

Dons Trust Board (DTB)

Minutes of meeting at Plough Lane at 6.00pm on 13 September 2023

DTB members

In attendance

Michele Little (Chair)

Graeme Price (Vice Chair)

James Macdonald

Mark Lewis

Richard Shepherd

Kevin Rye

1. Introduction

Michele welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies from Chris Philips and the Secretary.

5. Ratification of Email Decisions

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

- Acceptance of Kris Stewart's resignation from the Board, following his appointment by the PLCB to assist with overseeing stadium business and operations pending the appointment of a new club MD.
- The appointment of Michele Little as Chair of the DTB and Graeme Price as Vice Chair of the DTB (listed as item 2 on agenda).

On behalf of the Board, Michele asked that thanks be recorded for Kris's valuable and significant contribution as a Board member, joint Chair and then Chair since December 2021.

Noted that a number of decisions would be required to be made informally at the meeting, then subsequently confirmed under the urgent email voting procedure, after a casual vacancy appointment to the Board had been made to replace Kris Stewart and to return the number of members on the Board to the minimum number of 8 required by the constitution.

3. **Appointment to Casual Vacancy on DTB**

The Board discussed the question of an appointment of a casual vacancy on the Board following the resignation of Kris.

Further to the constitutional provisions enabling the Board to fill a casual vacancy position of an elected member (clause 62) and to return the Board to its minimum number (clauses 62 and 64), it was unanimously agreed to appoint Edward Leek (a previous DTB member and a current member of the Finance Committee) to fill the casual vacancy until the AGM.

4. **Minutes**

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

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

Strategic Objectives – following on from the branding work, the next joint boards away day was discussed.

Project to locate and record previous DT policies and decisions – Graeme confirmed he had discussed the work with Charlie Alpera and had thanked him for his work to date. Noted that reviewing the document was in progress.

Comms licences – After discussion it was informally unanimously agreed to continue using Smart Survey and to not renew the Survey Monkey subscription when it ends in November.

Auditors – Michele had spoken with Laurie Hill and the contract would be re-tendered next year. Noted that a new audit partner was in place. To be removed from outstanding actions list.

6. **Strategic Direction**

Discussion took place on business for the next SGM and the AGM.

It was noted that the members' survey on debt/equity was aimed to be circulated in early October before the SGM (provisionally Wednesday 1 November 2023) and a discussion could take place on it at that time, with survey results able to be shared.

The meeting date would be formally agreed under the Board's urgent email voting procedure.

7. **DTB representative on PLCB**

After discussion, it was informally unanimously agreed that James Macdonald be appointed as a DTB representative on the PLCB to replace Kris Stewart.

8. **Board Theme Groups**

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

James confirmed that, following appointment to the PLCB, he wanted to continue on Member Services & Engagement and it was informally unanimously agreed that Mark would now take over chairing that group, and Richard would now take on the 16-24 advisory group. James would also resign from the Nominations Committee role.

Graeme said realignment of theme group work was required. Discussion then took place on this, during which the possible merging of a number of 'high level' strategic Culture & Mission and Oversight actions were identified.

Graeme said that thought should also be given to membership growth; for the DT to be a financially active organisation; in relation to WAWF, running that website; fund raising; and that he was in favour of the DT owning the maximum number of shares it could, which would encourage gifting of shares and leaving of shares in wills, etc.

Graeme said that a lot of work would be involved in that area, that it would generally fall under MS&E, and that he would be happy to be involved in that area of work with assistance, maybe with 'outside' people involved.

Kevin said that a lot of comms work would also be involved and having one theme group overseeing that entire area would be sensible.

Michele undertook to email round with suggestions who might be in what group, including any new co-optees, following the combining of Oversight and C&M.

Michele suggested that going forward a set time/day be identified for monthly theme group meetings.

Community

Kevin updated the Board on some recent discussions – a further meeting of the group would be held at the end of the month.

MS&E

James reported that volunteers were now receiving food vouchers, the ESG were fully up and running, and election buddy would be used for the Board elections process. Noted that Meet the DTB had gone well.

The 16-24 group would meet again before its members returned to university. A number of issues identified by the group and suggested by them would be looked into.

DTB matchday presence was also discussed and the possibility of an area in the West Stand staffed by a volunteer would be looked into.

The SGM arrangements were also discussed, including IT support and streaming, as was future access to data relating to Trust membership now that the transition project passing that information to the club had been completed.

Oversight

Noted that the Oversight group would be meeting later in the month.

Culture and Mission

Richard said that feedback was expected on branding / comms from Charlie Talbot and Marc Jones.

James Macdonald left the meeting at 8.10pm

Noted that the Big Step survey was nearly ready to be circulated.

On culture improvements, Richard referred to further thought being needed. Richard referred to PLCB papers and the requirement for consistency, summaries of reports, etc to aid the reader.

During further discussion, boardroom representation and ticket availability was considered, including the need for clarity on complimentary tickets and numbers of VP guests, etc.

9. Co-optees

Richard reported that applications had been received, conversations had taken place and interviews with final candidates would now be held.

10. D&I

Nothing new to note.

11. AOB

Mark then referred to the September newsletter and noted that this was scheduled to be sent out on 22 September.

Meeting closed at 8.40pm