



Argyle Fans' Trust
 Board Meeting – MINUTES
 Saturday 20th December 2014; 11am Sally's House

No	Item	Discussion/Summary	Action
1	Members Present / Apologies for Absence	<p>Members Present: Bob Foale (BF), Tim Chown (TC), Sam Down (SD), Bob Wright (BW), Sally Snow (SS), Josh Pope (JP), Celia Ellacott (CE)</p> <p>Apologies: Ed Shillabeer, Paul Bartolini</p> <p>It was agreed that TC would act as chair for this meeting.</p>	
2	Minutes of last meeting	The minutes of the last meeting had been previously approved by email.	
3	Matters arising	None.	
4	Financial Report	<p>CE read out PB's financial report in his absence. Total funds in the bank are £11,852.90. The current balance is approximately the same as it was last year, with the election process (which was not required last year) having been paid for. The biggest cost is printing and stationery, at approximately £4,500.</p> <p>The first fanzine made a loss of £45.00, the second a profit of £24.00. This is not a matter of concern at this level as the fanzine has significant PR value to the Trust.</p> <p>The back of shirt sponsorship is available again on a first refusal basis to the AFT until Dec 31st. The board agreed that we would not take up the sponsorship for 2015/16, with the arrangement with the RBL having been a special arrangement for a special year.</p> <p>Action: PB to notify PAFC that we will not be taking up the back of shirt sponsorship option.</p>	PB
5	Membership Report	<p>BW reported on the current AFT membership.</p> <p>Total entries in database = 1,809 Number of shareholding members = 817 Junior members = 161 Total membership = 978</p> <p>A brief discussion was held around ideas to boost membership. BW suggested a letter/email to lapsed members to point out the situation with HHP and that a strong membership is important at this time.</p> <p>Action: TC and BW to draft a letter.</p> <p>TC suggested a 'recruit a friend' scheme, which was agreed.</p> <p>Action: TC to explore the specifics of the scheme with BW and report back to the board.</p>	<p>BW/TC</p> <p>BW/TC</p>



		It was noted that we could also highlight the increasing number of member discounts that we have, and seek further discounts from local businesses.	
6	Priorities for the year ahead	<p>The priorities for the year ahead were discussed, and the following items agreed as an initial set of priorities at this time:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The HHP/grandstand development, which is currently causing considerable uncertainty. 2) Regular engagement with the Club. We should seek to have at least a monthly meeting with Martyn Starnes, with documented/published outcomes. 3) Building the membership up. <p>Action: All to consider ways to address these priorities</p>	ALL
7	Club matters	<p><i>Regular meetings with Martyn Starnes.</i> As noted above, it is an AFT priority to maintain regular dialogue with the Club. PB had met with Martyn Starnes the previous week, and BF and CE met with Martyn on Friday evening to introduce themselves as new members of the AFT board. In a very positive meeting, a number of issues were discussed, including the grandstand. It was agreed that the AFT board would meet regularly with Martyn, with the next meeting being on Saturday 24th January. It was agreed that BF will be a regular attendee, plus up to two other AFT reps to be determined for each meeting. Action: BF to draw up agenda for next meeting with Martyn</p> <p><i>Matchday refreshments</i> Concerns with the matchday refreshments were raised in response to queries on an Internet forum. BF will raise this point with Martyn on the next meeting. Action: BF to add item to agenda for meeting on 24th Jan</p> <p><i>Collaboration with the GTs</i> The AFT is continuing to build its relationship with the GTs through a variety of events, e.g. the AFT is organising a St Patrick's Day event with the GTs, for the RBL Shirt Fund. The AFT will also work with the GTs on exploring potential temporary supporter bar facilities at HHP (discussed later in today's agenda). Action: BW to liaise with Gary regarding St Patrick's Day event</p> <p><i>Balloon payments</i> Some fans would like the club to be more open about the position with the football creditor balloon payments due at</p>	<p>BF</p> <p>BF</p> <p>PB</p>



		<p>the end of 2016. The PCC loan of £800,000 has allowed that payment to be reduced, and in part deferred to the end of 2019. The AFT understands that the long-term debt has been reduced, but it is not clear by how much. Action: BF will raise the question at the next meeting with Martyn</p> <p><i>Argyle Ladies</i> PB is working with Argyle Ladies to promote their team and their need for sponsorship. The AFT has agreed to sponsor a Ladies match later this season for £100. There will be a sponsors' event on Feb 22nd, part of the proceeds of which will go to the Ladies. Action: PB will arrange further and report to the board</p> <p><i>Argyle Angels</i> A number of fans have raised concerns about the Argyle Angels. While there is a positive side to the Angels being able to dance in front of a large crowd, a number of fans believe the style of dance is not appropriate, and that the performance on Remembrance Day didn't fit the ambience of the day. Action: BF will raise with Martyn at next Club meeting</p>	<p>BF</p> <p>PB</p> <p>BF</p>
8	External Communications	<p><i>Media releases/spokespeople</i> A number of media enquiries have been coming in, particularly with regards to HHP (e.g. the L&G letter release), and the AFT needs to be able to respond at short notice when required.</p> <p>It was agreed that for the time being TC will handle calls and emails, forwarding and alerting other board members as necessary, with SD and BF as secondary contacts. This will be reviewed at the next board meeting.</p> <p>In general the AFT board will seek to discuss issues as promptly as possible should an urgent action be required, while giving all board members a fair chance to comment. Action: CE to draft information for the press on how to contact/interact with us Action: SD and BF to be prepared to field contacts Action: TC to circulate list of contacts for new board and regular AFT 'helpers'</p> <p><i>Internet forums</i> It was noted that BF, SD, TC and JP all post reasonably regularly to one or both of the main two Argyle fan forums, namely Pasoti and ATD. It was agreed that the generic AFT account on each site will</p>	<p>CE</p> <p>SD/BF</p> <p>TC</p>



		<p>be used where possible for formal announcements. SD and JP will take on official postings there.</p> <p>Individual board members can still post as individuals, but should be careful regarding how they might phrase personal opinions.</p> <p>Action: SD/JP to ensure official AFT material is posted to Internet forums when required</p> <p>Action: TC to forward login details, and to inform Pasoti/ATD mods who is in possession of those details.</p> <p><i>Social Media</i></p> <p>Currently TC/PB post to the AFT Facebook community page as page admins, and TC posts to the AFT account @TheArgyleTrust on Twitter.</p> <p>It was agreed that we need more content, for which SD and JP offered to help. It was agreed both would look to post more from the official AFT account.</p> <p>Action: SD and JP to take on official AFT Twitter postings</p> <p>Action: TC to send FB and Twitter account passwords to SD/JP.</p> <p>It was also agreed that we should explore widening our use of social media.</p> <p>Action: JP will solicit ideas for social media.</p> <p>Open question – how do we convert Facebook page likes (at around 1,700 on Facebook) into members?</p> <p><i>AFT Website</i></p> <p>TC currently maintains the AFT website, which is kindly hosted by Mark Russell of the GTs.</p> <p>It was agreed that given how busy Mark is with his business doing so well that we should offer to migrate the site to a new platform.</p> <p>Action: TC to discuss with Mark about Web site migration.</p> <p>As per Facebook and Twitter, it was agreed we need more people available to do web site updates.</p> <p>Action: TC to give content editing permissions to SD/JP and info on how to use and be able to upload.</p> <p><i>Meetings with fans/surgeries</i></p> <p>CE suggested that we hold open ‘surgeries’ for fans to come to talk to us. The possibility of using a Devonport End kiosk was discussed. It was agreed that we would raise our efforts to encourage people to come to the Trust gazebo on weekend home match days to talk to us. The AFT now also has a sail flag that can be put up on good weather days in place of the gazebo.</p> <p>Action: TC/CE to use various media to encourage fans to visit the gazebo in next email newsletter and fanzine</p>	<p>SD/JP</p> <p>TC</p> <p>SD/JP</p> <p>TC</p> <p>JP</p> <p>TC</p> <p>TC</p> <p>TC/CE</p>
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9	Internal communications	<p>A brief discussion was held on how the new board could best interact internally. Email is currently working OK, but it would help if the volume could be reduced and Subject: lines renamed when the topic of discussion changes. It was agreed that we would explore other/better ways to collaborate and review at the next meeting. Action: JP to collate ideas.</p>	JP
10	Future sponsorship	<p>It has been suggested that we might choose a charity to work with for 2015/16, though not to the level as we have done with the RBL this season, which was a special arrangement for a special year. The board was in favour of identifying such a charity, subject to any agreement being for a small number of events and profile raising via our fanzine, web site, etc. It was agreed that while such activities are desirable, they should not distract from the main focus of the AFT's objectives. St. Luke's was mentioned as a candidate charity for the next season. Action: All to consider fundraising target(s) in community and/or related to Argyle – to be discussed/agreed at next board meeting</p>	ALL



11	Events in February and March 2015	<p>The following two events have been agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argyle Ladies event, 22nd February 2015 • St. Patrick's Day event, Tuesday 17th March 2015 <p>Action: PB and BW to liaise with Gary and report back to the board</p>	PB/BW
12	Asset of Community Value (ACV) application for Home Park	<p>The AFT board has the draft paperwork for an ACV submission for HP ready, on the back of the 80%+ support seen in our fans' survey for HP remaining in public hands.</p> <p>The ACV could give a six month option for the AFT to buy HP at the agreed sale price should HP be put up for sale by PCC.</p> <p>While such fundraising may be beyond the AFT's means, the ACV would at the very least give a 'heads up' on any sale.</p> <p>It is not clear at this stage whether the ACV takes precedence over the agreement in the current lease for James Brent to buy HP at 12x current rent in late 2016.</p> <p>It was agreed that we would discuss the application with the Club before submission.</p> <p>Action: TC to circulate current draft to board and liaise with SD on application and any associated issues.</p> <p>Action: BF to discuss submission with Martyn on 24th.</p>	TC BF
13	Safe Standing	<p>The safe standing campaign is progressing nationally. It was agreed that we would continue to support the campaign, esp. given our fans were 72% in favour (and most of the rest neutral) in our 2013 survey. The AFT will also explore working safe standing into and revised plans for a new grandstand.</p> <p>Action: ES to continue safe standing campaigning (and TC to pass on contacts from previous work)</p>	ES
14	Meetings and AGM	<p>The frequency of full AFT board meetings was discussed. It was noted that our minimum requirement is to hold four full meetings in any given year.</p> <p>It was agreed that we would try to delegate as many tasks as possible to one or two board members who could then report back to the full board.</p> <p>It was agreed that 11.30am to 1.30pm on weekend match days was the preferable time to hold board meetings.</p> <p>It was agreed that we would have a meeting at 11.30am on 24th January 2015, to be focused on HHP and the outcomes</p>	

		<p>from the AFT meeting (BF+2) with Martyn that morning. The next main meetings would be on Sat 28th February 2015 and Saturday 25th April 2015.</p> <p>The next AGM will be at the end of November 2015, ideally midday before a home game.</p>	
15	HHP supporter drinking facilities	<p>BF reported that Martyn Starnes has said that the FPC, which has been closed now for some time, is effectively condemned, so there is no value in putting money into it.</p> <p>Ideas for a temporary supporter bar facility were discussed, with the possibility of involving various supporter groups to make it happen, which was favourably received.</p> <p>A single facility could be split into a 'normal' bar and a 'FanFest' type bar, and also host a variety of events.</p> <p>Some good comments have already been received, e.g. from Richard Blight. The topic was also discussed at the AFT AGM in November.</p> <p>It was agreed that the AFT would take on an activity to consult and solicit the fanbase for requirements and options for a new (albeit most likely temporary) supporter social facility. We will speak further to the GTs and consult fans to understand what facilities would be desirable.</p> <p>Action: BF and CE to lead the discussions and consultations on supporter social facility requirements and options Action: BF to report interim findings to Martyn on 24th Jan.</p>	<p>BF/CE</p> <p>BF</p>
16	AOB	<p>The following items were raised under AOB. The chair reminded the board that all items should preferably be received for the agenda a week in advance of the meeting, and AOB used only for exceptional or 'late breaking' items.</p> <p><i>The 2014 EMG election report</i> The 2014 Election Management Group (EMG) produced an internal report for the AFT board to consider. Action: Report to be passed to new Secretary, to be discussed with a view to any rule changes for 2015/16.</p> <p><i>The Club's publication of the L&G Letter</i> The letter was discussed, with the following points of agreement arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We welcome fact that the letter was put into the public arena by the Club • We welcome large companies with strong financial backing supporting HHP 	<p>PB/RW</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We note there is no cast iron guarantee of funding – we recognise the letter is not a full commitment to fund • The AFT supports a new grandstand fit to meet the aspirations for the Club and supporters for the next 60 years • We are very happy to see a complementary build to the Life Centre to support funding • We will work with anyone who can move this forward <p>Action: TC/CE to draft a statement. It was also suggested that we could do a flyer for the next home game.</p> <p><i>Appointment of AFT Chair and Vice Chair</i> It was agreed before the meeting that this would be deferred until at least the January meeting, while the new board gets to know each other. There are options for a permanent, temporary or revolving (per meeting) Chair.</p> <p><i>New Secretary</i> A potential new Secretary has been found, with Andy Brennand having offered to join in mid-January. Action: SD to check arrangements and interest</p> <p><i>Supporter group meeting</i> It was suggested that we host a supporter group meeting to discuss common areas of interest. Action: TC to give contacts to BF to solicit views by 24th Jan. Action: BF to organise and chair meeting</p> <p><i>Grandstand WG</i> It was agreed that we would reform the Grandstand WG to discuss HHP, specifically to identify requirements for a new grandstand, and how it might be designed and funded. Some volunteers from the previous WG have already agreed to take part again. The WG would probably work closely with the FPC successor group, with some overlap of interest. Action: TC and SD to push forward.</p>	<p>CE/TC</p> <p>SD</p> <p>TC BF</p> <p>TC/SD</p>
21	Date of next meeting	<p>Next interim meeting: 11.30am Sat 24th January 2015 Next full board meeting: 11.30am Sat 28th February 2015</p>	