DONS TRUST BOARD

Board Meeting — Official Published Minutes

OFFICIAL PUBLISHED MINUTES FOR MEMBER PUBLICATION

Date	Wednesday 8 July 2026
Venue	Plough Lane, London
Start Time	6:00pm
End Time	9:45pm
Status	Official Published Minutes for Members

PUBLICATION NOTE

These minutes have been prepared for publication to Dons Trust members. Certain content has been redacted where the Dons Trust board (DTB) has determined it is not appropriate for public disclosure at this time. Redacted items are noted where they occur. All substantive decisions, votes, and agreed actions are included in full.

ATTENDANCE	NAME(S)
In Attendance	Angus Fox (chair), Graeme Price (vice chair) James Longhurst, Martin Drake, James Ledward (attending online) Chris Atkinson
Also in Attendance	George Jones (secretary) Richard Shepherd (guest presenter, AI presentation, departed after Item 2)
Apologies	Alex Folkes, Hannah Kitcher, David Rey, Michele Little (Treasurer)
Declared Conflicts of Interest	None

Item 1 — Introduction, Apologies and Protocols, and Directors' Interests

The chair opened the meeting at 6:00pm. Apologies were received from Alex, Hannah, David, and Michele. James Ledward attended the meeting online. The chair confirmed that a recording of the session was in progress for the purpose of producing minutes, and that Richard Shepherd, a former board member, was present as a guest to deliver the AI presentation immediately following introductions.

The chair invited board members to declare any conflicts of interest in relation to items on the agenda. No conflicts of interest were declared.

DECISION Meeting opened. Apologies noted. No conflicts of interest declared.

Item 2 — AI Presentation: Richard Shepherd

Richard Shepherd, a former board member, presented to the DTB on the practical applications of artificial intelligence for Trust and board operations. The presentation covered three use cases:

- Restructuring meeting minutes using AI to produce clearer outputs, with individual views and decisions separated from general discussion.
- Generating external communications — inputting bullet points and selecting a desired tone (warm, formal, celebratory) to produce newsletters, website updates, social media posts, and messaging content.
- Querying historical documents — uploading published minutes and other records to track decisions, actions, and KPIs across multiple meetings.

Richard emphasised that the primary benefit of AI tooling was reducing the administrative burden on volunteers, allowing board members to focus on member engagement and governance. He described this as "flipping the 80/20": spending less time on admin and more on impact.

A discussion followed on guardrails for AI use. The board discussed data sovereignty, the importance of keeping sensitive data out of non-approved AI tools, a "human sandwich" approach where humans initiate and humans review all content, and a specific policy position that AI should not be used to generate images. Board members agreed that a clear usage policy would be needed before AI tools were deployed organisationally. Richard offered to participate in developing that policy as a volunteer, alongside board members.

Richard Shepherd departed the meeting following completion of this item.

DECISION The board agreed to establish an AI Working Group, to include board members and volunteers from outside the board (including Richard Shepherd), to develop an AI usage policy for the Trust. The policy is to cover data sovereignty, guardrails on AI-generated content, and a 'human sandwich' editorial approach. A no-AI-images policy was endorsed.

ACTION Angus Fox to set up the AI Working Group and initiate the policy development process.

Item 3 — Investment Update (Decision Required)

REDACTED This item is redacted in full. The subject matter relates to ongoing commercial negotiations and is not appropriate for public disclosure at this time. The board considered a presentation on the current status of the investment process, engaged in substantive discussion including a vote on a formal matter, and agreed next steps.

Item 4 — Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes of the previous board meeting were reviewed. The board agreed to approve the minutes subject to further redactions being applied before publication, in line with the usual publication process.

DECISION Previous minutes approved subject to further redactions for publication.

Item 5 — DTB Actions List and Club Board Action Monitoring

The chair invited a review of the DTB actions list and updates on Club board action monitoring. The board noted that the majority of outstanding items were being progressed, with the principal live item being the investment process addressed under Item 3. The board was updated on the Club board meeting scheduled for the following week, including items that the DTB had raised for discussion. The board discussed the Club board meeting summary. No specific concerns were raised regarding the Club board action register at this meeting.

DECISION Actions list noted. Board satisfied with progress on outstanding items.

Item 6 — Ratification of Email Decisions

The board ratified two decisions made by email since the previous meeting:

- Club Budget Approval — The Club budget had been circulated and approved by email. The board formally ratified this decision. James Ledward noted that his ratification was conditional on the budget being revisited once more becomes known about bond take-up. Financial figures within the budget are not published in these minutes.
- Constitution Resubmission — The resubmission of the Trust's constitution had been approved by email. The board formally ratified this decision.

VOTE Club Budget ratified by the board unanimously.

VOTE Constitution Resubmission ratified by the board unanimously.

Item 7 — Club Board Meeting Summary and Questions

The board reviewed the summary from the most recent Club board meeting. The chair noted that a number of the Club board agenda items related directly to matters being discussed at this meeting, including the investment process, the SGM timeline, and succession planning for Club board roles.

Board members raised questions about specific items from the Club board meeting, including personnel matters. The board agreed that the appropriate forum for detailed discussion of Club board personnel matters was the Club board itself, and that the DTB's role was to note the summary and raise any governance- related concerns through the normal channels.

James Ledward raised the importance of maintaining effective channels for communication between the DTB and the Club board.

DECISION Club board meeting summary noted. No formal DTB actions arising. Board satisfied that governance channels are being maintained.

Item 8 — Dons Trust Finance: Debt and Equity Update

This item was presented in Michele's absence. The board was provided with a brief verbal update on the current position of the Trust's bond and equity position. Michele had indicated in advance that she was monitoring bond uptake following the recent podcast activity and would provide a fuller update once trends became clearer.

The board discussed the need for bond uptake to improve towards the end of August, noting that a failure to achieve this would require the board to consider alternative options. A minor amendment to the bond terms and conditions was noted, relating to the position of bond holders in the event of a change in the Trust's majority share status.

REDACTED Specific financial figures and bond income projections are redacted — commercial confidentiality. These figures are not yet in the public domain.

DECISION Finance update noted. Board agreed that the position would be actively monitored, with a formal review point scheduled for late August.

Item 9 — Secretariat (Decision Required)

George (secretary) presented a substantive item on the future structure of the secretariat function. George had previously submitted a paper setting out a proposed new secretariat structure, which had been reviewed by a sub-group of three board members (Angus, Hannah, and James Ledward) following the previous board meeting.

George raised concern that the sub-group had met without his involvement, and had reached a recommendation not to proceed with the structure he had proposed. George stated that he had not been consulted on timing, had not been present, and had not had the opportunity to address the board's questions about the proposal. George asked the board formally to reconsider the decision.

George outlined the rationale for the proposed structure, stating that a like-for-like secretary replacement was not sustainable given the volume of work and the pending period of significant organisational activity. He indicated that he had previously committed to remain in post through any forthcoming SGM and elections to ensure stability during a critical period.

The chair acknowledged George's views and the strength of feeling expressed. Several board members responded that they had read the paper carefully and respected both the work George had done and the importance of the secretariat function.

The chair summarised that the board needed to now make a collective decision, noting that a decision not to proceed with the proposed structure was not a reflection on George personally or professionally. Following discussion, the board agreed to proceed with recruitment for the secretary and assistant secretary roles. The question of whether the secretary should be remunerated was noted as a matter to be determined through the recruitment process.

George left the room for the board's final decision on this item.

REDACTED	Some detail has been adjusted based on feedback.
DECISION	The board agreed to proceed immediately with recruitment for both a secretary and an assistant secretary. Advertising to be published as soon as possible. The question of remuneration to be addressed in the recruitment brief.
ACTION	Angus Fox to oversee the preparation and publication of recruitment materials for the secretary and assistant secretary roles.

Item 10 — SGM and Event Planning

The board discussed planning for a forthcoming Special General Meeting (SGM), which would be required if it were necessary to present an investment proposal to members for a vote. James Ledward confirmed that the timeline required a minimum of five weeks between calling the meeting and the meeting taking place under the new constitution, with ideally two additional weeks for a soft-launch communications period. This implied a total lead time of approximately seven weeks.

The board also discussed the importance of scheduling Worldwide Wombles Weekend and other member events early in the season before notice periods on Sky fixture change, noting that this was a learning from the previous season. Women's fixtures were expected to be published later in the week and would also need to be incorporated into the rota.

REDACTED	Specific dates and milestones have been redacted due to commercial confidentiality.
DECISION	Provisional target date for an SGM agreed.
ACTION	Angus Fox to follow up on SGM and Worldwide Wombles planning.

Item 11 — Women's Team (James Longhurst)

George left the room for this item.

James Longhurst provided a brief update on the women's team. Women's fixtures were expected to be published later in the week. James Ledward had already marked International Women's Day on the DTB shared rota as a fixture day that should not conflict with Worldwide Wombles or other events requiring board presence.

The board agreed that women's fixtures should be integrated into the shared rota as soon as they are published. The chair noted the importance of ensuring DTB visibility and support at women's fixtures as part of the board's commitment to the women's game.

ACTION Martin Drake to add women's fixture dates to the DTB shared rota as soon as they are published.

Item 12 — Election Update (James Ledward)

James Ledward provided an update on the elections process. Preparation work was on track. James confirmed that no further planning decisions were required at this meeting. The board noted that elections would likely commence in mid-October and result in new board members taking up post at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in December.

DECISION Election update noted. No further action required at this stage.

Item 13 — MK Dons FC Fixtures Policy (Angus Fox)

The board discussed and agreed a policy covering the Trust's position on MK Dons FC fixtures. The policy covers both home and away fixtures and addresses the appropriate conduct and protocols for Trust representatives attending these matches.

James Ledward sought clarification on the policy name. The board confirmed the final title as the "MK Dons FC Fixtures Policy (Home and Away)" and agreed that the formal name would be updated on file by the secretary.

The board agreed the substance of the policy. Detailed policy content is not published in these minutes as it is an operational governance document.

DECISION MK Dons FC Fixtures Policy (Home and Away) agreed by the board and to be filed by the secretary.

Item 14 — Social Value Working Group Update (Angus Fox)

Angus reported on a meeting held with Hannah, James Ledward, and Graeme, together with community partners from Dons Local Action Group (DLAG), Wimbledon in Sporting History (WiSH), and the AFC Wimbledon Foundation (Foundation), with the purpose of exploring the establishment of a Social Value Working Group. Angus had drafted a Terms of Reference for the group but stated that the immediate priority was finding an independent facilitator.

DECISION Social Value Working Group work to continue. Terms of Reference in draft. Next step: identify an independent facilitator.

ACTION Angus Fox to progress finding an independent facilitator for the Social Value Working Group.

Item 15 — The Co-Operative of Supporters' Trusts

Angus reported on a meeting he attended in Northampton, at which a group of supporters' trusts discussed establishing a co-operative of members. Angus noted that the group was not seeking to replace the FSA but to provide a supplementary networking and lobbying function and noted that the Dons Trust was well regarded, with other trusts citing AFC Wimbledon as a model they aspired to.

The board discussed whether to participate. Several board members were supportive in principle, noting the value of the networking dimension. James Ledward stated that he saw no harm in understanding more about the intention and the membership, and was open to participating, but would stop short of committing the Trust to hosting the group's inaugural meeting.

The board raised the question of membership costs, noting that no figures were yet available. A board member noted that the cost could range significantly and that this information was needed before a final commitment was made. Angus agreed to write separately about the possibility of hosting a co-operative meeting at Plough Lane during the international break in late September, noting that any venue costs would need to be met by the group.

DECISION	The board agreed in principle to explore participation in the Co-Operative of Supporters' Trusts, subject to understanding the membership economics. Participation will be confirmed once cost information is available.

ACTION	Angus Fox to write separately about the possibility of hosting a Co-Operative meeting at Plough Lane in late September (approximately 40 attendees), subject to venue cost arrangements.

Item 16 — EDI Update (James Ledward)

James Ledward confirmed there was no specific update on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) to report at this meeting. The board noted this and agreed that the item would remain on the standing agenda.

DECISION	No update. Item carried forward to next meeting.

Item 17 — Any Other Business

A. Disciplinary Issue (George)

REDACTED	This issue is redacted from the published minutes.

B. Upcoming Publications (Angus Fox)

REDACTED	This issue is redacted from the published minutes.

C. DT Rotas (George)

George confirmed that board members were beginning to populate the shared match-day rota for the new season. The chair noted that nearly all home fixtures had at least one board or PLC board member assigned, with at least one PLC board member present at all home games covered.

The board discussed the away fixture rota, noting that the policy allows two Trust representatives at away games. The chair asked board members to prioritise completing the away section of the rota, as coverage was less complete than for home fixtures.

ACTION	All board members to complete their away fixture rota entries as a priority.

Note: Succession Planning (raised during meeting)

The board discussed succession planning as a recurring theme across several agenda items. The chair noted that the investment process, potential board professionalisation, and that the drawn-out timetable used previously in recruit for the Club board chair was not a viable model for the current situation. The board agreed that succession planning for key roles should become a recurring agenda item. The chair noted that it was premature to begin a formal process.

DECISION	Succession planning to be added as a standing agenda item at future board meetings. No immediate recruitment action required.

CONSOLIDATED DECISIONS, VOTES, ACTIONS, CONCERNS AND REDACTIONS

ITEM	TYPE	REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	OWNER
1	DECISION	DTB-Jul26-D01	Meeting opened. Apologies noted. No COI declared.	—
2	DECISION	DTB-Jul26-D02	AI Working Group to be established; policy to be developed.	Angus Fox
2	ACTION	DTB-Jul26-A01	Set up AI Working Group and initiate policy development.	Angus Fox
3	REDACTED	DTB-Jul26-R01	Investment Update — redacted in full (commercial confidence).	—
4	DECISION	DTB-Jul26-D03	Previous minutes approved subject to further redactions.	Secretary
5	DECISION	DTB-Jul26-D04	Actions list noted; progress satisfactory.	—
6	VOTE	DTB-Jul26-V01	Club Budget ratified (unanimous). Financial detail redacted.	—
6	VOTE	DTB-Jul26-V02	Constitution Resubmission ratified (unanimous).	—
7	DECISION	DTB-Jul26-D05	Club board meeting summary noted. No DTB actions arising.	—
8	REDACTED	DTB-Jul26-R02	Finance figures redacted — commercial confidentiality.	—
8	DECISION	DTB-Jul26-D06	Finance update noted; late-August review point agreed.	—
9	DECISION	DTB-Jul26-D07	Proceed with secretary and assistant secretary recruitment.	Angus Fox
9	ACTION	DTB-Jul26-A02	Prepare and publish secretary/asst secretary recruitment materials.	Angus Fox
10	DECISION	DTB-Jul26-D08	Provisional SGM date agreed	—
10	ACTION	DTB-Jul26-A03	Chair to follow up on SGM and Worldwide Wombles planning.	Angus Fox
11	ACTION	DTB-Jul26-A05	Add women's fixture dates to DTB rota when published.	Martin Drake
12	DECISION	DTB-Jul26-D09	Election update noted. Process ready to deploy post-SGM.	—
13	DECISION	DTB-Jul26-D10	MK Dons FC Fixtures Policy (Home & Away) agreed.	Secretary
14	DECISION	DTB-Jul26-D11	Social Value WG to continue; find independent facilitator.	—
14	ACTION	DTB-Jul26-A06	Find an independent facilitator.	Angus Fox
15	DECISION	DTB-Jul26-D12	Explore Co-Op of Supporters' Trusts participation (subject to costs).	—
15	ACTION	DTB-Jul26-A07	Write separately re hosting Co-Op meeting at Plough Lane (late Sept).	Angus Fox
16	DECISION	DTB-Jul26-D13	EDI: no update. Item carried forward.	—
17	ACTION	DTB-Jul26-A10	All board members to complete away fixture rota entries.	All board members
Note	DECISION	DTB-Jul26-D15	Succession planning to be standing agenda item at future meetings.	—

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 12 August 2026

Plough Lane (venue to be confirmed)