

Dons Trust Board (DTB)

Minutes of meeting at Plough Lane at 6.00pm on 12 July 2023

DTB members

Kris Stewart (Chair)

Michele Little

Chris Philips

Graeme Price

Richard Shepherd

Kevin Rye

James Macdonald

In attendance

Martin Newton (Secretary)

1. **Introduction**

Kris welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies from Mark Lewis.

2. **Minutes**

(a) The minutes of the June meeting were unanimously approved, subject to some further summary to the public version.

(b) On actions, the following was noted: -

Strategic Objectives – Issues would be discussed under item 4.

Project to locate and record previous DT policies and decisions – It was expected revision work would be completed in August.

Volunteers – Confirmed that matchday volunteers would receive vouchers valid for Elixir refreshments. Action agreed as closed on this report.

Comms licences – James confirmed that the use of zoom for 'Meet the DTB' had worked well and zoom would continue to be used for future AGM/SGM requirements as well.

Kris asked that James and the Secretary decide whether Smart Survey or Survey Monkey was the right 'tool' for the DT to use for non-election related surveys.

Auditors - Michele said that she would talk to Laurie Hill about whether the audit tender should take place for 2024 or earlier given that they were reappointed at the 2022 AGM. A conversation would take place at

the PLCB next week. Kevin suggested that it would be useful to speak with a former director of finance at a London football club.

Thoughts on 16-24 – Noted that discussion would take place in item 5.

3. **Ratification of Email Decisions**

There were no decisions to ratify.

4. **Strategic Direction**

Kris referred to the recent joint boards 'awayday'. The central ideas about our purpose, visions, aims, values had recently been agreed by the boards and help was now needed on the best way of expressing and communicating these ideas to members and supporters.

There had also been discussion of a portfolio of memberships across AFC Wimbledon, with varying offers at various tiers.

It was noted that AFC Wimbledon were taking marketing to a new level.

Kris said that a group would be established to look at brand and identity. The intention was to discuss this with Mick Buckley and to then regularly review going forward.

James asked about another 'awayday' and Kris agreed that thought should be given to when and where this could take place.

6. **Board Theme Groups**

To avoid duplication, actions under this item will not be added to the 'Outstanding Actions' paper – item 2(b) going forward

Member Services and Engagement

On the 16-24 age group, James reported that around 8 young members had been identified for membership of a 16-24 advisory group. The participants would get the opportunity to speak with Danny Macklin and Craig Cope. Meetings of the group would be at the stadium, with the possibility some members may also be invited to attend DTB meetings as appropriate. A report would come back to the DTB on progress and ideas put forward by the group.

During further discussion, the 'Meet the DTB' rota was discussed, along with topics for discussion at each session.

Culture and Mission

The Board then considered the report on 'The Big Step', a group dedicated to the removal of gambling adverts in football, created by families and friends of young people who had taken their own lives as a direct result of gambling.

It was noted that 'The Big Step' was not saying that people should not gamble but was trying to prevent the visibility of gambling as much as possible in football stadiums and on TV, in a similar way to what happened in F1 with cigarettes and football with alcohol. The direction of travel was to move away from gambling adverts, as shown by many countries across Europe. The Premier League had decided to stop having large gambling adverts on football shirts.

Statistics showed the issues of gambling within football:

- 496 gambling-related deaths each year in England alone
- 1.4m problem gamblers in Great Britain
- 7% of adults negatively affected by someone else's gambling problems
- 55,000 young people aged 11-16 addicted to gambling.

James referred to the alarming statistics and the 'bigger message' to take back for Danny Macklin, that consideration should be given to accepting less funding from betting companies. Kris confirmed the initiative would be raised at the PLCB. It was noted that in the Premier League, Luton had signed up to 'The Big Step' and that with more and bigger clubs joining up, the message would start to get through.

After some further discussion, it was unanimously agreed that the board supported joining the campaign, and would seek members' thoughts on the issue by way of a survey before signing up to 'The Big Step'.

The meeting adjourned at 7.04pm and then reconvened at 7.18pm

Oversight

On transfer fees disclosure, Kris confirmed he would be speaking again to Craig Cope.

With regard to the planned FSA governance review, the Secretary undertook to liaise with Kris.

In relation to board performance measures, Kris raised the matter of 360 degree reviews, with the requirement for feedback from the PLCB and from members. Graeme expressed the view it was difficult

to set KPIs for PLCB oversight. It was noted that some outcomes were simpler to measure, with others more subjective, in terms of what remedial action had been put in place and whether it had delivered, etc.

The Board summary of business following meetings was considered. Kris said that the summary had worked better for the June meeting and feedback was needed of views on that.

Kris said that more discussion was required at the next meeting on how theme groups were working, whether memberships needed refreshing, etc.

Noted that Richard was co-ordinating risk register work for discussion with theme group chairs. The plan was to report to meetings on a periodic basis, probably quarterly.

Discussion continued and the Board also noted that, under the Memorandum of Understanding between the DTB and PLCB, their approval would be needed for changes to the club charter, in relation to ticket allocation priority and kit change timescales. It was noted the charter is sent to the EFL.

On D&I, Kris confirmed that 4 co-optee expressions of interest had been made already.

James left the meeting at 8.25pm

Community

Kevin confirmed that on Junior Dons, clarity was still needed on whether girls/academy players still became Junior Dons and how it would work.

On the Hall of Fame, there had been some disappointment expressed regarding the statement not being seen by those involved in advance of publication.

It was further noted that the club senior management and players were engaging more across the community and charity activities. Craig Cope had player appearances better co-ordinated and a difference would be apparent this season.

Discussion continued and, on independent charities with which the club has SLAs, Kevin undertook to do some further work on the proposed co-ordination role, in consultation with Danny, and would provide some feedback.

7. D&I

Chris reported that a meeting with Danny would now take place next week.

Meeting closed at 9.05pm