

Dons Trust Board (DTB)

**Minutes of board meeting held at 7.30pm on 22 January, 2018
The Prince of Wales (meeting room), Wimbledon**

DTB members

Matthew Breach (Vice Chair)
Mark Davis (Chair)
Colin Dipple
Roger Evans
Nigel Higgs
Tim Hillyer
Cormac van der Hoeven
Jane Lonsdale
Sean McLaughlin
Charles Williams

In attendance

Tom Brown (Secretary)
Hannah Kitcher (Secretariat)

1. Introduction and apologies

All DTB members were in attendance, including Charles Williams who had been re-appointed to the board as a co-optee at the 10 January meeting.

Since the 10 January meeting, Mark Davis had been confirmed as Chair of the Trust, Matthew Breach as Vice-Chair and Sean McLaughlin as Treasurer. These decisions were formally ratified at the meeting, with no objections. Board members thanked Matt for his six years as Chair.

2. 2017 de-brief and discussion

Mark led a discussion to debrief on the DTB activities in 2017. This included what the DTB felt went well and what they would like to improve on.

Highlights included: the successful appointment of the new Chief Operating Officer (COO) led by Roger Evans, Sean McLaughlin and Matthew Breach; the grant of planning permission / S106 agreement for the new stadium; the use of filming and discussion groups at SGMs / AGMs; and use of surveys to find out members' views.

Challenges from 2017 included: the DTB's perennial tendency to prioritise more than is realistically deliverable, especially during a period when DTB business had continued to be preoccupied by stadium matters. The DTB also needed to ensure that meeting papers are read and digested by all DTB members in advance.

3. Priorities for 2018

The board discussed the priorities for the Dons Trust for 2018. Mark ran through a list he had circulated ahead of the meeting. Tasks had been grouped into four categories. Priorities under the four categories included the following:

- Oversight of AFC Wimbledon family, with particular emphasis on:
 - oversight of the Football Club Board (FCB) and the Club, including the migration of important responsibilities to the new COO;
 - continued oversight of the stadium project, including the commitment to consult members on options for dressing the stadium.

- Strategy and organisation, with particular emphasis on:
 - galvanising the work on future organisation initiated in 2016;
 - a review of the Constitution to get underway in mid-2018, once work on future organisation has progressed sufficiently;
 - elections and co-option policy (and, in particular, the cycle and timing of DTB elections, following an earlier consultation).

- Engagement/communications. Engaging younger members and potential members was a priority, and it was recognised that this is inextricably linked to wider communications strategy, including:
 - social media;
 - a refresh of the Trust's website;
 - Webjam (including options beyond the initial contract period); and
 - creating vibrant meetings with members.

- Dons Trust Operations, with particular emphasis on:
 - Overseeing and supporting the secretariat;
 - Overseeing and supporting the membership secretary (including migration of membership records to the customer relationship management database);
 - Data protection, ahead of new data protection legislation coming into force in May.

4. Dons Trust Board and working groups

Recognising that the list of priorities remained as lengthy as ever, the DTB discussed how to divide the delivery and oversight of DTB priorities for 2018. It was agreed that there is a need to be transparent with members about

what we intend to achieve in 2018 and to report back on this at the end of the year so as to ensure accountability to members.

The DTB discussed the possible ways in which to achieve this. The board had at a previous stage organised its work into working groups. This had a number of advantages, including:

- Saving time in plenary DTB meetings;
- The opportunity to involve non-DTB members;
- Sharing the workload within working groups;
- Increasing accountability of DTB members;
- A structure for reporting to the DTB and to members.

The DTB agreed that the priorities identified fell under clear themes, which could be organised into working groups. A discussion of individuals' preferences for being involved in particular groups resulted in the following working groups:

- Oversight (Matt and Mark);
- Stadium (Colin, Roger and Sean);
- Strategy and organisation (Matt, Nigel and Tim);
- Engagement and communications (Colin, Cormac, Jane, Charles);
- Dons Trust Operations (Mark, Nigel and Tim).

The DTB agreed that, for the groups to work most effectively, they would have their own set of objectives and a pre-established remit around what can and can't be decided outside of monthly DTB meetings. Some subjects, such as oversight of the Club and the new stadium, would inevitably continue to occupy time in plenary DTB meetings.

The DTB agreed that each group should produce a terms of reference in advance of the next DTB meeting, so that by the next meeting the board would have an outline for each working group of what would be achieved in 2018. Monthly progress reports would be expected from each group.

5. Dons Trust Board skills matrix review

DTB members had completed a skills matrix in advance of the meeting.

Working groups were asked to report back on any areas where they believed there was a skills shortage. The DTB would then explore whether it was possible to fill skills gaps through training (such as provided by Supporters Direct) or by involving others in working groups. Co-option onto the board could be considered if the board as a whole lacked skills that are needed at board level.

6. Engagement with members

This topic had been covered under item 3 and was not further discussed.

7. Diversity and inclusion

Jane reminded the board of an outstanding action to be brought to the attention of the Club.

8. Any other business

Under AOB, there was a discussion of what insignia to put on Junior Dons gifts, in the light of 2016 discussions about updating the Trust's logo. The DTB agreed to put options for a new logo to members to vote on over the coming months. In the meantime, for purposes of Junior Dons gifts, the DTB agreed to use the club crest, with the words "AFC Wimbledon" above and "Junior Dons" underneath.

The DTB noted their thanks to Loretta Wheeler for all her hard work to organise the 2017 Junior Dons Christmas party. Sadly, Loretta had announced that she would not be able to arrange the 2018 Christmas Party due to time constraints. The DTB would welcome any volunteers interested in supporting the organisation of the 2018 party.