

Dons Trust Board (DTB)
Minutes of board meeting held at 7.30pm on 24 April, 2019
The Cherry Red Records Stadium, President's Lounge,

DTB members

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

In attendance

Joe Palmer (club CEO)
Ed Leek (co-opted board member)
Rick Thomas (Volunteer Liaison Officer)
David Grows (Secretary)
Roger Edmonds-Brown (minute taker)

1. Introduction and apologies

Rick Thomas (Volunteer Liaison Officer), Ed Leek and Joe Palmer (club CEO) were introduced by Mark. There were no apologies.

**PART 1 – WITH FCB REPRESENTATIVE AND RICK THOMAS
(VOLUNTEER LIAISON OFFICER)**

2. Ratification of new DTB member

Mark said that following a recruitment process, Ed Leek had been identified as a DTB co-optee to help fill an identified skills gap on the board and had already attended some meetings. Mark invited Ed to say a few words and Ed explained that he was a part-time financial director to a number of small companies and had already met Tom Rawcliffe (the club's financial controller).

By a show of hands by DTB members, Ed's co-option was approved unanimously.

3. Volunteers' Charter

Mark explained that Rick Thomas (Volunteer Liaison Officer) had been developing a Volunteers' Charter over the previous nine months, and some material had recently been added to better reflect that it is a two-way relationship between club and volunteer. Latterly a volunteers' complaints procedure had been drafted, too. Mark said there was now an opportunity, after approval by the DTB, for the charter to be rolled out for the beginning of the 2019/2020 season, perhaps with the complaints procedure as an appendix.

Rick said that a volunteer **team leaders' meeting** scheduled at the beginning of April to discuss the charter document had been cancelled due to lack of availability. Rick said that, apart from DTB members, he had had no feedback on the document from team leaders. Rick had spoken to some and assured them of its worth to volunteers and team leaders alike. Rick confirmed that the charter had been sent out to team leaders but not the draft complaints procedure.

Points raised by the DTB were as follows.

The complaints procedure should clearly state it covers volunteers raising issues connected with their volunteering role, rather than wider issues with the club/Trust.

The extent to which volunteers should be adequately trained for some 'technical' roles, such as the cash office, shop, pitch side and turnstiles.

The need for distinction between expressing a personal opinion about the performance of players on social media (now generally considered acceptable) and leaking confidential club information (which was clearly not). The question of who should police and monitor activity, and how, was also raised.

Certain words and phrases were questioned, e.g. some of the language used seemed a bit heavy handed in relation to social media. Rick said that some of the text had been lifted from similar documents from other football clubs and may still need refinement.

The status of the document may need to be considered in the context of the DTB Code of Conduct, in case DTB members were considered in breach purely as a result of carrying out their role. Mark believed the latter would need to be revisited – it would take priority over the charter for DTB members, and DTB members should not be held in breach of the volunteer charter merely for holding debates with members.

There was some debate as to whether the document should be signed for as 'read and understood' and/or 'agreed'. David cautioned against asking volunteers to sign anything if it could be perceived as making them a 'quasi-employee'. It was agreed that all volunteers should be asked to sign a checklist indicating that they agreed to volunteer, had received an induction, had read the charter and were happy to be on the volunteers' database.

Rick thanked the DTB for its deliberations. He had spent a lot of time on this document already but would be happy to consider the necessary changes. He was keen for the document to be sent out in the near future.

On behalf of the board, Mark thanked Rick for all his hard work and for coming to the meeting, at which point Rick departed.

Action: All DTB to suggest any drafting 'tweaks' to the Volunteers Charter within seven days and return to Mark. Mark to draft checklist and forward both to Rick.

4. FCB report

Cormac said young fans were keen to attend games but were unable to access seats. Cormac asked if the club responded to season-ticket holders who email to indicate non-attendance at the next game. He also asked if the number of ticket returns could be added into the FCB report.

Action: Joe to add the number of ticket returns into future FCB reports.

Roger asked Joe how he was settling in to his CEO role. Joe said he had started at a critical stage with the stadium, which consequently took up about 60% of his time.

The club wanted **Will Nightingale** to stay, and Joe had had an informal chat with him.

Rob asked what it takes for the club to regard any communication from a supporter as an official complaint that gets recorded in the FCB report. It was agreed that there should be a more inclusive approach regarding **what constituted a complaint** as although this might increase the number of complaints recorded it would help improve customer satisfaction.

Action: Joe to widen the scope of complaints that get recorded within the FCB report.

On a question from Jane, Joe confirmed that the **assisted hearing commentary** provision in the new stadium had been picked up. Joe P agreed that the club's **safeguarding document** should be circulated.

Luke was not convinced that the **FCB report's current format** gave much added value to the DTB, pointing out there were no actions or directions provided to the DTB or the FCB. In response, Joe expected that infrastructure surrounding the new stadium would enable a more proactive approach by, for example, creating automatic reports. Mark said the FCB report needed an overhaul and the content should flow from the business plan, something that Joe P had been saying for some time.

Action: Joe to develop the FCB report into a proactive, business plan-led document.

In relation to our partnership with **Sustainable Merton**, Colin asked what progress there had been towards removing plastic glasses from the bars. Joe said that a number of initiatives were underway as we prepare to move to the new stadium and he would be getting a group together to create an

environmental policy. Mark suggested that this should be DTB a partnership with Sustainable Merton, who should be re-contacted. Hannah agreed to pick it up and to advise the DTB what was planned to be done.

Action: Hannah to arrange a meeting with Sustainable Merton.

5. Stadium report

Current activity

Mark recapped that there were weekly meetings of the Stadium Committee comprising various members of the DTB, FCB and our project manager Joe Giordano. Buckingham's final contract price with options was awaited. Mark and Ed were working with the club's financial controller, Tom Rawcliffe, on the financial overview.

Luke wished to place on record his thanks to the DTB members of the Stadium Committee – Mark, Colin, Roger, Rob and Ed – for their three hours per week attending this meeting alone.

Finance

The DTB and Joe discussed the latest situation regarding the capital budget, including the forthcoming crowdfunding share issue.

Consultation

Mark said that there would only be a short time window for consultation on any remaining physical/design aspects, and this would be managed by Luke, Cormac and Rob.

6. Update/next steps

FansBet

Luke agreed to take this item forward from DTB's perspective, with the aim for the agreement to be in place for next season.

Action: Mark to forward DT contract and Andrew Howell's comments to Joe.

WISH

The DTB briefly discussed next steps in light of the outcome of the recent SGM.

Action: Cormac to draft a one-page terms of reference for the working group so everyone is on the same page and circulate to all.

Action: Cormac to remind WISH that the DTB had asked them to prepare an inventory, which should also list the source of the items.

Action: David – WISH to be on the May DTB agenda.

WAWF

An earlier meeting had been postponed, but Joe and Jane were due to meet WAWF on Friday (26 April).

Action: Jane to summarise meeting with WAWF once it had taken place and circulate to DTB.

Action: David – WAWF meeting to be discussed at next DTB.

Jane congratulated the club on the 'brilliant' Easter Saturday kids' event.

Joe departed the meeting at this point.

PART 2 – DTB ONLY

7. Minutes of 27 March

Mark said that the minutes were awaited. This was due to the volunteer minute taker being extremely busy at work. The minutes could be agreed by correspondence.

8. Succession planning – follow-up

Mark said that **Erik** had offered to continue with some tasks. This would help create continuity for important stakeholders. Mark pointed out the only formal position that Erik now retained was as a trustee of the Foundation.

9. 2019 Priorities

With reference to the slides on DTB Responsibilities in 2019, which were shown to the April SGM, progress was as follows:

New stadium (slide 6)

Dealt with previously in *Item 5: Stadium report*.

Succession planning (slide 7)

Dealt with previously in *Item 8: Succession planning – follow-up*.

Updating strategy (slide 8)

It was agreed that the strategy work led by Nicole Hammond in 2010 should be referred to in this current update nine years later. Cormac said that five open forum dates in May had been planned, with the theme of where the club should be in nine years' time. Four were pub evening events spread around the Wimbledon area and the fifth a lunchtime event in Starbucks.¹

¹ Note: subsequently moved to an alternative venue.

Mark said that as Joe was keen to have a long-term strategy, it would be one area for the DTB to invest in a terms of reference.

Action: Roger to contact Matt Breach regarding the 2010 project.

Action: Cormac to send information about meetings to Rob for website.

Action: Roger, Cormac and Anna to draw up brief terms of reference, to dovetail with the club's own strategy review.

David said that Nicole Hammond may be able to supply some old documents from the previous exercise. Jane put a plea in to liaise with her when communicating with the Junior Dons in relation to the strategy review as this was not straightforward due to their age.

Engagement and communications (slides 9 & 10)

Communications strategy

Rob had conducted a couple of brainstorming sessions with other DTB members the previous week. Topics raised were sending out monthly messages via Mailchimp, ideas on email access for a team of volunteers (to be explored with Chris Mapple), experimenting with social media dashboards, and how much is in the open to promote the Trust and how much is behind closed doors for members only.

Rob agreed to draft a strategy which would include social media, although he would also start getting volunteers do some social media tasks in the meantime. Anna and Hannah agreed to assist Rob with the strategy paper.

It was agreed to hold off on a presentation to the DTB on a portal/members' only area of the Trust's website until after the strategy paper.

There was a suggestion of highlighting to fans by email the Trust Webjam page with the DTB's names and responsibilities.

Action: Rob, Anna and Hannah to draft strategy for discussion at next DTB.

Surveys

Luke and Joe were in ongoing discussions with a company which could survey people. Luke said it would be helpful to have the outcomes from the stadium consultation in late 2018.

Action: Roger/Colin to share with Luke outcomes of late-2018 stadium consultation.

Junior Dons and Diversity & Inclusion Working Groups

Jane said there was a D&I meeting after the game on the Saturday, and was waiting to hear back from David Charles and Wally about the Junior Dons player of the year presentation.

Internal workings of the Dons Trust (slide 11)

Constitutional review

Action: Rob to kickstart with an article for Trust website (liaise with David G).

IT tools for the DTB

Action: all DTB members who have significant DT documentation that isn't in the Google folders should transfer it there.

Membership secretary support

David G had been in recent discussion with John Stembridge.

Not just about headline priorities (slide 12)

Actions were taking place with the club badge, which will be registered as a trademark covering all club subsidiaries including the Trust.

And a whole load of other stuff (slide 13)

Mark would put together the matchday rota and would find out the latest situation on mediation.

10 Ratification of bank account signatories

Following contact with the Co-operative Bank, the DTB ratified its bank account signatories.

11 ESG Report recommendations

The DTB further discussed discussion the report submitted by the Election Steering Group after the 2018 elections. It was clear that there was a spread of opinions within the DTB. It was agreed that the next steps should be the actions below.

Action: all DTB members who hadn't yet inputted their comments into the Google Sheet to do so within 1 week.

Action: Hannah to summarise a consensus position for sending to the ESG.

Action: Rob to note relevant strands for the constitution review.

12 AOB

Forthcoming agenda items

Action: Mark/David to schedule Philip Rudling (Foundation) and Jeremy Sauer (Academy) for forthcoming DTB meetings.

The meeting ended at 10.50pm.

Appendix 1 to the minutes of the 24 April 2019 DTB

Board Minute of Wimbledon Football Club Supporters Society Limited

The Chair noted that he had received a report from Sean McLaughlin, the outgoing Treasurer, which noted that with the departure of four Board Members following the recent Board Election that there were no longer any signatories to the accounts with the Co-operative Bank remaining on the Board. In addition it was noted that the change of signatories form from the Co-operative Bank required that all existing signatories sign the form to change the signatories, as outgoing signatories. The Chair also reported that Sean McLaughlin had spoken to the Co-operative Bank online help desk, which had informed Sean that this requirement could be waived on receipt of a signed resolution from the Board approving the new signatories, and that outgoing signatories were not required to sign the change of signatories form. Finally, it was noted that the Board was required to complete a Business Online Banking form to provide the new signatories access to the online banking system.

The Board discussed the position and it was agreed that it was in the interest of the Society to appoint five new Bank Signatories as follows:

Mark Davis
Roger Evans
Colin Dipple
Anna Kingsley
Mukesh Desai

It was therefore resolved that:

- The five persons listed above be appointed as signatories to the Company bank accounts held with the Co-operative Bank;
- That all existing signatories to the accounts be removed;
- That the Co-operative Bank be requested to implement these changes based on the provision of Board Resolution signed by the Chair, and to waive the requirement for all existing signatories to sign the change of signatories form;
- That the Chair, with the assistance of Sean McLaughlin be authorised to complete such forms as are required to effect these changes.

.....
Mark Davis, Chair