



MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING

Monday 17th February 2025

- Present:** Nick Brodrick (NB) – Chair, Ali Bryant (AB), Rob Burkitt (RB), Robin Causley (RC), Bob Cole (BC), Sam Druiff (SD), Rob Dickinson (RD), Harry Lovering (HL), Michel Thomas (MT), Rick Williams (RW) – Secretary
- In attendance:** Danni Wyatt (DW)
- Apologies:** Clive Hayward (CH)

25/13	<p>Minutes of the meeting held on 20th January 2025 The minutes of the meeting were tabled and approved and there were no matters arising that were not on the agenda for this meeting.</p>	
25/14	<p>TUST/TUFC partnership</p> <p>a) TUFC Board NB advised that the next meeting is on 27th February.</p> <p>RW advised that he had held an informal discussion with Sam Barnes (non-exec director) to clarify the status of NB and DW as TABMs. It was confirmed that they have the same full director status as the Bryn Consortium members and that Sam is the only non-exec director with a vote on the board. Joe Lovell (CEO) and Neil Warnock are on the board but do not have a vote.</p> <p>It was agreed that some clarity was required from the board about the on-going financial situation, in particular how the monthly losses were being covered.</p> <p>b) TUST and Club relationship While there is still room for improvement, it was noted that generally communication with Club staff is better.</p>	NB/DW

<p>c)</p> <p>d)</p>	<p>Supporter Liaison Officer NB reported that there had only been one applicant for the voluntary position of SLO. This was a well known supporter who appears to be well suited to the role. It was agreed that NB should arrange a formal interview with the candidate with MT, DW and a Club representative present, probably Dom Garrett-Mee as Head of Fan Services.</p> <p>Once appointed, the next stage would be to recruit a team of Match Day Ambassadors under the leadership of the SLO.</p> <p>Marketing initiatives SB and RB reported on their meeting with the Club on 10th February to discuss their lottery proposal but nothing had been heard since.</p> <p>At this point NB shared brief details in confidence of the Club's plans for a new membership scheme on which the board provided some feedback.</p>	<p>NB</p>
<p>25/15</p>	<p>Community Share Issue - Investor Rewards BC provided an update on progress:</p> <p><u>Director for the Day</u> – all matches for the rest of the season now allocated.</p> <p><u>Investor Member Board</u> – now displayed inside the Hospitality entrance and all agreed that it looks very good. There is one minor error with the spelling of a name which BC is arranging for the supplier to correct.</p> <p><u>Investor packs</u> – following the distribution of envelopes before and after the two previous home games just over half had been collected. Proposals were discussed for distributing the remaining 260 which may include collection at the next home game on 1st March, availability from the Club shop at specified times during weekdays, hand delivering locally and ultimately posting the rest. A budget of approximately £400 would be required for this including 18 overseas investors.</p> <p><u>Meet the Manager</u> – frustratingly we are still awaiting a new date and venue for this postponed event.</p> <p><u>Golf Day</u> – Platinum Investors had been offered an invitation to the Annual TUFC Golf Day. Arrangements for this had been made by the Club for 8th April but with no reference to the investors offer.</p> <p>MG had taken this up with the Club and it was apparent that this had been overlooked. An alternative date was offered for a scaled-back event for investors with refreshments to follow at Boots & Laces.</p> <p>The board felt that this was inadequate and did not match the spirit of the reward offered, which had been at the suggestion of the Club in the first place. It was felt that Platinum Investors should be offered complimentary places at the Golf Day arranged for 8th April. NB and DW to raise.</p>	<p>NB/DW</p>

<p>25/16</p>	<p>Independent accounting review RW explained that two potential independent advisors had been approached. One had declined the offer as his company was now working for the Club but the other has offered favourable terms for the review and some positive initial advice. It was agreed to appoint him to review our accounting practices, tax liabilities and audit requirements on the proposed terms.</p>	<p>RW</p>
<p>25/17</p>	<p>Strategy review The Strategy Team had met on 10th February and notes from the meeting had been circulated in advance.</p> <p>It was agreed that the wording of the mission statement and five core objectives (which replicate those set out in the Rules) remain appropriate without amendment.</p> <p>The current Strategic Plan was reviewed and amendments proposed as follows;</p> <p><u>Independence</u> It is important that TUST retains its independence from the Club despite its 28.6% shareholding and its rights and obligations under the Articles of Association. The following clause proposed;</p> <p><i>Where TUST's views differ from the Club's our appointees on the Club board will represent our views.</i></p> <p>It was agreed that there is no need for a Memorandum of Understanding with the Bryn Consortium now that we have representation at board level and a proposed Supporter Liaison Officer.</p> <p><u>Plainmoor</u> The existing Plan focuses on a possible move from Plainmoor as that was the stated objective of the previous owner. Such a move does not appear to be on the agenda of the new ownership and TUST has the permanent right of veto on any such proposal.</p> <p>Regardless of this, we believe that the Council should retain the Freehold of Plainmoor whilst reserving the option of reviewing this requirement if a bona fide case is made for the Club acquiring the freehold in the future.</p> <p>However, there is need to renew the Asset of Community Value registration that expires this year.</p> <p>Reference to new stadium plans should be relegated to the end of this section along the lines; 'Whilst we are committed to staying at Plainmoor, if there are any future discussions about relocating the stadium we will represent supporters' views and interests in such considerations'.</p> <p>It is proposed to remove any reference to installing an artificial playing surface. We don't believe this is on the agenda of the new owners and if it is raised in the future we will consider it on its merits.</p>	

Long term ownership aspirations

We discussed whether full fan ownership like the Exeter City model is a current objective. It was proposed that this is not an aspiration in the period of this 3 year plan and no reference is needed.

Community engagement

This was a priority under the existing plan as the Club itself had little or no interest in such activities. It was also prudent to devote some of our surplus funds to community causes rather than simply allow the Forever Yellow Fund to grow too fast.

We feel that the Club is now showing genuine and tangible interest in engaging with the community and our emphasis should be on supporting it in doing this in partnership rather than TUST seeking to lead on it.

NB mentioned the Charity Policy that is part of the proposed Club Charter (details to follow).

Business engagement

Likewise, we have previously worked independently to promote the Club to the local business community because we felt that the Club was failing to do so effectively.

As with Community Engagement, signs are that the new regime are committed to working with and supporting businesses including a more professional approach to Club sponsors. We propose to work in partnership with the Club in this respect.

Other discussions

Use of funds

Previous policy has been to allocate approximately 50% of surplus income to the Forever Yellow Fund and the balance to community causes. The need to grow the FYF is no longer such a priority although we do need to decide how much should be retained in the fund for contingencies. This decision will depend on our assessment of potential risks and will be decided later in this review process. There is currently £20k in the FYF. We will consider investing the FYF in an interest bearing account / bonds but must be accessible at short notice.

Decisions will also be needed on how to spend TUST surpluses. This will be a key area to consult members on in due course but the feeling of the board is that the majority of this money should be used to support the Club in one way or another. This might be with direct investment or indirectly by supporting associated activities such as the Women's team or Community Sports Trust that might otherwise rely on funding from the Club.

There was particular discussion about the merits of providing financial support for youth development. It was noted that the Club is unlikely to set up a full youth system until it is back in the EFL as (a) significant grant funding would then be available and (b) any young player developed in the NL can be snapped up by another club without any compensation.

The need for the Club to prepare in advance for a youth set-up and to publicly state its intentions was noted. In the meantime we should consider how we can support the present youth set up, maybe by sponsoring the U-18s which come under the umbrella of the TUCST.

Other suggested areas for spending include setting up the Club Museum for which grant aid may be available, subsidising the Official Travel Club and marking TUSTs 20th anniversary in 2026. It is proposed to give members a list of options to choose from when we consult.

Member engagement and retention

NB outlined the benefits of membership offered by some other clubs and reference was also made to Argyle's Evergreen Club. Extending the discounts available to members both within Plainmoor and surrounding pubs and businesses was considered. This ties in with the work of the Marketing Team in conjunction with the Club.

It was agreed by all that relaunching the members' monthly newsletter was an effective way of improving fan engagement. Also the need for another Fans Forum, preferably in partnership with the Club is a priority and should probably be held twice a year in future.

The membership will also be given the opportunity to contribute directly to this review of our Strategic Plan in due course via an open meeting at Plainmoor or an on-line meeting and / or a questionnaire.

Risks

While everything is very positive for both the Club and TUST at present, it is important that we consider how things could go wrong and this assessment of risks will be one of the most important parts of the new Plan. Among the risks identified at this early stage were;

- Withdrawal of interest by owners
- Irrecoverable disagreement between investors
- Loss of key personnel eg: Chairman, Manager
- Failure of the team to achieve promotion targets
- Failure to control costs
- Loss of revenue through falling attendances etc
- Loss of TUST membership
- Reputational damage

This is only a first and quick assessment of key risks. More work will be needed and the conclusions plotted on a Risk Map with the likelihood and impact of each risk assessed and steps to mitigate them recorded.

Next steps

3 year budget projections to be prepared
Further work on Risk Map
Consideration of the above at March board
Consultation with membership – probably April
Sign-off new Strategic Plan by board.

RW

<p>25/18</p>	<p>Youth strategy HL reported that he had held constructive discussions with the Club about the proposal to engage with young football fans through school visits. He had enlisted the help of another supporter to co-ordinate the initiative in primary schools. Some players appeared keen to get involved. RD asked DW if any of the Women's Team would get involved. She explained that most live outside the area but some could probably be found.</p>	<p>DW</p>
<p>25/19</p> <p>a)</p> <p>b)</p> <p>c)</p> <p>d)</p> <p>e)</p>	<p>TUST Partners</p> <p>Community Sports Trust RD advised that the TUCST board meet on 19th February. They are particularly keen that a Club representative, preferably a director, should attend.</p> <p>TUST had received a request from the TUCST Manager for van sponsorship. He had been advised of the current embargo on community funding pending the outcome of the strategic review.</p> <p>Women's team DW updated the meeting on the team's progress and future direction. The decision to fully integrate the Women's Team into the Club would be publicised shortly. The home game against Bishops Lydeard on 30th March would be played at Plainmoor to coincide with a Mothers Day lunch event.</p> <p>Travel Club The recent sad events following the Maidstone game had been widely discussed prior to the meeting. The board fully support the stance taken by the Club in respect of those who had breached regulations and its need to protect the good name of the TUFC. There was a degree of frustration that the full facts of the case had not been made public and some complete falsehoods had been circulating as a result. The potential threat to the Club's finances or promotion challenge arising from such behaviour cannot be over-emphasised.</p> <p>Local MPs RC had arranged a Zoom meeting with the three local MPs to be held on 26th February. This is an opportunity to raise awareness of TUST's activities and promote support for the Football Governance Bill. NB, RC, MT and BC to attend.</p> <p>FSA General Meeting Notice had been received of this meeting on 27th February to vote on proposals to increase the representation of Associate Members and introduce a requirement for Affiliate Members (TUST) to participate in FSA training and governance audits and to appoint the FSA as a Corporate Member. The board supported the proposals and RW will attend the virtual meeting on its behalf.</p>	

<p>25/20</p> <p>a)</p> <p>b)</p>	<p>Media & PR</p> <p>Football v Homophobia RB and CH had issued a statement in conjunction with Tom Kelly of Torquay Talk in support of this national initiative which the Club are backing.</p> <p>Back in the Game RB reported that the Club has now provided sanitary bins in the men's toilets. PHS/Prostate Cancer UK are sending signage to advertise the bins and no further action is required.</p>	
<p>25/21</p> <p>a)</p> <p>b)</p> <p>c)</p>	<p>Any other business</p> <p>Programme availability A supporter had enquired whether match programmes could be made available to purchase on line. This has certainly been the case in the past. NB to check with the Club.</p> <p>Tony Bedeau It was agreed that TUST should be represented at TB's funeral, either in person or by sending flowers and/or a donation depending on the family's wishes.</p> <p>A year on It was agreed that TUST should issue a short statement to mark the twelve months since Osborne made his announcement to withdraw from the Club on 22nd February. RB to draft for approval.</p>	<p>NB</p> <p>RB</p>

The date of the next meeting was fixed for Monday 17th March 2025 at 6.30pm

Chairman's signature.....Date