



MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

Monday 20th March 2023

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

Apologies: Sam Druiff (SD)

23/17	<p>Step One mental health charity Dom Bryant of Step One attended the start of the meeting to update on plans for 'Walk & Talk Football' mental health events. NB had brought Step One to the attention of the Club when he met Dom Mee recently and as a consequence DM had made contact with DB and a virtual meeting had been arranged for 23rd March to discuss the potential for a partnership.</p> <p>DB was keen to launch a series of regular walks with the first starting from Plainmoor. He would welcome the participation of any TUST members and it was agreed to publicise the event when a date is decided. TUST may also be able to identify a few ex-players who would be willing to participate.</p>	
23/18	<p>Minutes of the meeting held on 20th February 2023 The minutes of the meeting were tabled and approved.</p> <p>Minute 23/12 – NB reported that his contact at the FSA was leaving shortly. An offer of £250 contribution towards the VIP Treats scheme had been accepted rather than wait for his successor to start with no guarantee of securing the £500 originally offered.</p>	
23/19	<p>Relations with the Club Notes of the meeting held on 7th March between NB & RW with Dom Mee and Jo Harris at the Club had been previously circulated and noted. NB reported that a limited response had been received to the queries raised by TUST and a decision on the timing of the next meeting was expected this week.</p>	

	<p>The Club had requested specific questions regarding the Fan-Led Review & White Paper and NB suggested that this would be an opportunity to ask about the proposed requirement for club owners and directors to be visible, for greater transparency about how decisions are made and improved levels of fan engagement.</p> <p>RW noted the requirement from the Club to treat the meeting as confidential and proposed that clarification of this point should be sought at the next meeting. There was little point in having a dialogue if the details can't be shared with members.</p>	
<p>23/20</p>	<p>VIP Treats NB reported that the Club had decided to invite direct applications for the scheme as partner groups had been unable to provide sufficient candidates.</p> <p>He had approached the Imagine This charity for ideas on future projects that could be delivered in partnership with the Club. Further discussions to be held.</p> <p>RB suggested schemes such as 'Kids for a Quid' could be considered.</p> <p>MT expressed concern that TUST had not received due recognition for its contribution to the VIP Treats and other sponsorship schemes and was keen that this should be a condition of any future partnership.</p> <p>RW explained that the board had previously agreed that all future partnerships or sponsorships would be subject to a written agreement. Any grant would be conditional upon any unspent contributions or monies associated with a failure to deliver the agreed project should be returned to TUST. This would also include a requirement for feedback on how the project sponsored went, ideally with photographs and visuals etc, which could be used for publicity purposes and an appropriate level of recognition including the use of the TUST logo.</p>	<p>NB</p>
<p>20/21</p>	<p>Strategy Team BC reported on the meeting held on 2nd March. The focus had been on a 'Saving the Club' scenario, rather than launching a phoenix club. The FSA to be approached for further advice in this area. We will seek to learn from experiences of other clubs which have been saved.</p> <p>Template press releases and statements had been prepared for various scenarios if needed.</p> <p>There had been a preliminary discussion about possible names for a phoenix club including a proposal that supporters should be consulted.</p> <p>Following the meeting, members of the Strategy Team had held a very useful virtual meeting with Richard Irving of the FSA regarding sources of funding including Crowd-funding and Community Share Issues. Some interesting examples from other clubs were considered. It was agreed to promote the use of the Forever Yellow name for the fighting fund in future.</p>	

	<p>RW reported that he had contacted the Council leadership about the report TUST had presented for them and he had been advised that this would be shared with the Council's Chief Executive with a view to TUST holding a meeting with the appropriate officers.</p> <p>NB shared a letter he had received from a TUST member suggesting the Recreation Ground as a potential alternative site for a stadium. It was agreed that the detailed proposal was interesting but the site had been previously discounted for a number of reasons. It would be interesting to know whether the current owner had considered this site and this would be asked at the next liaison meeting. NB to reply to the member.</p>	NB
<p>23/22 Governance</p>	<p>a) Social media policy The existing policy was reviewed and approved without amendment. It was noted that the policy should be read and signed by all new board members.</p> <p>b) Equality and Diversity Policy A draft policy had been circulated and was approved. RB noted that the policy was a living document and should not simply be shelved until its next review. There was some discussion about how it may be applied in practice. BC also reminded the board of his desire to see the 'My Club, My Shirt' inclusivity campaign adopted by the Club.</p> <p>c) Playing by the Rules -The Governance of English Football MT summarised a presentation made at Westminster on 13th March on this report by ResPublica. He will send a link to the report for information.</p>	<p>RW</p> <p>MT</p>
<p>23/23 Partner organisations</p>	<p>a) Community Sports Trust (TUCST) TUST had asked the Club if it could hold a Fan Zone before a game this season and been told that it was discussing this possibility with the TUCST. We will make TUCST aware that we are keen to assist if it goes ahead.</p> <p>MT reported that he had attended a recent session of the TUST sponsored Junior Disability League which had attracted about 20 participants. He also advised that a contact of his in Cornwall was planning to bring a disabled football group to Torbay for a tour and he had discussed this with the manager of TUCST who was keen for TUCST to be involved. TUST could volunteer to assist with the event. Perhaps this could coincide with a pre-season friendly with the Club providing the group with free tickets for the match.</p> <p>b) Women's Team Several members of the board were among the 400 or so who had attended the Women's first game at Plainmoor the previous day. RD reported that they were still on course to win the league with four points required from the last two games. It was hoped that the final match on 30th April could also be played at Plainmoor. TUST may consider sponsoring a match next season.</p>	

<p>c)</p>	<p>Partners networking opportunity It was agreed to put this proposal for an informal meeting on hold until after the season.</p> <p>In the meantime consideration was given to offering financial support to the Travel Club for one of the remaining away games of the season. Finances are challenging for many of the loyal travelling Yellow Army with the cost of living situation and their support over the crucial closing stages of the season may be vital. NB to seek information on the costs involved and how TUST may best contribute.</p>	<p>NB</p>
<p>23/24</p> <p>a)</p>	<p>Membership</p> <p>Record systems and collection of subscriptions BC advised that he had been looking at alternative automated systems such as Hubspot (used by Hereford United Supporters Trust) and FanBase (introduced by a TUFC supporter who is employed by them). All the systems looked at have their merits but also limitations and the fact that no one system has widespread usage suggests that we are not alone in having difficulty finding a suitable one. Also, all systems appear to rely on a third party such as GoCardless or Stripe to collect payments at a significant cost per transaction.</p> <p>RB had previously looked at ways of streamlining our existing system and this may still provide the best option. He would give it further consideration in consultation with AB.</p> <p>NB advised the meeting that FanBase was primarily a ticketing system and it may be appropriate to bring the Club's attention to what the system has to offer, given the issues experienced by supporters when using the existing system.</p>	<p>RB</p>
<p>23/25</p> <p>a)</p> <p>b)</p>	<p>Media & PR</p> <p>Board members have been actively re-Tweeting and posting official Club messages.</p> <p>NB reported that local journalists Richard Hughes and Guy Henderson had requested an interview with Clark Osborne to ask what his plans for the Club are if it is relegated and he proposed to do the same at the next opportunity.</p> <p>Ian Twitchin Trophy and Away Player of the Season award MT had ordered the trophies including a replacement for Ben Wynter whose 2022 trophy had been damaged in the post. The Club will be asked if the presentation of the ITT could be made at the last game of the season while the Exiles were making plans to present their award at the last away game.</p> <p>BC volunteered to confirm details for the engraving of the trophies and their collection in MT's absence.</p>	<p>NB</p>

<p>c)</p>	<p>TUST profile There was a discussion about how TUST should respond to the current concerns surrounding the Club's immediate future. It was agreed that the top priority was to back the team until such time as its league status is confirmed. With this in mind, the board were opposed to any calls for fans to boycott games.</p> <p>Once the outcome of the season is known, TUST will raise appropriate questions of the owner and directors. In the meantime it is continuing with much work behind the scenes to prepare for a range of scenarios with the intention of being as prepared as possible should the need arise.</p> <p>It was proposed that board members could wear TUST badges at matches and make supporters aware that they could be approached with any enquiries or suggestions. NB has a supply of badges which he will circulate.</p>	<p>NB</p>
<p>23/26</p> <p>a)</p> <p>b)</p>	<p>Any other business</p> <p>New board members The need for new members was agreed and there was an initial discussion about the skills required. A few potential names were considered. Matter to be considered at a future meeting.</p> <p>United Trust Bank Investment RW reported that the 3 month fixed rate bond was maturing on 3rd April. It was agreed to retain the funds in a UTB instant access account while options are considered. Guidance to be sought from the Strategy Team when it meets next month.</p>	<p>RW</p>

The date of the next meeting was fixed for Monday 17th April 2023 at 6.30pm.

Chairman's signature.....Date