

# Dons Trust Board Meeting



Wednesday 8 October 2012

The Cherry Red Records Stadium

President's Lounge



## MINUTES

### Members:

Matthew Breach (MB)  
David Gowns (DG)  
Iain McNay (IM)  
Simon Bath (SB)  
Zoe Linkson (ZL)  
Nicole Hammond (NHa)  
Tom Adam (TA)  
Kate Terriere (KT)

### Invited:

Erik Samuelson (ES)  
Nigel Higgs (NH)  
David Charles (DC)  
Ivor Heller (IH)  
  
David Hall (DH) – Secretariat  
David Reeves (DR) - Secretariat

### Apologies:

Sean McLaughlin (SM)

Eric Page (EP) - Secretariat

Ref	Item	Action
	The meeting began at 19:30.	
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Apologies/Minutes/Matters Arising</b>	
1.1	Apologies were received from Sean McLaughlin and Eric Page (Secretariat).	<b>DR / DH</b>
1.2	David Reeves agreed to take the minutes and share with David Hall.	
1.3	It was noted that draft minutes to the DTB Meeting of 10 September had been approved prior to this meeting.	

2.0	Football Club Board Report	
2.1	<p>ES briefly recapped on the recruitment and selection process for the new football manager, which had culminated that day with final interviews in Central London. Around 40 applications had been whittled down to six applicants, invited for first interview with ES and Harry Bassett. Following a report back to the Football Club Board, four of those candidates were invited to final interview today (Monday 8 October) with the full FCB plus Harry, and a psychologist with a particular brief to assess the candidates' behaviours at interview. Immediately following the interviews, the panel had then discussed and analysed in considerable detail each candidate's strengths and weaknesses. This culminated in a decision by the panel to recommend to the DTB the appointment of Neal Ardley as AFC Wimbledon's football manager and Neil Cox as his No. 2 (who had also attended the interview).</p>	
2.2	<p>At the request of the DTB, ES and other members of the FCB outlined the relative merits of the successful pair over the other candidates. There followed a robust discussion, during which it was established that Neil Ardley would bring strong technical coaching skills, an impressive vision for the club, a proven track record on youth development and a huge passion for both football management and the club itself. There was also evidence that he would strike up a good relationship with the FCB. Although it was acknowledged by the FCB that Neil Ardley lacked football league management experience, Neil Cox did have recent League Two playing experience with Crewe Alexandra. Despite this reservation, it was the view of the interview panel that Neal Ardley was the strongest candidate and should be recommended for appointment.</p>	
2.3	<p>Other issues discussed included the relative likelihood of Neal Ardley being able to keep the club in League Two, his football connections, his ability to build a successful team with the limited funding available, the impact on the existing football staff, immediate priorities for the team and football targets set, and next steps. ES said that he hoped that, following a telephone conversation with Neal Ardley later that evening, followed by the unsuccessful candidates the following day, it may be possible to announce the appointments later on Tuesday 9 October. It was hoped that the new managerial team would be in place for the Cheltenham Town game on 13<sup>th</sup>.</p>	
2.4	<p>Following this discussion, the DTB ratified the recommendation for Neal Ardley and Neil Cox to be appointed, and invited ES to contact Neal Ardley to offer him the position by telephone that evening.</p>	<b>ES</b>
2.5	<p>SB proposed a vote of thanks from the DTB to the members of the FCB for</p>	

	their considerable efforts over the past few weeks, which was unanimously endorsed by all DTB members.	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Finances</b>	
3.1	ES outlined the proposals for addressing the forecast financial shortfall for the current year through increasing fund-raising efforts. MB described how he had discussed with the FCB the idea of splitting the existing fund-raising role into two new positions. One would focus on DT 'business as usual', the other on big projects, mainly for the Club. ES stated that he would produce job specifications for these roles and advertise them within the next 2 weeks.	<b>ES</b>
3.2	There was a brief discussion on the latest situation with regard to creating "Associate Directorships" of the club. ES stated that the FCB would create a proposal for this, building on work undertaken by Kris Stewart last year and IM more recently. It was agreed that such a proposal should be put before members so the FCB recommendation will be tabled at next month's DTB meeting prior to being debated at the AGM.	<b>ES</b>
3.3	ES noted that the projected loss was forecast to be roughly equivalent to the profit before depreciation from last year; however it was important to increase fund-raising to ensure that there were no negative consequences for next season as such a position could not be sustained.	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Operations Director Report</b>	
4.1	The Board thanked DC for forwarding the detailed Health and Safety Policy and Risk Assessment documents. Due to the time taken up on Item 2, it was agreed to defer a proper review of this item to the next meeting.	
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
5.1	<p><b>Junior Dons</b></p> <p>NHi said that at the recent SGM the role of the Junior Dons had been raised, in particular the extent to which the Club could be more adventurous with what it can offer JD members. For example, some clubs aligned their junior membership schemes more closely with their football activities.</p> <p>IH said that seats in the new stand offered good sight lines for children, and suggested the club consider offering special season ticket deals in the family section for JD members.</p>	



5.3	<p>should be backed up with evidence in or linked to the manifesto' in order to ensure any claims were substantiated.</p> <p>MB confirmed that SB would not be standing in the next election. It was agreed that this would be referred to in the planned Dons Trust article for the forthcoming Cheltenham programme.</p> <p><b>Community Charitable Trust</b></p> <p>NH said that the Community Working Group had a number of questions regarding the setting up and operation of the new charitable trust. NHi responded to these questions, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funds in the charity could be spent on any of the aims enshrined in the trust objectives. Typically, initial monies would fund salaried staff to make the trust operational, and to seek additional funding from other sources for the four charitable pillars.</li> <li>• Regarding the setting up of the trust board, the Club have appointed a solicitor in Newcastle recommended for the purpose by the PFA and Football League Trust. His advice was to ensure an appropriate balance on the board between the football club and independent membership – initially this would be two club members and one independent (eg from local politics, education etc.). Later, this could be increased to three and two respectively.</li> <li>• The new trust would, in the short-term, fund 'business as usual' activity, during which time arrangements would be put in place for staff to transfer across, following TUPE rules. Thereafter, it would be up to the trustees to determine how to allocate funds across the trust's activities.</li> </ul> <p>It was agreed that the DTB would ratify the proposed trust constitution, and that NHi and DG would attend the next CWG meeting on 17 October.</p>	
5.4	<p><b>DT website</b></p> <p>DG reported that the new site had now launched and had received a lot of positive user feedback. The Board congratulated DG on the quality of the site and content. DG said that DR would be taking over responsibility for the site from the end of this week.</p>	
5.5	<p><b>East Stand sponsor</b></p> <p>SB confirmed that the campaign to sponsor the east stand would kick off this week, using media 'crowd-sourcing'.</p>	

5.6	<b>Wycombe Wanderers match</b>  There was a brief discussion about the arrest at Wycombe on 22 September. It was confirmed that one individual had been banned by the Club, and two others had been given police warnings as to their future conduct.  The meeting closed at 21:45. The next meeting to take place on Thursday 8 November 2012.	
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