



Argyle Fans' Trust
Board Meeting - MINUTES
Saturday 16th January; 10am
Ed's house.

No	Item	Discussion/Summary	Action
1	Members present / Apologies for absence	<p>Members Present: Bob Foale (BF) Chair Celia Ellacott (CE) Vice Chair Virginia Pike (VP) Ed Shillabeer (ES) Frazer Lloyd-Davies (FLD)</p> <p>Tony Cannan (TC) Secretary Anthony Sherlock (AS) Tom Moore (TM)</p> <p>Apologies: Bob Wright (BW) Paul Bartolini (PB) Ken Wild (KW)</p>	
2	Election of officers for 2016	<p>BF presented Tom Moore to the Board, mentioning his business management and IT skills which would be of great help to the AFT. BF recommended he be co-opted to the Board with immediate effect, this was seconded by FLD and was unanimous with the other Board members. Tom is now co-opted to the Board with immediate effect.</p> <p>BF invited nominations for position of Chair. When asked if he would like to stand again the chair confirmed his wish to do so. This was seconded by CE and unanimously agreed by other Board members. BF therefore remains in post as Chair.</p>	All



		<p>BF then invited nominations for position of Vice Chair. CE nominated herself, seconded by BF and unanimously agreed by other Board members. CE remains in post as Vice Chair</p> <p>PB is going through a handover process with AS to take over Treasurer duties. This will be concluded as soon as possible and when both PB and AS are satisfied all details have been concluded accordingly.</p> <p>TC and VP to gradually take over membership duties from BW. However, both expressed concern about the amount of paperwork that may be generated by members who are not yet online – details discussed in item 3.</p>	
<p>3</p>	<p>Membership report</p>	<p>BW had sent details in his absence.</p> <p>Number of shareholding members = 847 Junior members = 151 Total = 998</p> <p>Lapsed members = 906</p> <p>Whilst still maintaining a core base of around 1000 members, there was concern over the amount of lapsed members, and that the total members had gone from 1021 at the AGM down to 998.</p> <p>It is suggested that we move to a more 'online' based payment system or to standing orders so that memberships don't just expire without members realising as it is believed that people don't renew once they expire.</p> <p>Also recommended was moving the whole membership process to a complete online</p>	<p>FLD, TM</p>



		<p>system as paper based correspondence continues to become a more costly burden. FLD and TM are looking into this along with their other IT improvement enterprises. Members who wish to retain paper-based correspondence may do so, but that we think we may have to start charging for some of these items as the cost of postage for 'snail mail' and printing continues to rise. Emphasis was placed on the value of the Trust membership cards and certificates and whether they are really needed...should the cost of these be passed on?</p> <p>CE felt that we should keep these.</p>	
4	Financial Report	<p>Cash in bank:</p> <p>Barclays - £9987.80 PayPal - £646.52</p> <p>TOTAL - £ 10,634.32</p> <p>Outstanding debt</p> <p>Bob – £2000.00 Tim - £2000.00</p> <p>Total outstanding: £4000.00</p> <p>The Board were also presented with a breakdown of merchandising sales and AFT party figures.</p> <p>It was agreed to start to pay off the debts owed to Bob and Tim from the profits of the Anniversary night.</p>	AS



		<p>AS to look for paperwork that may have been produced and signed as to what the conditions of these loans/underwriters were as the current Board did not agree to them but we know it was in conjunction with the RBL shirt sponsorship. However, it was agreed that the AFT has a moral responsibility to pay this money back and so Bob and Tim will each receive £500 back of the money they loaned in the first instance. This is just a starting point and more will of course follow.</p> <p>We should of course seek to maintain an average pot of at least £10k, although with the current debts we know we have less than that.</p>	
5	ACV update	<p>TC advised that Plymouth City Council have given a new date of January 29th 2016 for a decision on our ACV application. This is due to some issues they needed clarifying before they could proceed. TC will follow up on Monday, however it seems entirely possible given the time elapsed that the decision will be forthcoming by January 29th.</p> <p>There were concerns expressed about what would happen if we are unsuccessful. It was agreed we would tackle this if it became necessary to do so but TC will check about an appeals process just in case.</p>	TC
6	Fanzine cost and advertising	<p>CE advised that we should be covering shortfall on fanzine cost with advertising.</p> <p>KW is currently working on some advertising and sponsorship for the fanzine.</p> <p>Agreed to keep it at a print run of 500.</p>	CE, KW, FLD



		<p>FLD advised that we need to keep more data on exactly what fanzine run has been sold as we still have old ones left over from previous runs.</p> <p>He also suggested stopping posting free ones, again, trying to steer the Trust away from manual snail mail admin as well as keeping costs down. All agreed.</p> <p>TM to look at different printing firms for costings, also we will look to bring down the paper quality. Whilst we are happy with the product, the type of paper used is too expensive for what a fanzine is at it was agreed we'd use a cheaper type.</p> <p>CE advised we need more writers to contribute articles. Not just for the fanzine but for our other outlets as well (Herald Column, PAFC match-day programme).</p>	
7	Sponsorship	<p>We are sponsoring a table at the Wycombe game fans-fest this year. Two of Wycombe's Fans Trust have been invited as reciprocation of their hospitality last season. There are six spaces remaining and we have agreed to attend as a Board. This may all change if the game is moved to a Tuesday due to Wycombe's FA Cup commitments if they're still in it.</p> <p>CE advised that we must be sure how the difference in the cost is going to be made up.</p> <p>We are also sponsoring the Hartlepool home match in May which we hope will be trophy lifting championship day! There are 10 slots for this and so far, 2 have been sold.</p>	All



8	Michael Foot's scarf	ES was having this framed and is going to ascertain progress with this. We are looking to display it in a prominent place in Home Park.	ES
9	AFT Website and Online services.	<p>Membership updates have been discussed in item 3.</p> <p>TM and FLD are looking to upgrade the website. FLD has contacted Chris Webb who owns the website domain and he has been assured that Chris will let us have it with no quibble.</p> <p>Next will then be a hosting upgrade which will cost £90p.a. but TM says he can get the actual installation done for free.</p> <p>Once that is complete then there will be an opportunity to start developing and updating content on the website.</p> <p>As for content and regular updates, FLD can provide BF and CE with passwords for all the accounts so they can be monitored.</p>	FLD, TM
10	Electronic score board	<p>All agreed there should be one at Home Park, but with TC's investigations with two different firms quoting an average of £81k for installation, it was quickly agreed that this is something the AFT simply cannot afford to implement and is something the Club should be paying for.</p> <p>BF to speak with Tudor Evans of PCC to ask what happened to the screens that they offered Argyle for free. It is possible the Trust could serve as a 'middleman' to make this happen, but the Trust certainly cannot afford to fund anything of this magnitude at this stage.</p>	All



11	Selling/Auctioning of Luke McCormick signed poppy shirt and where the money goes	<p>FLD suggested waiting until the season end as Luke is one of our highest profile players and it is likely we'd get more for it at a later date.</p> <p>CE to meet with Rick Cowdery to discuss but it is believed the agreement was that the money would go to the Royal British Legion.</p> <p>Deferred until February meeting.</p>	All
12	Potential Match v Oxford Utd fans' trust	<p>FLD advised that Oxford United fans' trust have been in touch to suggest a match between supports of both clubs.</p> <p>FLD suggested hiring the 'Goals' venue and having a mini tournament. 4 small teams from both sides playing each other.</p> <p>It was suggested we involve a ladies team and Paul's walking 50+ team.</p> <p>FLD to ask Oxford if they can provide opposition to support that.</p> <p>BF advised our track record of organising events is not good, however we must proceed albeit with caution and that the event must NOT run at a loss. FLD to advise on further arrangements.</p>	FLD
13	Agreement on two dates for the extended members meeting and a social event	<p>Next board meeting will be Feb 13, with extended meeting/social event to be on March 19. Venue yet to be decided.</p>	
14	What are the AFT's aims and how we achieve them.	<p>Discussion followed the lines of adopting a 'mission statement' which tells in a nutshell what fans would expect from the Trust. Currently ongoing and would look to have this</p>	ALL



		<p>done as soon as possible for adding to the website.</p> <p>Aims need to be to ensure that the people of Plymouth in future generations always have a club to support.</p> <p>Continue to be critical of PAFC where necessary and push issues raised by supporters.</p> <p>Gaining ACV status is now critical – as discussed previously, this will be finalised any day now.</p> <p>We MUST persue supporters bar/Far Post Club.</p> <p>CE put forward the following proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Maintaining proper membership and financial records which includes items we sell.● Minutes and other notes which are agreed and published quickly● Building up membership (as previously discussed)● Staffing the gazebo and having a visible presence in other areas of the ground (more volunteers)● Sending out weekly member emails even if there isn't much to say.● Getting involved in plans for Mayflower 2020● Recruiting more people to the Board with skills to offer – not just those who can organise raffles – people with pedigree and clout!● Talking with other Trusts● Share investment scheme?	
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- Drawing up a proposal for buying the pitch and selling it in squares (Chelsea did this which was very popular)
- Start a crowdfunding page – must nominate a specific purpose.

FLD added the following proposals under the moniker: **To Have An Increasing Influence Over The Running Of PAFC:**

- Membership acquisition – increase the number of new AFT members. A larger Trust will have more weight within the football club.
- Churn reduction – reduce the number of existing members leaving the AFT. Existing members are easier and cheaper to retain than acquiring new ones.
- Upselling – encourage existing members of the AFT to spend more money with the AFT. An increase in funds will allow the AFT to expand.
- Fundraising – encourage members to raise money for PAFC. Creates an AFT presence which in turn should increase membership acquisition, improve churn reduction and provide more opportunities to upsell

Every action should influence at least one of the above.

Action plan to be drawn up.



		Also discussed was about raising our profile and working with other Argyle Supporters groups such as PADSAs, PASTAs etc. Currently ongoing as we look for new joint initiatives. Looking to finalise this in February meeting.	
15	Next meeting	Saturday 13 th February 2016, 10am.	All