



MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

Monday 20th April 2020

Virtual meeting held via Zoom

Present: Michel Thomas (MT) – chair, Nick Brodrick (NB), Rob Burkitt (RB), Robin Causley (RC), Rob Dickinson (RD), Rick Williams (RW).
Apologies: Ali Bryant (AB)

20/24	<p>Minutes of the meeting held on 16th March 2020 The minutes were tabled and approved.</p> <p>Minute 20/23(b): it was reported that, in response to the decision to offer members the opportunity to defer their subscriptions during the current crisis, only one corporate member had so far requested to do so and no individual members.</p>	
20/25	<p>Future of football</p> <p>(a) The current season The recent statements by Clarke Osborne and George Edwards criticising the football authorities for lack of clear leadership during the current crisis were noted and endorsed.</p> <p>It was understood that the poll of its members currently being conducted by the National League appeared to indicate support for ending the season immediately which all present agreed was the most likely and preferred scenario. The need for the Premier League to offer financial support to the lower leagues was highlighted by MT and supported by all.</p> <p>(b) Next season and the future The board had welcomed the owner's recent commitment to continue funding the Club through the present suspension of activities and beyond. Clearly, these are worrying times for the football community and without doubt there will be clubs at all levels which will struggle to survive the crisis. TUFC is not immune from this threat but the TUST board feel reasonably confident that the Club will come through providing next season can start promptly and continue in normal fashion.</p>	

	<p>Having said that, TUST's remit is to be as prepared as possible for the worst case. With this in mind RW reported that the Strategy Team would be reconvening via e-mail and virtual meetings to consider what steps can be taken to mitigate such circumstances or prepare to respond should they occur.</p> <p>It was subsequently proposed by MT, seconded by RW and unanimously agreed that RD should join the Strategy Team.</p> <p>RW reported that the application to renew the listing of Plainmoor as an Asset of Community Value had been approved by the Council and this would last for the next five years. RW & NB to draft a newsletter item regarding this.</p>	RW/NB
<p>20/26 Media and publicity</p> <p>(a) Press coverage NB reported on recent press coverage including articles he had contributed to the Non-League Paper and the Herald Express. He had developed a good relationship with Richard Hughes at the latter and it had been agreed that he would write a regular piece in future under the title 'Fan's Zone'. He was congratulated for his success in finally obtaining a voice for TUST in the local media. It was recognised how useful this could be in getting the TUST message across to those readers who do not use the internet or social media.</p> <p>(b) Marketing It was agreed to renew TUST membership of Paignton & District Chamber of Commerce. MT suggested that a request could be included in the next newsletter for a member with marketing experience to join the board.</p>		RW
<p>20/27 Quarterly finance and membership report AB had submitted a report as follows;</p> <p>Membership: 375 Bank Balance as at 31st March; £40000 savings £3920.37 current £1685.44 held on behalf of Sam Balsdon disabled facility and PLFF account</p>		
<p>20/28 Responding to Coronavirus</p> <p>(a) Support for members and supporters There was a discussion around ways in which TUST could assist its members and the wider community in the present exceptional circumstances. NB suggested funding a box at a match once football resumes for use by NHS staff in recognition of the great work they were doing. RC had previously mentioned that TUST's nominated charity, Rowcroft, like many others, was experiencing a decline in donations. However, he highlighted the more pressing needs of the Torbay Food Alliance which was the umbrella organisation supporting numerous foodbanks across the district. Discussion of what could be done was deferred to item 20/29 below.</p>		

	<p>(b) Torquay United Community Sports Trust (TUCST) MT reported that he had held a telephone conversation with Jamie McInnes who had indicated that TUCST was adequately financed for its activities for the remainder of the current season. It was therefore decided that no further contribution from TUST was necessary at this time.</p> <p>(c) TUFC The board considered whether there was anything it could do to support the Club but in the absence of any appeal for assistance it was decided not.</p>	
<p>20/29</p> <p>(a)</p> <p>(b)</p> <p>(c)</p>	<p>Charity fund raising</p> <p>Football Supporters Association (FSA) 'Fans For Diversity' campaign NB reported on a discussion that he had held with Maria Ryder of the FSA. They could help to facilitate a social event aimed at engaging with community disabled groups with a view to encouraging greater engagement with the local club and attendance at matches. It might involve a short talk about the Club's history and background, explanation of the match day experience, players or other representatives of the Club attending and generally promoting the passion that football can inspire. The FSA could provide funds to support this and TUST would contribute personnel, prizes and merchandise etc.</p> <p>He would have raised this with Jo Harris, the TUFC Disability Liaison Officer, but JH was now furloughed and the proposal was on hold with the suspension of the season. The board agreed that it would be very keen to work jointly with the Club, TUCST and FSA to promote this opportunity once football resumed.</p> <p>Retro shirt proposal MT and RB explained an approach they had received from an organisation offering to supply trusts with a retro shirt in any chosen style. These would be sold at £35 each with £10 going to the trust's nominated charity. The scheme had been endorsed by a number of other club's trusts. It was noted that the Torquay Talk website was currently running a poll on favourite kits.</p> <p>Whilst the concept was worthy of consideration, it was unlikely to be viable to promote it in the present economic climate. The proposal will be reconsidered when football recommences. MT to advise the organiser of this decision.</p> <p>Charitable donations The meeting returned to the proposals raised under item 20/28 (a).</p> <p>After some discussion it was proposed by RB, seconded by NB and unanimously agreed to make a donation of £500 to the Torbay Food Alliance. It was noted that this would be match-funded by Torbay Council. MT to liaise with AB over arranging the payment.</p>	<p>MT</p> <p>MT</p>

The date of the next meeting was provisionally fixed for Monday 18th May 2020 at 6.30pm.

Chairman's signature.....Date