

Dons Trust Board (DTB)

Minutes of meeting at Plough Lane at 6.00pm on 8 November 2023

DTB members

Michele Little (Chair)
Mark Lewis
Kevin Rye (online)
Richard Shepherd
Chris Philips
Angus Fox
James Macdonald (online for part of the meeting)

In attendance

Martin Newton (Secretary)
George Jones (Elections item)
Hannah Kitcher (Observer)

1. Introduction

Michele welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies from Ed Leek, Graeme Price and Anuk Teasdale.

George Jones was present only for the elections update item.

Elections

A discussion was had about the recent elections and George fed back some initial thoughts from the ESG. The full report from the ESG would be provided in December.

George Jones left the meeting at 6.54pm

2. Minutes

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

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

Strategic Objectives – Noted that a joint boards away day was planned for early 2024.

(Action – Michele to progress)

Project to locate and record previous DT policies and decisions – Richard confirmed he had looked at the draft, which was good, and that he would take on the task of keeping the document up to date. Richard to contact

Charlie for concluding the project. In time, the record would be uploaded online.

(Action – Richard to review)

3. Ratification of Email Decisions

None.

4. Strategic Direction

No more to report.

5. Board Theme Groups

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

MS&E

Mark confirmed that the D&I meeting with the club about data collection had not happened yet. Noted that clarification was needed on what information was required by the EFL alongside the DT data. Anuk to take the lead and follow up with Kris Stewart.

The 16-24 group had not met recently – previous suggestions had been made about the need for more appealing social media images and tweets. Some of the group had attended 'meet the manager' with younger fans and Richard confirmed that engagement would take place with the club team in due course.

Mark referred to producing a DT flyer to hand out at home games.

Kevin reported that he had a meeting, to discuss comms planning. Kevin undertook to speak with Hannah about her involvement in the group that were co-ordinating comms going forward. On membership, noted that an update on renewal numbers was required.

On the SGM, noted that Michele had been criticised for answering all questions asked of the Board and at future meetings the 'workload' needed to be shared.

Discussion took place on Board recommendations relating to member resolutions. Noted that recommendations should continue to be made according to the nature and content of resolutions.

On voting at future SGM/AGM meetings, Michele undertook to look at how quickly multiple votes could be removed, allowing online voting on the night as well as in advance by 'proxy'.

The meeting adjourned at 7.59pm and reconvened at 8.11pm

Culture and Mission and Oversight

Noted that work on the review of the constitution, a separate governance audit by the FSA, and Board performance measures was required.

Richard referred to performance measurement following the terms of reference for the theme groups. The formal KPIs for the club and senior leadership team need consolidating.

Michele said that hopefully a verbal update could be made on equity and debt consultation at the AGM. So far, the majority were in favour of considering going below 75%, but not in sufficient numbers for a restricted action vote to pass. Noted that legal advice had been sought around protections for club ownership at less than 75% legally, with alternate ways suggested of adding protection through extra restricted actions.

Noted that the club would do a joint announcement on Big Step shortly.

There was a discussion on collective responsibility and then on whether the Board should reconsider a ProBoards question on individual board members' views. It was unanimously agreed that the principle of collective responsibility should be maintained.

On disclosure of transfer fees, it was unanimously agreed that the decision should lie with the Head of Football Operations, who is not in favour of disclosing transfer fees generally. Should it be to our benefit to at some stage, we can monitor it on a deal-by-deal basis.

Regarding matchday tickets, it was unanimously agreed to refuse the offer of free tickets and to adopt the new ticket policy.

Community

Noted that no meeting had recently taken place. Kevin indicated he was considering standing down from the chair because of other priorities but would remain a group member. Noted that Michele would ask Anuk if she would like to chair the group going forward. Next step would also be to invite reps from the charities and other relevant groups to attend on rotation.

6. **D&I**

Anuk to follow up D&I data collection with club.

7. **AOB**

The following was raised:-

- Secretary to also be included in exit interviews.
- The shortlist for the MD role was imminent.

Meeting closed at 9.47pm