

**Report on the**

**Bath City FC Board Meeting**

**27 July 2020**

(Video/Conference call)

**Present:** Nick Blofeld (Chair)**,** Martin Powell, Paul Williams, Andrew Pierce, Shane Morgan, Jon Bickley, Michael Clayton, Joy Saunders

**Observer**: Bob Chester

**Apologies**: John Reynolds, Chris Coles

Nick opened the meeting by thanking everyone for the huge effort made by so many, but especially by a few (Paul, Bob, Shane, Emma and Jon) in making the playoffs happen. From brainstorming ideas to raising funds to organising the stadium set-up, covid testing etc, it was a very big team effort. Despite the disappointment on the day, he felt sure we would be back having learnt, improved and be pushing for promotion again whenever we could.

1. **Financial situation** **update**

Paul’s update highlighted that we are doing alright financially, despite not much actually happening day to day (ie only the one game), but we have drawn down some Government funding. Some disappointing news was that Curo are reducing their requirements and payments but this was countered by the news that the gym is re-opening and appears to be busy.

The key is to get matches back on again, with crowds asap! Overheads have been kept to a minimum and we have received part of the money raised from the crowdfunding. Total costs for the playoff should be around £18k, with an expected slightly downwards adjustment later.

No one is sure when we will start playing again, there have been rumours of as early as 5 September, but most think October is more realistic. There have been a few “test” sports events with crowds and the Government will then review these and decide how to progress, but most expect the onus to fall back on the clubs. Key issues to overcome are: entry/exit, toilets, food and drink, half time.

There was some discussion about how we “unwind” from the lockdown and get going again. Various questions were raised, including can we leave injured players in furlough?

It was agreedthat a smaller group would meet and look more closely at Paul’s draft budget/forecast.

1. **Football**

The player budget should start at the same as the 19/20 season, and will be part of the above review.

We currently have 8 players signed up and Jerry is busy talking to others and deciding his best options.

Tom Smith has been named Vanarama National League South Player of the Year.

On-line ticket sales enable data collection for track and trace.

Season ticket revenue for next season so far totals £29k. One way of promoting them may be by advertising that season ticket holders will get priority on access to matches.

Jerry’s contract has one more year to run and the view was an additional year should be added. His role in the success of the Crowdfunding was noted.

1. **Re-Development**

Nick gave an outline of the recent call between himself, Chris, FWP and Greenacre, which was positive.

Greenacre are impressed with the work by FWP and are working with Strides on some new ideas.

If a new proposal is submitted following the FWP review, it will be a new full planning application, but there will be an accelerated process without all the same fees as last time.

It was noted that the revised plan produces a better ground for the Club in several ways. If the appeal succeeds, it may be possible to change the plans (eg not raising the pitch so high), but we don’t know for certain at this point.

1. **Actions from last Board, Previous Board Meeting Minutes**

Jon, Paul, Andrew & Nick are looking at the commercial revenue in the Business Plan.

The Foundation SLA is moving ahead on the premise of one director from the Club acting as a trustee.

Minutes of the last meeting were accepted. Proposed by Andrew Pierce and seconded by Joy Saunders

1. **Society & Supporter’s update**

Martin reported thatthe level of interest and anticipation of the play-off match was unprecedented, probably because of the absence of matches during the Covid lockdown. Feedback on the Crowdfunding was that people were very impressed by the Club’s effort and creativity in the benefits offered. There was also good feedback on the digital programme, particularly from those who don’t get to many home matches as they are “exiles” or live abroad, so it was suggested trialling this again for matches next season.

With regard to the live streaming of the play-off match, there was widespread dismay at the poor quality and refusal to offer refunds. BT/Sportradar have responded to supporters who claimed refunds that this had been refused by the League.

A joint complaint was sent to the National League by Martin, the Society and the Supporters Club but this has not elicited a reply as yet. Nick confirmed the Club will officially complain to BT/Sportradar and the League.

There was supporter appreciation of Dave Phillips’ filming of the game.

The Society’s Q&A evening was well received, especially by exiles. Several mentioned how much they appreciated Helen Donovan’s input on the Foundation which Martin passed on to her.

Martin had previously decided to step down from the SLO role and Nick thanked him, on behalf of the Club, the Board and himself personally, for all his work in the role over the past few years, efforts which have been much appreciated.

Michael agreed that the Q&A evening seemed to go down well and the Society aims for this to be a fairly regular event using the same format even as social distancing rules change. He and Shane are investigating setting up video conferencing facilities in the Club to enable hybrid Board meetings.

The Society’s key focus at the moment is the upcoming AGM on 3rd September. There has been a good level of interest in the elections for the two Director roles and Society committee roles.

Oliver Holtaway, as election officer, has been running a mini-campaign to make sure the Society committee elections are genuine, encouraging participation and more people to stand. Whilst the elections to the committee are not role-specific, the information lays out the types of skills which are sought and Oliver is confident we will have a decent number of nominations. There are separate application processes for the SLO and Director roles.

Nominations close within 2 weeks of the AGM (14 August). It was agreed that the Club is happy to promote the AGM.

There are also people interested in volunteering, including someone in France!

1. **Commercial update/Key Working Group updates/issues**

Bob’s report was circulated prior to the meeting. He explained that playoff flags and shirts are being distributed to sponsors who can’t come to games, some being delivered where personal contact with the sponsor is useful.

There has been an upward surge of sponsors and advertisers and outcomes are pretty positive so far and not as bad as anticipated a few months ago. Bob is following up with John Reynolds about talking to his contacts.

The shirt sponsors draw is expected to be held on Thursday 3rd Sept and, as Jerry will be busy with training, Bob will get an ex-player in to do the draw. So far there are 31 entries and Bob will be very pleased with anything between 50-60.

The lottery has done quite well. Ideally this would be increased from 400 to 500-600 now it’s online, and Bob is talking to Jon about getting it in the newsletter/website etc.

The terms of the arrangement with Bristol City Women were discussed. Some of these matches will be televised on BBC 2, some shown live, with a highlights programme as well.

Shane reported that most of the club-based businesses are up and running again.

Joy thanked Shane for the work he did with the University on distributing student equipment to local charities. There will be some press coverage on that.

Helen Donovan has asked what we can do to help the Foundation to maximise fundraising but we can’t say until we know when we can open doors. The usual procedure is to select four well attended, spaced out matches at which to allow bucket collections. Last season Carole mobilised volunteers to help with the bucket collection, which is usually done by the charity of the season.

1. **AOB**

Jon’s proposal for a 7 or 14 day campaign to promote supporting Bath businesses was agreed. It will showcase Club related businesses each day, primarily shirt draw sponsors, with photos of them with scarves in front of their businesses.

Michael will see if it is possible to arrange for the next meeting to be a physical/virtual hybrid meeting.

1. **Date of next meeting – Monday 24th August.**

Meeting ended 21:06