



MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Held on Wednesday 25th November 2020 at 6.30pm
Via Zoom**

Present: 21 members (verified against membership records).

Apologies: received from one member. No proxy forms had been received.

Michel Thomas, the Chairman, welcomed the members and Rick Williams, the Secretary, explained how the meeting would be run on Zoom.

The Chairman then gave a detailed summary of the trust's activities during the past twelve months including its community outreach, political engagement, business partnerships, press coverage, meetings with the Club and involvement with supporter organisations both locally and nationally. He also referred to the current calls for a fan-led review of the governance and financing of football at all levels.

Minutes of the 2019 AGM

The minutes, having been circulated with the agenda, were taken as read and proposed for approval by Nick Brodrick, seconded by Rob Burkitt and unanimously approved.

Receipt of the accounts and balance sheet for the year ending 30th June 2020

Copies of the draft accounts had been circulated with the agenda. Ali Bryant, the Treasurer, presented the profit and loss accounts showing a turnover of £10,401 and an operating surplus of £5,442. In accordance with TUST policy, up to 50% of this would be committed to community initiatives. The balance sheet showed total funds of £48,766.

There were no questions from the floor and the accounts were proposed for approval by Tony Benet, seconded by Jon Gibbes and unanimously approved.

Proposal to disapply the requirement for a full audit for 2020/21

In a motion proposed by Rick Williams, seconded by Rob Dickinson 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 2021 when they are presented to the next AGM held in 2021.

The members of the society agree that the Accounts for the financial year ending on 30th June 2021 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 three current members continuing to serve. The seven vacancies had been notified to members and nominations invited. Only four nominations had been received, all being existing board members and they were therefore duly elected for a term of two years without the need for a ballot as follows;

Nick Brodrick Rob Burkitt Robin Causley Rick Williams

It was noted that the board was keen to attract new members, particularly from under-represented groups such as exiles, females and younger supporters.

Report of the board

Nick Brodrick, board member with responsibility for Supporter Liaison, provided a detailed summary of his activities during the year. He referred to the impact of Covid-19 which had prevented any attendance since the home game on 29th February but that it now looked likely that a limited number of fans could return on 5th December. In addressing the impact of the pandemic he had conducted surveys of all National League clubs in respect of season ticket refund policies and streaming services.

Nick referred to TUST's continued liaison with local MPs and councillors, national football organisations and the formation of the Devon Supporters Trust Group which was hoping to expand to cover the South West region.

He updated members on the improved relationship with the Club, indicated by the willingness of its directors to engage with TUST via regular meetings with Dominic Mee, the Club's Media and Supporter Liaison Co-ordinator.

Nick advised that he had written a couple of articles for the Non-League Paper and subsequently been invited to contribute a weekly column to the Herald Express under the Fans' Zone banner. This was also circulated to TUST members and posted on the fans' forums, thereby ensuring a wide audience. He had recently requested an interview with Clarke Osborne to mark his fourth anniversary of ownership and was awaiting an answer.

Rob Burkitt gave a summary of TUST's activities on social media and its website. He explained that, in addition to Nick's articles, regular newsletters were produced for TUST members.

Robin Causley reported on TUST's community outreach programme. A strong partnership had been developed with the Torquay United Community Sports Trust (TUCST). He reported that Jamie McInnes, the previous TUCST manager, had left the post but that Matt Anthony, his deputy, had been appointed to the role and a meeting with him was being arranged. It was disappointing that the popular pre-match Fan Zones had been halted by the Club but there was a desire from both TUST and TUCST to revive these in the future. TUST are keen that the Premier League Fans Fund grant which originally facilitated the Fan Zones should have a lasting legacy. Other events in the wider community had been curtailed by the Covid restrictions but it was hoped to relaunch these in 2021.

Robin also reported on the informal dialogue held with the acting Chair of the fledgling Supporters Club and that there was a desire from both parties to work constructively together to compliment rather than duplicate their respective roles.

Rob Dickinson reported on the Torquay United Womens Football Club which is run independently from the main Club. TUST had formed a strong partnership to support the team as part of its community outreach remit. There had been increasing interest in the women's team and the number of squad members has grown considerably. He also explained the close links with the TUCST girls' teams, providing a development path for young players. A financial contribution towards the cost of tracksuits had recently been made from TUST's community fund.

Richard Ebbs thanked the board for its hard work and all it had achieved and this was endorsed by other members.

There were a number of questions and suggestions from the floor including discussion about plans for a new stadium, the owner's investment in the team (which was widely welcomed) and uncertainty over his long-term strategy. More openness around such plans was required if they are to be creditable. It had, for example, been many years since the last Fans' Forum.

However, it was agreed that regaining league status was the absolute priority.

David Sellman suggested that occasional, informal Zoom meetings for members may be welcomed by exiles in particular. It was agreed to pilot this in the New Year.

The Secretary noted that despite the year's economic hardship and the fact that some fans may lose interest in a trust when the team is successful, TUST membership had actually increased.

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. He concluded that we all want Torquay United to be a successful community focused club and one with a secure future and that lies at the heart of TUST's remit.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Chairman's signature.....Date