



MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

Sunday 3rd December 2023

Held via Zoom

Present: Nick Brodrick (NB) – chair, Ali Bryant (AB), Robin Causley (RC), Bob Cole (BC), Rob Dickinson (RD), Sam Druiff (SD), Michel Thomas (MT), Rick Williams (RW).

Apologies: Rob Burkitt (RB)

<p>23/90</p>	<p>Review of fans' protest held on Saturday 2nd December</p> <p>TUST had supported the protest called for by fans at its recent Fans' Forum. This took the form of a call for supporters to stay in the ground for 15 minutes after the final whistle with the objective of getting the ownership to 'Talk to Us' and specifically for the club to hold a Fans Forum with directors present.</p> <p>Whilst it was agreed that the number of protesters was disappointing, it was noted that there were several reasons for this; a good result, it was very cold and recent proposals from the club to improve communication with fans.</p> <p>It was reported that despite the low turnout, the protest had received favourable feedback from supporters and had generated press coverage. It was suggested that the threat of the protest had already partially achieved its objective and that in itself was a success.</p> <p>There was some discussion about how TUST can get its message to a wider audience. Leaflet handouts before games and further protests were considered.</p> <p>SD suggested setting up a PR Group to tap into those with experience or a wide network of contacts. It was agreed to give this further consideration at the next board meeting.</p>	
---------------------	--	--

23/91

TUAFC proposals for improved communication

NB reported that he and RW had been invited to a meeting with club directors George Edwards and Mel Hayman the previous Thursday. A statement setting out the club's proposals for an Independent Steering Group and renewed liaison meetings with TUST had been presented by GE. This had been discussed with members at the TUST AGM on Thursday evening. Advice had also been received from the Football Supporters' Association (FSA).

a) Supporter consultation group

It was noted that the club had already published its proposals for an Independent Steering Group. The board believe that the success of the Group will depend on the democratic appointment of its members, independent of the club.

To give the Group the credence it requires, TUST would suggest that it should be structured along the lines of the Fan Advisory Boards (FAB), which have come out of the Fan-led Review. If Torquay are to rise to the National League and the EFL in the coming years then this sort of engagement will be required under the independent regulator anyway, and so the club can be said to be getting a head start on things and future proofing their setup for when the requirements change upon promotion.

b) TUST/TUAFC liaison meetings

The board welcomed the proposed return of regular meetings and suggested that their frequency should be mutually agreed as the relationship develops.

It recognised that all engagement between TUST and the club should be on a professional and respectful basis but was disappointed that the club felt the need to specify this when it is a given in any such relationship. It endorsed the adoption of an appropriate Code of Conduct and terms of reference, preferably in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding as adopted by many clubs.

Before accepting the proposal it was agreed that clarification was needed on the following points;

That 'meetings with TUAFC board representatives' means at least one TUAFC board member will attend.

What the restriction on 'publishing an opinion' means. Clearly both TUST and its board members as individuals need to be able to express opinions, always in a respectful way in accordance with the Code of Conduct. TUST has a social media policy which sets out guidance on how we use such platforms both as board members and as individuals.

Agreed notes of the meetings to be available to our members, recognising that on occasions there may be confidential items which cannot be published.

In conclusion, the board welcomed the club's proposal to arrange a meeting of TUST board representatives and the TUAFC board to consider how the club and TUST can work to improve the club's communications, its reputation, influence and supporters' experience.

	RW to draft a response to the club for approval which will also be published to our members.	RW
23/92	<p>Kitmas project</p> <p>Following the decision at the last meeting (minute 23/87(d)), NB had liaised with Torbay Childrens' Services and the club shop and had established that 20 shirts were available at a cost of £630 (details had been circulated prior to the meeting).</p> <p>The proposal was to ask members to make donations towards the cost but given the limited time available and the complexities of collecting money, RW suggested that TUST could meet the cost from its Community Fund. This was unanimously agreed.</p> <p>NB to confirm arrangements and seek a publicity opportunity.</p>	NB
23/93	<p>Any other business</p> <p>There was no other business</p>	

The date of the next meeting was fixed for Monday 18th December 2023 at 6pm.

Chairman's signature.....Date