

Dons Trust Board (DTB)

Minutes of meeting at Plough Lane at 6.00pm on 7 August 2023

DTB members

Kris Stewart (Chair)

Michele Little

Chris Philips (online)

Graeme Price

James Macdonald (online)

Mark Lewis

In attendance

1. Introduction

Kris welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies from Kevin Rye, Richard Shepherd and the Secretary.

2. Minutes

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

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

Strategic Objectives – Kris reported that a meeting would take place with Mick Buckley, Danny Macklin, Michael Lee (ECCP), Charlie Talbot and Marc Jones on 16 August on branding.

Project to locate and record previous DT policies and decisions – Noted that Charlie Alpera had shared a reduced version of his earlier work and that this was around 70 pages in length, with links to appendices. Michele considered this revision to be far better than the earlier draft.

Graeme asked whether it was considered the document should provide a decisions audit trail all the way through or a summary of 'where we are now'. Kris said that the former would be preferable in terms of secure, well maintained organisational governance, but that the latter may be more appropriate. It was noted that a decision or policy made in 2005, whilst never formally superseded, could well be completely out of date and superfluous to requirements in 2023. Kris asked that the Board's formal thanks be forwarded to Charlie Alpera for his work on the project.

Graeme undertook to now consider the revised document and options for summarising the content further.

Comms licences – Kris confirmed that Smart Survey had been purchased for a further year. A further decision on whether to continue with Smart Survey or Survey Monkey in the long-term would be required. James and the Secretary to discuss this prior to Survey Monkey subscription renewal date in November.

Auditors – Noted that it had been agreed with Laurie Hill to re-tender the audit contract next year. Graeme considered that there may also be further options available from persons/companies experienced with football industry audits that would do the work at a cheaper rate.

The Board adjourned at 6.59 and reconvened at 7.24

3. **Ratification of Email Decisions**

The following urgent decisions taken under the Board's approved rules for email voting outside of meetings were formally confirmed:-

- An update to the Club Charter.

The alterations were changing two kits a year (with the away becoming the third), introduction of a loyalty points system, and associated simplification of Charter contents.

- Secutix Quotation.

The quote for Secutix support work to progress the transition of DT memberships to the club's ticket system was approved.

4. **Strategic Direction**

Kris referred to volunteers, in terms of what the DT could do to support them more and help resolve any issues. Recent improvements had taken place around food vouchers for volunteers. The cashless system in place on matchdays was discussed and it was noted that the club's offered solution on programmes and golden goals was tokens that could be bought with cash in the club shop.

Mark then summarised the concerns of volunteers around golden goal sales and the suggested solution. The future of the matchday programme was also discussed. James then raised an issue for discussion at the next 'awayday', on how to achieve a better sense of belonging for people working for the club. Kris said that it would be useful to find time for a reflective session with the senior leadership, which should include consideration on how the club do 'the right thing' with volunteers, and how that could be achieved.

Kris undertook to consider possible future 'awayday' dates.

6. **Board Theme Groups**

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

Community

No further matters to discuss.

Oversight

On comms review, Kris reported that the club had contracted a company to review operations. The intention would be to review what the club do, benchmarking against peers, thinking about times / situations where comms were difficult and how to manage and structure advice in terms of skills that were required to be added in a way to suit club finances. The review would probably be concluded by the end of September, with recommendations to follow.

In relation to bond consultation, Michele said that 2 'online' sessions had taken place, with around 15 people each. The September meeting was planned to be 'in person'. A document would come from Kevin about matters raised, thoughts given, etc. Michele said that at the PLCB, it had been agreed that it would be helpful for the Finance Committee to produce a document that answered more technical questions. After September, there would be a member-wide survey and more detail needed.

Michele said she had been working on the draft document with Graeme, considering matters likely to require a vote, corporate protections, restricted actions and financial considerations. Legal advice would be sought and included.

Discussion continued and it was noted that the boards would end up discussing different scenarios depending on the outcome of consultation.

Culture and Mission

On Big Step, Kris reported that he would be speaking to Danny.

MS&E

The 16-24 group was set to meet next week at PL.

The transition of Junior Dons to the club was going well with Isa continuing to help.

The transfer of DT data to Secutix was taking longer than expected. Kris said that lapsed memberships would be renewable under the usual arrangements.

7. **D&I**

Nothing new to note.

8. **AOB**

Mark raised the following matters which were duly noted:-

- The next newsletter was in draft form;
- At 'Meet the Manager' an attendee had asked about WAWF 'ownership'. Noted that the WAWF website is currently down;
- T-shirt and sweatshirts for the DTB had been done and delivered, payment was required for the same supplier who handles DLAG t-shirts;
- Pop-up banners would be sourced, subject to agreed wording.

Meeting closed at 8.55pm