



MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Held on Thursday 25th November 2021 at 6.30pm
at Torquay Athletic Rugby Football Club and via Zoom**

Present: 24 members (verified against membership records).

Apologies: received from two members. One proxy form had been received.

Michel Thomas, the Chairman, welcomed the members.

Minutes of the 2020 AGM

The minutes, having been circulated with the agenda, were taken as read and proposed for approval by Matt Gorman, seconded by Bob Cole and unanimously approved.

Receipt of the accounts and balance sheet for the year ending 30th June 2021

Copies of the draft Annual Report and Financial Statements had been circulated with the agenda.

Matt Gorman, the Independent Examiner for the year's accounts, summarised the conclusions of his examination as included in the Annual Report.

Ali Bryant, the Treasurer, presented the profit and loss accounts showing a turnover of £9,676 and that the net surplus had increased by £2,368 from £5,442 in 2019-20 to £7,810. This is broken down as follows: turnover was down by £725 which comprised reductions in income from membership fees and donations (£370) and projects (£355). This was offset by reduced expenditure of £1,400 on activities such as events, sponsorships and donations due to the pandemic. As a result the gross surplus increased by £678. Administration expenses were also down, by £1,691 to £2,019, again due to less activity and no printing costs associated with producing brochures as in previous years.

The balance sheet showed current assets (bank accounts) have increased by some £7,800 to £55,478 as a result of the 2020-21 surplus.

We continue to build significant reserves to enable TUST to deliver its objective of keeping the club going in the short-term should the worst ever happen or at least re-launching as a phoenix club.

Expenditure is carefully managed and there is financial capacity to fund relevant community outreach schemes. The meeting supported the continuing policy of committing up to 50% of the net surplus to community initiatives. This means almost £4K is available in the coming year to support things such as Torquay United Community Sports Trust (TUCST), the Women's Team and schemes that benefit the wider, local community.

There were no questions from the floor and the accounts were proposed for approval by Simon Crabtree, seconded by Rob Dickinson and unanimously approved.

Proposal to disapply the requirement for a full audit for 2021/22

In a motion proposed by Nick Brodrick, seconded by Jon Gibbes and unanimously supported, it was resolved that, subject to the provisions of section 4A of the 2014 Cooperative and Community Benefit Societies Act, the members of the Society shall not require an audit for the accounts covering the current financial year ending on 30th June 2022 when they are presented to the next AGM held in 2022.

The members of the society agree that the Accounts for the financial year ending on 30th June 2022 and for which reports will be laid before the following AGM do not require a full audit provided that:

- An Independent Examination of those accounts is carried out in place of the full Audit
- The Independent Examination is carried out in line with the best practice of the FSA as set out in the Guidance Notes.
- A report from the Independent Examiner is included within the Accounts and circulated to members.
- The members of the Trust instruct the Board to identify a suitably qualified practitioner to undertake the review.
- The Board shall agree the appointment of the examiner and shall agree the terms of that appointment in writing.

Election of board members

The Secretary reported that there were ten places available on the board with four current members continuing to serve. The six vacancies had been notified to members and nominations invited. Five nominations had been received, three being existing board members and two current co-optees and they were all therefore duly elected for a term of two years without the need for a ballot as follows;

Ali Bryant Bob Cole Rob Dickinson Sam Druiff Michel Thomas

Report of the board

A summary report of the board was included in the Annual Report and Financial Statements circulated with the agenda. Individual members of the board then provided further details of TUST's activities during the past year.

The Chairman thanked his fellow board members for their willingness to give their time voluntarily to support our club and its community. He reminded members that TUST is the main constitutionally organised group supporting Torquay United.

He told the meeting that the past year had been an exceptionally busy one despite Covid regulations and protocols. TUST had contributed to the Fan-Led Review, held meetings and correspondence with our local MPs, Torbay Council and the Safety Advisory Group as well

as developing the South West Supporters' Trust group, comprising representatives from Exeter City, Plymouth Argyle, Bristol City, Hereford FC and Yeovil Town.

He also informed the meeting that the trust's relationship with the club's directors was at an all-time low with meetings on hold until the New Year at the earliest.

Vice Chair, Robin Causley, reported on TUST's community focused activities and stated that TUST fully supported and endorsed the club's recent Community Day initiatives with its free tickets for NHS and care home workers to thank them for their hard work during the worst of the pandemic and for another batch of free tickets for 'Women's Day' but regretted not being invited to be involved with such things as a fan zone entertainment area.

TUST's supporter liaison officer, Nick Brodrick, gave a snapshot of the supporters' trust's achievements over the past year. TUST was instrumental in supporting members of the Yellow Army in the coin/bottle throwing incidents at Wrexham, represented fans' views on the club's original ticketing arrangements and he has been contributing a weekly column to the Herald Express and occasional articles for the Non-League Paper. But he posed a number of questions: What are owner Clarke Osborne's plans for the club? At what stage is the Five Year Plan? What news is there about a new stadium? Is the club still actively seeking a return to the Football League?

The AGM heard that at the forefront of TUST's activities is its mission statement: promoting good governance, seeking to ensure the long-term sustainability of Torquay United for the benefit of current and future supporters and the wider community.

Among the topics discussed was the just released report of Tracey Crouch's Fan-Led Review, particularly noting the proposed rules for new stadium builds, the revised owners' and directors' tests, the introduction of a Shadow Board, a Golden Share and the idea of being able to drink alcohol 'in sight of the match' which received a cautious welcome.

The meeting was told that TUST was writing letters to all three local MPs to urge them to see that the required legislation to implement the review is passed in Parliament.

Rob Burkitt informed the meeting of TUST's social media activities including the promotion of causes such as Andy's Man Club (male mental health) and #HerGameToo, both of which the football club had belatedly taken up.

Rob Dickinson reported on the recent success of the rejuvenated Women's Football Club which was now running two teams following TUST's support last year.

Rick Williams summarized the role of the Strategy Group which is tasked with planning for the club's sustainability and TUST's role if the club's future is ever put at risk, particularly at short notice.

Bob Cole stated that he had learned a lot since being co-opted on to the board. He asked himself why he didn't already know this and suggested that TUST needed to blow its own trumpet a bit more, letting members and more importantly the wider fan base know about the work that the Trust does representing fan's views and in encouraging inclusivity by supporting satellite groups such as TUCST and the Inspirations teams.

He felt that if more fans knew of the good work that TUST does more would join. And increasing the membership would give the Trust a more powerful voice.

Sam Druiff introduced himself and said that he was keen to bring the views of younger supporters to the board. He is the host of the Talking Torquay podcast and has a wide range of contacts among the fanbase.

Suggestions from the floor included TUST producing a template letter for supporters to send to their MP in support of the Crouch Report and a membership drive. Various ways of delivering the latter were discussed including advertising in the press, leafletting campaign and social media. The fact that TUST membership costs less than 50p per week should be emphasized.

Closing remarks

The Chairman closed the meeting by thanking the board for all their hard work during the year and the attendees for their support and valued contributions.

Despite the effects of the pandemic and the reluctance of the club to engage in meaningful dialogue, TUST members can take a lot of positives from the year's activities.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Chairman's signature.....Date