

Dons Trust Board

Draft Minutes of Meeting Thursday 14 April 2016

Cherry Red Records Stadium President's Lounge

Members

Matt Breach (MB)

Mark Davis (MD)

Jane Lonsdale (JL)

David Growns (DG)

Roger Evans (RE)

Nigel Higgs (NH)

Colin Dipple (CD) (part)

Sean McLaughlin (SM)

Invited

Mick Buckley (MBu) (part)

Rob Crane (RC) (Secretariat)

Michael Hayes (MH) (Secretariat)

Rob McGlinchey (RG) (Secretary)

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Tom Adam and Erik Samuelson (ES).

2. DTB Discussion: FCB Papers and Current Issues

a) MB orally reported key issues from the recent FCB meeting:

i) The pre season friendly at La Manga is to be cancelled and it will be replaced by a shorter trip to Wales. *[This section has been redacted]*. It was noted that the cancellation should be widely communicated.

ii) The state of the KM pitch is poor. NA is seeking better organised reporting lines on this.

iii) The Budget was reviewed.

iv) Christmas fixtures – FL requirements mean that we could have a home game on New Year's Eve. The club may try and move this to 30 December.

v) HMRC are being pressed for answers on a community share scheme.

vi) Project Houdini is an app to be used on the free wifi to be provided for all clubs who opt in to the deal, but it is not clear whether revenue has to be shared.

vii) AFCW has been invited to the Playoff planning meeting for the first time.

viii) Fans should be encouraged not to “dump” items that they are donating to be sold on AFCbay at the DT Kiosk. This should be circulated to members, suggesting that photos are sent in first.

b) Discussion/Preparation for Agenda item 3:

i) ES to respond to the four key questions he has been asked (see 3a below).

ii) JL noted that the Foodbank collection is due this Saturday but no communication as yet has been made to members. It was noted that this is run by the Foundation.

iv) NH asked that the LLW item go back on the agenda. He would like to be able to report back to the August SGM in order to pre-empt a members' resolution, and he would like the data within one month.

v) SM suggested that there should be a running list of actions required from the FCB. The DTB agreed that this should start immediately, subject to DTB agreement at each meeting as to items to go on the list and items to be removed.

vi) MD suggested that the DTB should identify strategic questions to assist in the Budget discussion.

vii) An update on printer cartridge collection is required.

[This section has been redacted]

3.FCB Update

(MBu joined the meeting)

a) FCB Report

MB asked for MBu's comments on the questions that were put to ES prior to the meeting.

i) LLW

MBu said that DC has been talking to AFCW contractors who are struggling to supply the information that the club requires; an estimate of the extra cost is £20,000. Ivor Heller has reported to ES that all staff directly paid by AFCW are receiving the LLW, but confirmation is needed from ES. NH asked whether any contracts were renewed for 2015-16 – Mbu undertook to find out. It was proposed that ES should produce a written position paper which the DTB could then debate. *[This section has been redacted]*

ii) Player Engagement

It was noted that after the York game there had appeared to be no other player present apart from the MOM, which meant that the agreed policy may not have been implemented. MBu was reminded that there was an action programme suggested by ES, which should have been implemented, and it was agreed that the FCB should make it happen, starting with the Crawley game. JL suggested that an article highlighting all aspects of player engagement (both post match and as part of their community work) be published in the near future.

iii) End of Season Event

Involvement of POY, PP and former players was discussed and encouraged. Ticket sales could pick up though should AFCW achieve the playoffs.

iv) On printer cartridges, MBu thinks some of the cartridges have gone. He will find out if the Foundation can still make money out of cartridges.

Academy Budget - MBu was asked why this seems to be increasing? He said the latest draft budget has taken £40K out of their budget. NH asked to what can be attributed the incremental cost increases over the past 2 years. SM suggested that ES be asked to produce a summary of the actual and budget costs for 2014 to 2017 budgets to facilitate this review.

[This section has been redacted]

b) Stadium

An update was provided by Mbu on developments surrounding the stadium.

(CD left the meeting)

Mayoral candidate lobbying - there was discussion about the effectiveness of the email campaign to mayoral candidates. MBu said that the club has been liaising with Galliard's PR advisers who are concerned that more aggressive action could backfire – we are therefore following their advice. MB noted that JL is approaching the coalition that challenged the West Ham stadium deal, and she is emailing all London clubs tomorrow. She suggested that DT members, and the DT website, should comment and retweet via Twitter or Facebook through BTDH. MBu was asked to take these points back to Galliard's PR advisers. In answer to a question from RE, he said the club is in communication with the GLA executive. It was noted that responsibility for the section 106 agreement will now pass from Merton to the GLA. *[This section has been redacted]*

c) Budget 2016-2017

MB explained to MBu that the DTB needs to consider strategic issues. MBu said that while this budget is slightly less conservative than its predecessor, it still does not take account of transfer fees, and does not assume a cup run beyond the second round. RE asked whether player bonuses are paid for reaching the playoffs and if so, whether they are in the budget? MBu said bonuses are payable and are not in the budget, but neither is playoff income.

NH asked about assumptions for home gates, bearing in mind promotion of well supported teams if Oxford and Plymouth go up and AFCW don't. MBu said steps will be taken to increase home fan capacity for home games against lesser supported teams such as Accrington and Newport. NH requested more information on how to increase attendances generally. **Note: MBu agreed to feedback the plans, but noted that the budgeted attendance figures are lower than this year's forecast.**

MBu reported that programme improvements are being considered. DG said that the production team are keen on improving the quality. One in five matchday attendees buy a programme, not out of line with other League 2 clubs. JL suggested that content providers be consulted in advance of changes. MBu to feed back to ES, for discussion with MB and DG.

NH queried why the cash flow does not include VAT payments. MBu to raise with ES.

RE emphasised the importance of cash flow and wages.

SM noted that he had emailed some comments on the Budget to ES. During the meeting, ES replied by email that the FCB will review.

d) SGM Debrief

MD suggested that the Academy be an agenda item for the August SGM. It was agreed that we should aim to have a better venue and a presentation on the Academy. NH suggested the DTB should have greater oversight over youth strategy, and that the DTB should receive minutes of the technical board meetings.

Agreed that NA/JS be invited come to a DTB meeting – JL suggested separate meetings for NA and JS.

[This section has been redacted]

MBu was thanked for attending, and left the meeting.

4. Webjam Update

JL reported that RC has been appointed content manager, but there is a need for exclusive content to be given to members, in order to have something to “sell” to DT members. DTB members were therefore requested to think of information that can be given to DT members exclusively which they cannot otherwise get, whether it be to do with stadium or whatever. Ideas to be sent to RC by DTB members. We need to have a bank of exclusive content to be rolled out initially, and thereafter DTB members should constantly review whether anything they are doing could be communicated to DT members ahead of fans generally. An example could be boardroom policy. RE suggested that the postcode breakdown could be another subject to data protection issues. RC’s meeting summaries could be another, but care should be taken not to replace the DT website.

One hundred initial DT members have been selected for initial rollout, which will happen in June. JL will present a marketing policy to the May meeting.

NH asked if Webjam could be a tool to expand DT membership; JL said this was not part of the remit, but suggestions are welcome.

JL warned that the rollout would be a massive issue involving a lot of cleaning up, so the DTB should anticipate some pain and be prepared to live with it.

NH asked if this will be for over 18s only. JL said yes, not for JDs, but we do need to think about 16 to 18s.

5. DTB Role/TOR Progress Update

The various working groups reported progress. SM and RE (Succession Planning) are meeting ES on 19 April and will present an outline of the plan when required. NH and MD have met and are working on their remit. MB is working on the consultation exercise that will include assessing the appetite for standing in the New Stadium. JL suggested that there will be overlaps between groups and where this happens there should be liaison before bringing things to the DTB.

6. AOB

a) MB reported that he has had a good response to his appeal for volunteers to assist on stadium consultation and a first meeting is imminent.

Boardroom policy will be the first thing to be shared when Webjam is launched.

- b) MB asked board members to advise him when dealing with any outside organisation so as not to send confused messages.
- c) DG reported on progress on the new CRM. MB and DG to push this as an agenda item at the next FCB meeting as it is essential that this should be in place by the time we are in the new stadium so we should start now. SM suggested that this should be handled by asking the FCB to put it in the Budget or give a reasoned argument for not doing so.
- d) RM reported that he will have a paper on membership ready for the June DTB meeting. There are ideas for expanding membership and on youth. CD and RM to work on establishing a working group. DG will send RM an old paper which contained some ideas. MB mentioned that a fan he met whilst on the Walk to Wembley charity walk, had made some suggestions. RM to follow up.
- e) JL raised the co option question. She said we need to tell the membership whether we are going to co-opt a board member from a younger age group or not, or is representative of that group. MB was reluctant to co-opt anyone unless s/he has a specific remit, but the general feeling was that there would be a remit for a younger person, and that such co-option would only be until the next AGM. Agreed that NH should address the “young voice” issue with younger DT members, while MD would draft a role specification.
- f) It was agreed that DT members should be notified of the deadline for putting resolutions to the SGM. The papers for general meetings must go out at least 30 days before the meeting, so the solution was agreed to be notification in good time before that deadline, with the offer of help in drafting resolutions.
- g) SM said he would like to have a debate about the AFCW Foundation with an evaluation.
- h) It was agreed that JL will ask the Webjam graphic designer to assist in the branding of the DT Kiosk.

The meeting ended at 10.46pm.

Next DTB Meeting Tuesday 12 May at 7.30 pm

MEMBER ACTIVITIES SINCE MARCH 16 MEETING

Matthew Breach

General: manned DT kiosk (3 games) and compiled 2 DT programme pages. Answered 3 requests for interviews from students and other Supporters Trusts.

DTB Meetings: set-up further session with our facilitators (Chris and John) to discuss progress and agree any further actions that would be beneficial to the DTB; organised special meeting on stadium funding (April 28th).

SGM Preparation: Worked up agenda, invite letter and ticket pricing resolution.

Consultation: set-up appeal for volunteers to form a consultation working group; 8 suitable candidates (4/5 appearing to be quality new volunteers) identified and date of first meeting being agreed via Doodle (will be in May).

Mark Davis

Worked with Chair to finalise allocation of activities to DTB members

Jane Lonsdale

Webjam: Project plan meeting with David Grows, David Reeves and Rob Crane on 18 March; meeting with David Lloyd on 1 April re marketing plan; update at SGM on 7 April.

Board Meeting and representation: note taking at SGM on 7 April and update on Webjam, Away Boardroom duty Wycombe 2 April.

Member engagement: responding to member queries on volunteers away day; Webjam project, planning application and ticket pricing.

Junior Dons: Haydon page: writing, collating and submitting Haydon page for York (19 March); Portsmouth (28 March). Liaising with Roger Dennis on Junior Dons newsletter to include feedback on Haydon programme. Arranging player profiles for new players.

Bring the Dons Home (BtDH) liaison with BTDH team on writing campaign following the mayor's call in of the planning application and liaison with Supporters Direct to secure other FCs writing in support.

No other member activities were submitted to the DT Secretary