

Dons Trust Board

Draft Minutes of Meeting Thursday Monday 17 October 2016

Cherry Red Records Stadium Back Bar

Members

Matt Breach (MB)

Mark Davis (MD)

Jane Lonsdale (JL)
(Secretariat)

David Gowns (DG)

Roger Evans (RE)

Nigel Higgs (NH)

Colin Dipple (CD)

Tom Adam (TA)

Sean McLaughlin (SM)

Invited

Erik Samuelson (ES) (part)

Rob Crane (RC) (Secretariat)

Michael Hayes (MH)

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Matt Spriegel and Rob McGlinchey.

2. DTB Discussion: FCB Papers and Current Issues

[DTB members discussed the points to be raised with ES during the FCB section of the meeting]

3. FCB Update

(ES joined the meeting)

(a) Stadium Update

ES said that AW advises that the new stadium should be completed by end 2018, leaving it for discussion later whether we would wish to move mid-season, but on this basis we should be certain for the 2019 season. *[This section has been redacted]*

On the funding issue, ES said we will not need the bank loan until February/March 2018. We will not need to spend any money on the stadium, apart from design costs, until we get the land, in about a year's time. *[This section has been redacted]*

RE asked what is the role of PLOs (Public Liaison Officers). ES said they interface between the developer and the public. Galliard will publish a monthly newsletter briefing local residents about the development.

RE asked about safe standing and when a decision has to be made on this. ES noted that the Football Foundation (FF) has already said that we will lose the grants if we are not all seater. He added that he understands that the Police are not in favour of safe standing. However, ES plans to ask the FF if they would agree to transfer the grants to the new stadium on the basis of an all-seater stadium but if by the time the decision has to be made the ban on terraces has been lifted, then we will seek that the grant be made transferable.

JL asked about judicial review. ES is not worried about this, although an application could cost a further 3 month delay since, he speculated, Galliard may delay their notice if an application for judicial review is made, and in any event they will not serve notice until the section 106 agreement has been completed. There is nothing to be done unless and until a judicial review is launched in which case we will have to respond. **Note:** Subsequently, Galliard issued notice so there wouldn't be a delay as the notice period covers the period of a JR.

Timing of the proposed DTB meeting with ES and AW was discussed. ES has already asked AW to update his advice which is to be ready ahead of the FCB November meeting and will be discussed with RE probably on 4 November. ES to suggest possible dates for a meeting with the DTB. It will be necessary therefore for the DTB to hold two meetings between now and 15 November to cover Accounts, Stadium, AGM preparation and other deferred DTB matters.

Action: ES to suggest dates for meeting with AW.

[This section has been redacted]

RE asked whether the grant of planning permission has triggered any approaches about stadium naming rights. ES said no. He feels that we will need to instruct consultants.

(b) CRM

ES noted that the proposed CRM system outlined in DG's briefing note would reduce cash flow by £77,952 in Year 1. He agreed to revise the cashflow figures and circulate.

Action: ES to revise cash flow figures and circulate

DG said that benefits from the new system will start to be experienced in January 2017, although financial benefits are hard to quantify. Ticketing is planned to be in the new system by March 2017. ES said that the attendance numbers we are experiencing mean that the new system is unlikely to generate more season ticket revenue, but marketing should benefit.

JL asked how the new system would benefit John Stembridge (as Membership Secretary) and the DT. DG explained the benefits including automatic address correlation and automation of many tasks JS now performs manually.

In answer to a question from TA, DG said that the figures do not cover migration costs to the new stadium. Migration costs should be funded out of the new stadium budget just like all other IT systems. We are aiming to minimise testing and migration costs through the use of the cloud and take into account the new stadium in the design.

The next steps were identified as being signature of the contract by ES (lawyers have vetted the draft and suggested amendments that have been accepted) followed by commencement of the first sprint.

The DTB unanimously approved the proposals in DG's briefing note.

Action: ES to sign CRM contract

(c) Accounts

The tabled Management Accounts were discussed. ES said there would be some amendments when they are presented as statutory accounts, mainly to take account of new accounting standards, one of which is the requirement to disclose the "fair value" of KM, but the overall result is roughly what was expected. The expenditure on the new stadium continues to be capitalised, but for accounting purposes has to be included in the balance sheet under debtors. The statutory accounts will be produced ahead of the November FCB and DTB meetings.

In response to a question from NH, ES said that transfer fees received are shown under Football Income on page 9.

ES noted that the anticipated increase in Dons Draw income had not materialised. Targeting a wider audience (e.g. Academy parents) has not yet been initiated.

ES confirmed to JL that the Donations item includes the WAW figures. ES was asked to break down those figures.

SM thanked ES for the accounts. SM and ES suggested that Alison Franks be thanked for her work carried out after she left the club. The DTB unanimously agreed. ES to supply her email address to MB for him formally to thank her.

MD noted and congratulated the Academy and the Ladies and Girls for the amounts they raised at the Minithon.

ES to supply breakdown of Donations; also Alison's email address.

(d) Proposals for Safety

The Police have suggested that Millwall fans be put in the John Green Stand, which is unacceptable to the club as it would mean evicting season ticket holders in that stand. *[This section has been redacted]*

ES confirmed that the budget contains provision for Millwall game policing.

MD and DG raised the issue of Chemflow stewarding problems. Evidence of failure to check tickets early was noted.

(e) LLW

This item was carried forward to the next meeting but ES commented on the HMRC decision to review all 92 Premier and Football League clubs in connection with the National Minimum Wage.

Therefore, in common with other football clubs, we can probably expect an HMRC investigation at some stage, for which we would receive written notice. Experience from clubs that have been investigated suggests that the investigation would be detailed, and would home in on benefits scholars, apprentices and volunteers. *[This section has been redacted]*

Action: ES to make recommendations as to what steps are needed to ensure we don't fall foul of the regulations.

(f) AOB

JL asked whether BDO are paid for the work they do. ES said historically they had charged very competitive rates. This has changed recently, but we still take advantage of some free advice from time to time. SM felt their charges very reasonable.

MB asked whether the plan is for the back bar to be made "hospitality only" following introduction of the pop up bar. ES said this would not happen.

MB asked why the bar was not opened for the televised Oxford game. ES said that there had been few indications of interest whereas for other games of this type DC usually gets numerous calls before a televised game to ask if the bar will be open. This time there were none. Therefore, IH and the FCB board decided on commercial grounds to cancel both the hospitality and the bar opening. The website announcement about this could have been clearer, but there were social media announcements making it clear. ES said that next time the bar would be opened and attendance would be recorded.

JL raised an alleged incident at last season's game against Luton FC. [This section has been redacted]

There was general discussion about the extent to which complaints about non strategic matters should be made to the DTB rather than to the FCB.

ES said that the FCB is formalising and consolidating a code for volunteers' conduct. This led to a discussion about complaints procedures. ES felt that the DTB should look at its protocols with a view to ensuring that complaints about operational matters should generally be passed to the FCB while at the same time supporting the staff, but recognising that some operational complaints may become strategic if they are symptomatic of a wider problem. ES

said he thought that the DTB did have such a complaints protocol, and suggested this should be retrieved and circulated to the DTB.

Action: Protocols (both FCB and DTB) to be examined and reviewed.

MB asked about merchandising. ES said that following a meeting with the merchandise team, it had been agreed with them that if the new office administration recruit with the paperwork and some administrative matters regarding online sales it will ease the burden on the merchandise volunteers.

[This section has been redacted]

MB asked about the proposal to request parking donations in support of the Academy. ES explained the idea is to have a bucket collection on match days requesting donations, possibly £5, as a voluntary payment to help the Academy, made by steward/esses and Academy members.

ES was asked how many current banning orders we have. He will check.

Action: ES to report number of banning orders.

[This section has been redacted]

ES raised the issue of an online podcast. The FCB has discussed this and decided to restrict their access. Effectively, they have become the modern equivalent of a fanzine but receive access that no fanzine would be allowed. Fundamentally, parts of what they do are in direct competition with the club's Comms, although there are good things about what they do some of which we could learn from. The FCB plans to withdraw their access to players and management and explain why. The FCB realises that this may not go down well and may provoke indignation on social media. MB suggested that this could be prefaced by saying that the club is putting together a code of practice for dealing with fanzines. The DTB unanimously agreed with the FCB's decision.

Action: The FCB to put together a code of practice and inform the Podcast of their decision

ES reported that he has been approached by an Evangelical organisation, His Church, which provides free breakfasts for schoolchildren and wants permission for its distribution vans to hand out food in the KM car park (not on matchdays). ES had told them that we would not be able to work with them if they used this as a basis for proselytising and they confirmed that this would not be done - they simply feel called to help the needy. ES and the Foundation Trustees are prepared to give this a try. After discussion, the DTB approved by majority vote, subject to no proselytising or conversion attempts and provided it does not conflict with the foodbank. JL asked which schools are included in the local schools mentioned in the Foundation Report. ES will now write to His Church to take this matter forward

Action: ES to advise which schools will benefit from this breakfast supply.

(ES left the meeting at 10.45 pm)

4. Webjam

JL reported on progress. 2800 DT members were invited to join, so far 448 have signed up. Changes are being made to improve the website. It is better to access feed via your individual profile. Feedback from DT members suggests they want to know what individual board members do and want to contact DTB members directly. This can be achieved by means of a special forum. JL will send an email to DTB members with full information on all this but she needs a swift response to her improvement suggestions since election materials have now been posted. She encouraged DTB members to continue to contribute content, and for it to be engaging. DT Members want to have exclusive content.

Action: JL to email DTB members with an update. DTB members to respond swiftly.

5.DTB Role/ToR Progress Update

This was carried forward due to time constraints.

6.AOB

Supporting Jacqui Forster at Supporters Direct.

JL updated on the recent email that had been considered and voted on by Board members relating to the Dons Trust making a contribution to the fund set up to support Jacqui Forster, and employee of Supporters Direct. This funding did not relate to an ongoing dispute between SD and Jacqui.

JL had emailed the DTB on 25 September asking for support for agreement to the DT making a donation of £100 to the Fund. An online vote was held with 8 votes in favour (MB, JL, RE, MS, MD, NH, DG and SM) one against (CD) and one no response (TA). JL reported that so far no donation had in fact been made on behalf of the Trust in spite of the decision to do so.

Due to the timeliness needed for the donations the site had now closed. JL to liaise with the people who had set up the contributions page to see if there was still a way we could contribute and would update. It was suggested that a contribution to a charity could be made.

RE suggested that the DTB should have a code of practice for situations like this sort of appeal.

Action: JL to update DTB on this.

DT Logo

After reviewing the various alternatives, it was agreed that there should be a one week poll by DT members to make a decision on which one to use.

Minithon

Thanks were recorded to Eileen Samuelson and all others concerned for the Minithon success.

DTB Elections

It was noted that there are more candidates than available places.

DT Accounts

SM agreed to provide a timetable. He hopes to have final draft by end October.

Action: SM to provide timetable for DT Accounts.

Fundraising

TA will have a paper ready for the next DTB meeting.

SD and FSF

JL went to an informal meeting of trust clubs on October 8th meeting which discussed funding issues in the context of SD and FSF. She will circulate a note and minutes of the meeting.

Next DTB Meeting

A special DTB only meeting to cover items other than stadium (succession planning, LLW, fundraising, DT Accounts etc) is be held late October/early November, date to be arranged via Doodle.

The meeting concluded at 10.54pm.