatories to seek further support and the formation of a new group to spearhead action. It was agreed that a special single agenda item meeting of the Board be arranged in April to discuss the campaign in more detail.

#### 8. Membership Representatives

LM introduced this item and suggested that the Trust looks to identify lead members in each country where there is currently representation. The purpose would be for those members to encourage the growth of the Trust in their country and to be asked to share local information that might be of interest to all Trust members. The idea was welcomed by everyone and it was agreed that we should try to do it. LM was asked to lead the initiative, with initial input from PB and RD.

#### 9. Trust Administration

CH introduced this item with reference to his previously circulated report. The report proposed that individual portfolio holders be given limited spending authority to action small tasks without the need to seek Board approval first. The recommendation was agreed with a limit of £100 for each action, subject to the agreement of the Treasurer beforehand and subject also to the Trust's cash account remaining above £4000.

## 10. Female Supporters

RD introduced this item and reminded everyone that it was deferred from the previous meeting and followed on from a report published in January 2023 concerning the growing importance of female supporters within the game. Everyone acknowledged the need to ensure female supporters are welcomed and valued by their clubs, and are able to attend matches without fear for personal safety and security. It was also recognised that female supporters have a very important role to play within the game going forward. It was agreed that the Trust must do more to encourage female engagement and a number of ideas were discussed, including the need to appeal directly for more female members and putting mechanisms in place to encourage their active participation and influence within the Trust. It was recognised that help is required to develop a strategy for engagement. It was agreed that as a starting point the Trust should produce a post appealing for more female Blues supporters to become involved. RD to lead.

## 11. Portfolio Updates

LM raised the matter of a supporters hut being made available at St. Andrew's on matchdays. It was agreed that this idea would continue to be pursued with the club. PK gave an update on recent successful contacts with representatives from other supporter Trusts, including those at Burnley and Swansea. PK also explained that he had recently met [REDACTED] who possessed an in-depth archive of the club that requires being digitalised. She had asked if the Trust could help. It was agreed that the Trust might be able to assist and the matter should be kept open for future consideration.

## 12. Any Other Business

(i). LM explained she still required material for the latest newsletter and appealed for information to be sent quickly;

(ii). LM raised a concern that the 2 month duration between Board meetings was too long and that she didn't always feel aware of what was happening as a consequence. In discussion it was agreed that the meeting schedule for the current year could be revised if there was an overall appetite to do so, but in the meantime all board members should remember to keep colleagues updated via the WhatsApp group of any activities they were involved with;

(iii). BK identified Coventry City as a recent example of the effectiveness of supporter boycotts if that was an idea that the Trust did decide to pursue going forward;

(iv). CH explained that in his discussions with the club regarding the creation of a Fan Advisory Board he wanted to identify a suitable and prominent person who might chair the Board. He asked for any ideas to be sent to him

by email urgently for inclusion on a long list to be shared with the club.

Names raised at the meeting were [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

### 13. Date of Next Meeting

- The date of the next meetings was confirmed for Thursday 25 May 2023 at 7.00pm via Zoom video conference call.

The meeting finished at 9.32pm.