

## **Dons Trust Board Meeting**

Thursday 19 February 2015

The Cherry Red Records Stadium

Presidents Lounge 7.30 pm

Minutes - Part 2

### **Members:**

David Growns (DG)

Jane Lonsdale (JL)

Zoe Linkson (ZL)

Mark Davis (MD)

Kris Stewart (KS)

Nigel Higgs (NH)

Sean McLaughlin (SM)

### **Invited:**

David Hall (DH) Dons Trust Secretary

Michael Hayes (MH) Secretariat

Rob Crane (RC) Secretariat

Apologies

Moorad Choudhry (MC)

(DTB Only)

### **10. Minutes of January 19 Meeting**

The Minutes were approved.

### **11. DTB Co-option**

DG reminded the Board that they have power to co-opt up to 3 additional board members. JL has suggested that consideration be given to co-opting someone from the 16 to 25 age group. This is an important age group with which the DTB does not engage and therefore is not fully representative of its members. There was discussion about whether it would be easy to find someone from that age group who would have the time and commitment regularly to attend long evening meetings, and a risk that such a co-option might actually be demotivating for the person concerned. There was also the issue of child protection for those below the age of 18. It was noted that there have been young DTB members in the past. It was agreed that the DTB should seek better to engage with this demographic, and co-option could be part of a wider strategy. DH reminded DTB members that they were all

elected and that the process of co-opting members needed careful consideration to avoid allegations of nepotism. He suggested that Working Groups were a useful option for key projects. NH volunteered to analyse the DT database which will reveal DT members in the 18 to 25, and will prepare a paper on the subject with assistance from JL.

**Action – NH to prepare a paper on co-option with assistance from JL**

DH said there were other areas in which the DTB lacks expertise, including major construction works and project management, and co-option or working group membership would be desirable to assist with the new stadium proposals.

## **12. ESG Report**

DH presented his report, the main conclusion being that the election process should be started earlier in 2015. John Dolan has offered to chair the group again and Neil Springate has once again offered to be the independent scrutineer. Graham Stacey, who successfully organised the twitter debate in 2014 may also be available to join the group. JL suggested that the group should ask for volunteers to fill any skills gap e.g social media skills and that any dates for hustings should also be set up early ensuring that technical people were also available to ensure they went ahead.

The DTB noted its' thanks to the ESG for the running of the 2014 election process.

**Action – It was agreed that DH ask John Dolan to Chair the group and select a team (including Neil and Graham – if available - and any others to meet skills gap) and report back with new arrangements to the May or June DTB meeting.**

SM said that in his view the election should be held every 2 years due to lower recent turnout and getting more people on the ESG. He said more Board places might encourage more candidates to come forward. He also felt that it should not be done in December due to the proximity of Xmas putting off some voters.

## **13. Ticket Pricing Survey**

MD summarised his detailed paper and asked the DTB what further analysis, if any, they would like to be undertaken. DG suggested further analysis of the narrative comments made in the survey responses. It was agreed that the DTB needs to know now the FCB's intentions on 2015/2016 pricing. MD's paper should be shared with ES. MD said that the survey was undertaken as the first stage of a consultation process but, given the need to prioritise the workload of the DTB and the limited remaining period at TCRRS, he did not intend to take it to the next stage yet unless the DTB thought that should happen. It was noted that the response rate to the survey was greater than the percentage recorded in the DTB election which indicated that the survey was welcomed.

**Action – MD to update the paper to incorporate analysis of narrative comments. DG to give ES a copy of MD's paper and inform ES that the DTB would like to know the FCB's intentions re ticket pricing for 2015/2016 as soon as possible.**

## **14. Kick It Out's Equality Standard**

NH summarised this and explained that the Equality Standard represents best practice. He wanted the board's initial reaction. In his former role as a member of the FCB he had been aware of racism at

some (mainly non league) grounds, but the Equality Standard does not just apply to racism but to all forms of discrimination. In answer to a question from SM, he said that the work involved would take longer and cost the club more than LLW accreditation. It was agreed that NH would do more work to find out what other clubs have done and what would be the first step for AFCW. KS said that NH will need to get ES's support - DG to speak to ES about this.

ZL asked whether the club has signed up for Football Against Homophobia. KS agreed to find out.

**Action – DG to inform ES that NH will be seeking input from other clubs about what is involved in meeting the Equality Standard. KS to ascertain if the club is signed up for FAH.**

### **15. Disabled Supporters Representation**

In the absence of MB, this is to be carried forward to the March meeting.

### **16. Matchday Representation**

This has not yet moved forward.

**Action – ZL will engage with John Stembridge and Gerry Hever in order to progress.**

### **17. AOB**

i) DG reported that ES, MB, KS and DG had a good meeting on Friday 20 January and agreed a number of actions for recommendation to the DTB namely:

*a) Prioritisation of items for 2015 Board meetings*

*b) MB to lead group including KS and other board members to clarify the role of the DTB Chair*

*c) ES and KS to collaborate on Community Share Issue*

*d) Board Member Training*

*e) Election and Induction Process for Board Members*

*f) Ways of working as a Board*

**Action – DG to update MB on MB's return from NZ, and report to Board within 2 weeks**

ii) NH referred to the 18 January stadium meeting and suggested that the DTB should be providing input to AW as to what the DT needs from a community stadium, which would mean consulting DT members. DG said that he has provided AW with some input on this which will be circulated, but it was thought that the DTB should be able to speak for DT members.

**Action – DG to circulate what AW is to produce re input from DTB on stadium design**

iii) JL reported that she has received an email from Tudor Jennings about the difficulties of signing up to DT membership for those who cannot do so online. She will circulate this to Board Members and would like assistance on how she should respond.

**Action: JL to circulate email and request that it be responded to**

iv) ZL reported on the Expert Working Group. She has been attending bi-weekly meetings of this group which is due to make an interim report to the Department of Culture Media and Sport by the end of March.

v) JL referred to an email she had sent to MB, DG and DH proposing that DTB members report on what they are doing for the DT outside of board meetings. This can be either verbally at the board meetings or by email but should be minuted.

**Action – DTB members to report what they have been doing outside board meetings such reports to be minuted.**

vi) KS reported that SD are organising events for Supporter Ownership form 11-18 April (the week when we play Wycombe at home). DH said that there is also a survey from SD to be completed by 28 February\*

**Action – KS to talk to the FCB about participation in the events week and to complete survey\***

The meeting finished at 11.11pm.

Next meeting – 16 March 2015 at TCRRS.

\*Post meeting note – the deadline for the survey is actually 2 March.