2026 AGM – Chair's Report

When the Trust was first formed in 2012 our mission was to safeguard the club during challenging times. A lot of work was done by the Trust in areas such as securing St. Andrew's as an Asset of Community Value, shaping the Football Governance Bill through the Fan Led Review prior to its eventual enactment, and in working behind the scenes in pushing for ownership change.

Following the takeover by Knighthead, our approach has needed to change to reflect the changing circumstances. The club is now on the best footing it has probably ever been, but we still believe it is important to continue to have a strong independent voice for Blues Fans and our main focus for 2026 has been on the following:

1. To influence the role of the Independent Football Regulator (IFR). Alongside other fan groups and the Football Supporters Association (FSA), we continue to engage in consultations with the IFR looking at fine tuning its role. We are also working with a group of Supporters Trusts on how to develop the role of Supporters Trusts within this framework;

2. To improve fan engagement with Blues. At the moment, the club's preferred means of engaging with fans has largely been through the Official Supporters Clubs (OSC's), although there has been some more widespread engagement with fans through surveys on the new stadium etc. We believe that best practice would be to set up a broader based Fan Advisory Board, with at least a degree of elected fan membership, as is done successfully at other clubs. We have discussed this with the club, but at present they are content to stick with the current model. We will continue to try and influence the situation as opportunities arise. We have also fed back to the club on some specific issues, and we believe this has contributed to some better communications from the club. For example, in relation to the rationale for ticket pricing;

3. Provide services for Blues Trust members. We continue to run on-line guest events where we live interview a Blues guest and allow Q&A from attendees. This year we had a successful event with Mike Wiseman and we are looking for more such events in the near future. We also continue to run an active WhatsApp group for members. Do let us know if you aren't a member and wish to join. We have also started a series of surveys for members to understand your views on a variety of topics.

   On behalf of members and Blues fans more generally, we also submitted a consultation response to the Department for Transport (DfT) on the proposed closure of Bordesley station. Using feedback obtained from a survey of fans we put the case that Bordesley station should at least remain open until the new stadium in the Sports Quarter and associated

new transport links are open. Beyond that we also suggested that the long-term case to close the station is re-examined as there appears to be greater future potential than the current evaluation has assumed. The wheels of Government move slowly, but we are expecting a response from the DfT later this year;

4. Wider fan engagement to strengthen the influence of supporters and other supporter groups. We ran the Blues Trust cafe in the Trinity Church ahead of Saturday 3pm kick-offs and occasional night games during the 2025/2026 season. This continued to grow and enabled us to support local charities, including the Foundation. Following a change of pastor at the Trinity Church over the summer, the future of this going forward is in some doubt, but we will continue to explore. We are also part of a loose federation with other independent Blues groups and are looking to develop more collective approaches between these groups, particularly with regard to charitable giving.

My sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed to the work of the Trust over the past 12 months. As you will know, we remain a completely voluntary organisation which relies on those contributions to function. And although the backdrop is so much better than it was until quite recently, there is always work to be done to ensure that the views of Trust members and other Blues supporters are heard and valued.

I particularly want to recognise the contribution of two of our Board members. Mark Garrett, who joined the Board around the turn of the year and was a key player in evangelising the case for Blues setting up a Fan Advisory Board. Sadly, Mark passed away suddenly in the summer after a short illness, and his input is widely missed. RIP Mark. Secondly Peter Bull is retiring from the Board after many years of sterling service as Treasurer and IT systems lead of the Blues Trust. Peter has been meticulous and dedicated in his roles and the Trust is in a healthy position financially in no small part due to his efforts. Thank you, Peter, and I'm happy to report that Peter will continue to help with the website going forward.

The Trust exists to provide an independent, democratic voice for all Blues fans and its activities are driven by you the members. So, if there is anything more you feel we should be doing, or if you want to get involved, please do get in touch. Also, to ensure the Trust's voice continues to be heard, please continue to renew your membership and encourage your friends to join too.

KRO

Neil Cottrell

Chair