

**Dons Trust Board (DTB)**  
**Redacted minutes of meeting held at 7.30pm on 27 February, 2019**  
**Meeting Room, The Prince of Wales, Wimbledon**

**DTB members**

Rob Crane  
Mark Davis (Chair)  
Colin Dipple  
Roger Evans  
Cormac van der Hoeven  
Anna Kingsley  
Hannah Kitcher  
Jane Lonsdale  
Luke Mackenzie

**In attendance**

Erik Samuelson (Club CEO)  
David Growns (Secretary)  
Roger Edmonds-Brown (Secretariat)

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**1. Introduction and apologies**

Apologies were noted from Joe Palmer (Club COO). There were no other apologies.

**PART 1 – WITH FCB REPRESENTATIVES**

**2. FCB Report**

Erik provided an update on **incidents at the end of the Charlton home game** on 23 February. The three main incidents were:

1. Abuse of the Charlton manager by a home fan.
2. Racial abuse of Jason Euell, as heard by his son.
3. Racial abuse on Instagram of Lyle Taylor after the game.

Erik had asked Club Secretary David Charles to provide a report on the three incidents, with recommendations, and any wider stadium management issues that needed to be addressed. Erik said a brief statement on this matter was posted on the Club's website on 26 February.

Cormac said he was at a Diversity & Inclusion meeting chaired by Jane after the Charlton game, which coincidentally was covering how to create a more immediate matchday response to the reporting of antisocial and abusive behaviour, and what happens when the control room phone was rung.

Jane said that a paper on promoting the abuse policy and to publicise the greater use of the control room phone number was sent to David Charles and a meeting arranged by Jane with David on Friday, 1 March, to implement the communication proposals.

Jane commented that this was a good opportunity to more widely publicise the control room phone number (0770 464 9119), so that people could use it to report abuse 'as it happens'.

Hannah welcomed the website statement that Erik mentioned earlier but felt that all complaints should be dealt with more publicly by the Club. Erik said that there were not very many written complaints, and therefore not many that could be reported.

Jane queried the stewarding of the Chemflow, as it was often overfilled due to Rygas ticket holders not being properly checked and gaining access. The board discussed measures that might make it easier for turnstile operators and stewards to check tickets.

Roger asked if the EFL or FA had become involved after the Charlton game, and Erik said no. Roger also asked if there had been any suggestion of an organised group behind the trouble, and Erik said that since last season they had kept a low profile.

Roger asked about the 2019/20 budget, and Erik said it was with Tom Rawcliffe (Financial Controller), and that a draft should be completed the following week. Erik confirmed there would be two budgets, catering for the possibilities of relegation and survival in League One.

Erik confirmed that ticket prices would be unchanged next season and reported that the number of unused seats being returned for resale by season-ticket holders who were unable to attend a match has increased considerably since last summer.

Jane asked if there was any other ticketing news, as last year the 80% rule had emerged following statements that there would be no ticket price increases. Noting that the 80% rule had been rescinded, Erik reported that season ticket renewals would need to go out in late March and that five-year season tickets could still be renewed but no new ones issued.

Luke asked who ultimately decided on ticket prices, and Erik said that the FCB decided on a recommendation to the DTB, who in turn consult members on any proposed increase.

Erik confirmed that the Club would receive a £125,000 bonus as one of the two League 1 clubs reaching furthest in the FA Cup.

In response to a question from Roger, Erik reported on progress of Wally Downes and the first team.

Hannah asked when the appointment of Nick Dawes (Acting Head of Recruitment) could be announced, and Erik said it would be when certain contractual issues were clarified.

### **3. Stadium Report**

Mark reminded board members of the discussions from the special board meeting held on 13 February at which the board had met Buckingham, the prospective contractor for the stadium.

At the 13 February meeting, there had been questions put to Erik regarding the various parts that made up the total **financing of the stadium**, including a progress report on the loan being arranged for us. A meeting regarding the latter had been subsequently arranged.

**Action: Mark and Erik to meet with the loan arranger on 1 March to discuss the loan package.**

There was a discussion on finding cornerstone investors for the proposed crowd funding.

Mark said that the 13 February meeting had agreed for the need to enhance stadium project governance at this crucial stage of the project, and it was agreed that a Stadium Oversight Committee be set up comprising representatives of the DTB, FCB and Joe Giordano (project manager) to meet on a weekly basis.

**Action: It was decided to form a Stadium Oversight Committee to oversee governance of the stadium build. It would meet weekly, and consist of the members of the DTB, FCB (*agreed later in agenda item 7 to be Mark, Rob, Luke, Colin and Roger*), along with project manager Joe G, and the first meeting to be on Monday 4 March. Mark and Erik agreed between them to produce an agenda.**

There had been no recent stadium communications until Rob's update on the Trust website a few days previously, and it was agreed that communications from now had to be embedded into the agenda. Erik pointed out his recent programme notes that covered Galliard and the S73 planning revision, and that the Council Planning Committee on the 21 March would consider our latest application.

Jane suggested there was still a very big misconception what the initial stages of the stadium would look like, with only about 100 who had seen at first hand the SGM presentation. Erik agreed that it was clear a lot of people didn't understand the current situation regarding the stadium.

Before Erik left the meeting, Luke Mackenzie gave a brief update on the betting partnership consultation which was due to start before the home match against Doncaster. It had been made clear it was an indicative vote and the issue had already driven member debate, he commented. Cormac noted that the Trust could have driven it more on social media, but nevertheless was a good example

of getting members involved, and of holding a dialogue and conversation with diverse opinions.

Erik left the meeting at 8.35 pm.

## **PART 2 – DTB ONLY**

### **4. Minutes of 9 January**

The minutes were approved.

### **5. Minutes of 23 January**

The minutes were approved, pending some spelling changes.

### **6. Succession planning**

There was a discussion about succession planning.

### **7. Priorities (Roles and Responsibilities)**

Mark reminded DTB colleagues that they had decided in January not to continue with last year's board committees (though working groups would continue), with the exception of a stadium oversight committee and also Mark and Rob effectively being the continuation of the oversight committee. Other responsibilities were to be allocated task by task.

The board then reviewed the list of topics were set out in Paper 3 and allocated them to individual / groups of board members. *[Editor's note: The allocations have been recorded in a spreadsheet on DTB Webjam. These responsibilities will be presented at the SGM on 17 April.]*

The following actions arose during the course of discussing this agenda item.

#### **Communications Strategy**

**Action: Rob to canvass DTB availability for a communications brainstorming session.**

#### **Kiosk Matchday**

**Action: Making the kiosk more informative and welcoming on a matchday. It was agreed an A-frame could announce a weekly theme. Mark agreed to order an A-frame.**

## **Code of Conduct**

**Action: Jane wanted this to come back to the DTB before it was finalised as it will cover DT volunteers and so as to ensure previous comments had been taken on board. Mark to liaise with Rick Thomas (Volunteer Coordinator).**

## **Membership Secretary workload**

**Action: Mark to advertise for volunteers to help John Stembridge.**

## **Allocation of responsibilities**

**Action: Hannah to produce an article for the Trust's website, outlining who on the Board was doing what.**

## **8. Update on Treasurer Role**

Mark summarised responses to a recent appeal for volunteers for both people with financial expertise who were interested in being co-opted onto the Board to help fill an identified skills gap, and for a treasurer, with the possibility that the roles might be combined if appropriate. Mark hoped to get the recruitment completed by the end of March. Colin and Jane volunteered to support Mark in interviewing potential co-optees.

## **9. AOB**

The Board ratified a vote about the 9yrs podcast that had been carried out by email since the 23 January board meeting. Following on from discussions at that meeting, the board had voted against an initial motion circulated by email, as the majority of board members felt it struck too harsh a tone. A compromise motion had been put forward by Rob and seconded by Mark, as follows:

*"The Dons Trust Board notes that the club has withdrawn the 9yrs podcast's press pass following some comments made towards an AFC Wimbledon player in episode 154 of the 9yrs podcast. Even if humorously intended, these comments could be, and were, construed by some supporters as inciting violence against a club employee. The Dons Trust Board strongly disapproves of the comments made and we do not intend to intervene to overturn the club's decision. In light of the comments in the podcast, the Trust Board will decline any volunteering offer from the 9yrs podcast until 1 June 2019. After that date, the Board will consider any new volunteering offer from the 9yrs podcast in light of whether the podcast team: (i) has apologised for its comments, (ii) has not made similar comments about club employees in the interim and agrees not to make similar comments about club employees in the*

*future, and (iii) as will be expected of all volunteers, agrees to comply with any future volunteers' charter that is in place."*

The following Board members had voted in favour by email: Rob, Mark, Jane, Anna, Hannah, Roger. The following Board members had voted against by email: Luke, Colin, Cormac. The board unanimously ratified this decision, in accordance with board practice for email resolutions.

The Board recorded its thanks to James Mathie, a long-standing Supporters Direct case worker who had given invaluable advice to the Trust and Club but was now leaving the organisation at the end of March. Jane would forward information on his replacement.

Receipt was noted of a report from the Election Steering Group about the 2018 Board elections; and the DTB agreed to consider it at next month's meeting.

It was agreed that on completion /receipt, the FansBet promotional video should be sent out to other board members (**Action: Luke**).

Jane asked about finalisation and publication of Jane's notes of the three telephone conversations between the DTB and FCB in the run-up to Wally Downes' appointment (**Action: Mark**).

Jane noted the Junior Dons newsletter was planned to go out 23 March (ahead of Gillingham Game) and would include the voting slips and information on the JDs Player of the Season. Jane asked Mark to remind David Charles about the use of the club facilities for the mailshot.

Luke said that communications to members about the forthcoming SGM on 17 April should remind them about the opportunity to submit members' resolutions and the deadline for doing so.

The next meeting would be on 27 March 2019.

The meeting concluded at 11pm.