

## **Dons Trust Board**

### **Minutes of Meeting Monday 20 March 2017**

**(Includes Notes From Additional Meeting Held Thursday 16 March 2017)**

#### **Cherry Red Records Stadium Presidents Lounge**

##### **Members**

Matt Breach (MB)  
Mark Davis (MD)  
Jane Lonsdale (JL)  
Colin Dipple (CD)  
Nigel Higgs (NH)  
David Grows (DG) 16<sup>th</sup> only  
Matt Spriegel (MS) 16<sup>th</sup> only  
Roger Evans (RE) 20<sup>th</sup> only  
Tim Hillyer (TH) 20<sup>th</sup> only  
Sean McLaughlin (SM) 20<sup>th</sup> only

##### **Invited (20<sup>th</sup> only)**

Tom Brown (TB) (DT Sec. designate)  
Rob Crane (RC) (Meeting Summary)  
Michael Hayes (MH) (Minute Taker)  
Hannah Kitcher (HK) (Minute Taker)

#### **Precursor: Meeting Held on 16 March**

A DTB only session was held on 16 March to discuss how the Board should operate and its priorities for the year. Apologies for that meeting were received from RE, SM and TH, noting that all provided inputs on priorities and to the skills matrix prior to the meeting. No separate notes or minutes of that meeting will be published, but the key points arising are summarised in Section 3 below as a recap of the session was given prior to continuing the key discussions from that evening.

#### **1. Apologies and Welcome**

Apologies had been received from Erik Samuelson (ES), Mick Buckley (MBu), DG, MS, and Rob McGlinchey (RM). MB introduced and welcomed the new DT Secretary designate Tom Brown and Hannah Kitcher who joins the Secretariat. It was noted that TB will liaise with RM to conduct a handover in order to get up to speed. The DTB agreed unanimously to extend their thanks to Rob for his service as Secretary over the past year, and particularly his efforts to support the Board despite unanticipated changes to his day job greatly decreasing the time he had available to assist.

#### **2. FCB Report**

MB summarised the report, which had been received from ES. Key points were the likelihood of hiring a paid manager for merchandise, the soft tender process for stadium cost validation, acceleration of approach to new stadium financing, [Redacted] the satisfactory result against MK on and off the pitch, Joe Bursik's call up to England U17 squad, and recruitment of new Foundation Director getting under way.

In answer to a question from RE, MB noted that Ivor Heller (IH) had stated that the merchandise manager position would likely be full time. JL noted that a member of the existing team may be interested in applying. TH said he had been asked to write a job spec and a person spec based on 30 hours per week plus some weekends. He noted that more staff would be needed at the new stadium.

RE asked for more detail about the soft tender process and timing for the accelerated funding process. MB said that ES [Redacted] and is investigating all possible means of financing, noting that there are now restrictions on what is possible so far as tax efficient vehicles such as community shares are concerned.

Questions were asked about appearance payments from Burnley for Dan Agyei given his recent debut – details requested for April meeting.

**Action: MB to ask ES for details of Dan Agyei appearance payments.**

JL asked about timing for recruitment of a new Foundation Director. It was noted that the deadline for applications is 7 April, but if a successful candidate has to give notice a realistic start date might be September 2017.

[Redacted]

After discussing various financial issues, it was agreed that an up to date cash flow statement is required for the April DTB meeting.

**Action: MB to ask ES for an up to date cash flow statement ahead of the April DTB meeting.**

RE asked for further information about Chelsea's proposals for work on KM pitch and floodlights during the close season and beyond. MB did not have this information.

[Redacted]

RE asked about timing for the Kings College 3G pitch; MB said there were still no concrete plans to his knowledge about when this will go ahead.

The DTB unanimously recorded their thanks to all concerned (including players, club staff, volunteers and fans) for ensuring that the Franchise game was able to be completed so successfully.

[Redacted]

### **3. Review of Strategy Meeting held on 16 March 2017**

#### **3.1 Conduct of DTB Business**

MB summarised the key target improvements as being:

- a) Tighter Agendas
- b) TORs for Working Groups
- c) Making decisions faster

d) Ideas to improve the structure of meetings

- i) 10 minutes at the start of the meeting for matters to raise with ES
- ii) Use Webjam to work offline
- iii) Finish FCB section by 9 pm
- iv) Finish normal meeting by 10 pm
- v) No time limit for single topic meetings
- vi) Chair more ruthlessly
- vii) Meeting papers earlier and better (at least weekend before meeting)
- viii) Use of KPIs to facilitate quicker review of FCB report
- ix) Live Action log to be accessed via Webjam
- x) Traffic light priority system – only red to be discussed (occasionally green)
- xi) TORs for working groups
- xii) Rota for programme page contributions by DTB members (each 2 pages per season)
- xiii) 6 month review meetings to assess progress (timing to be agreed)

### 3.2 Skills Matrix

Areas where the overall board has a skill gap include Comms (internal and external), Community Engagement and Fundraising. Other areas where the DTB is short of experience include Marketing, Volunteer Management and Stadium Design.

### 3.3 Co option

The most likely skill gap to be covered by co-option was agreed to be Comms. NH thought DT and Club Comms would need to be better co-ordinated before an appointment was considered. MB thought that the desired outcome would be that any DT member who wanted to be informed would have a reasonable idea of what the DTB was doing. TH thought that KPIs could fairly easily be developed starting with timely publication of minutes and including regular consultations. After discussion, it was agreed that DG's draft Comms strategy produced a couple of years ago should be recirculated, and RC should re highlight the suggestions he had posted on Webjam. Should the approach of co-option be agreed in the future, a role spec would need to be agreed prior to recruitment.

It was suggested that specific working groups (the TOR would need to emphasise the level of commitment required) might be a way to cover lack of diversity on the Board. Alternatively, some form of Members' Panel that included under-represented groups among fans or DT members (e.g. disabled fans/members) could be formed. TH agreed to look at suggestions for such a Members' Panel (Fans Forum not being the right name as it has other connotations).

**Actions: DG to recirculate his draft Comms paper. RC to re highlight his Webjam post. TH to explore Members' Panel suggestion.**

### 3.4 Priorities for 2017

These were agreed as:

- a) [redacted]
- b) FCB Oversight (Plenary, but via MB/MD)
- c) Stadium Oversight (Existing group of ES/Andrew Williams/RE; suggest CD joins given contracting experience, with RE/CD bringing issues back to plenary)
- e) DTB Business
  - i) Secretariat; includes DT Secretary, David Reeves, minute takers, etc. (DT Secretary in charge, MB to oversee)
  - ii) Membership (Working Group to support John Stembridge (JS)). It should be separated from the Secretariat and have close involvement with the CRM project. MD noted that the Membership secretary (JS) is constitutionally a sub-secretary below the DT Secretary. A meeting is required involving the working group plus the former and current secretary to sort issues out. TOR for the working group to be agreed following publication of the Membership Survey.
  - iii) Comms (Working Group following agreement of Comms strategy)
  - iv) Membership Engagement (Working Group led by CD / MS)

Notes: Membership is separate from Membership Engagement. Constitution and Governance is subsidiary to Secretariat.

TH volunteered to cover Football Governance. It was noted that MD and TH would support work on the DT Constitution with the Secretariat, but it was agreed not to be a priority for 2017.

JL asked about the election issues raised by the ESG in JD's presentation to the February DTB, which had been posted on Webjam. She had sent the comments to John Dolan who will provide an updated paper to be discussed at the next DTB meeting. RC noted that the election process has been advertised as being an item on the April SGM Agenda. It was suggested that at the SGM, SM should also float his ideas about the election cycle, in particular the fact that each DT Member having as many votes as there are vacancies makes it much harder for any new candidate to get elected.

At the suggestion of MD, it was agreed that ownership and responsibilities for activities not classified as priorities should nonetheless be allocated among DTB members to ensure PoCs are known if anything arises in these areas. MB will circulate a summary for discussion. Subject to comments, revised TORs are to be prepared.

**Action: MB to draft and circulate a full activity/ownership matrix.**

#### **4. AOB**

a) The DTB unanimously recorded congratulations to the AFCW Ladies Development Team for winning its League, and to the Under 14 Girls team for winning the Surrey FA County Cup.

b) MD noted that that TH's comments about data protection need to be addressed.

c) TH reported that following the decision at the February DTB meeting, he contacted Nicola Hudson of SD who is available from the end of April to deliver Board Member training at KM on a Sunday between 10 am and 4.30 free of charge (premises and light buffet lunch down to us). It was agreed to accept this offer and to allow SD to invite Trust Board Members from other clubs.

d) TH reported that he has attended two LOFT (the Supporters Trust of Leyton Orient) meetings. The situation is still perilous, although Leyton Orient fans have raised £110K in ten days. The winding up order has been adjourned and it is believed that the owner has paid the tax bill. JL said she has already made a personal donation and offered help to Tom Davies from LOFT. It was agreed that the DTB should record its best wishes, offer to help LOFT with any of our experience or expertise and provide a link to the relevant website from the DTOS and Webjam. TH to pass this message on and represent the DTB.

e) [Redacted]

f) There was discussion about the Membership Survey and the Ethical Survey. It was agreed that both should be published. After debate, it was agreed that the Ethical Survey should be available to all fans, but the Membership Survey should only go to DT Members. There was discussion about the method of publication. It was noted that there is a consultation page on the DTOS. Guidance on access should be published on Webjam.

**Actions: Data protection issues to be addressed. Board member training offer to be accepted and other clubs invited. Help and publicity to be offered to LOFT. [Redacted]**