Report on the Bath City FC Board Meeting

Mon 2 August 2021 at 1900

**Hybrid meeting Attendees**: Nick Blofeld (Chair), Jon Bickley, Cheryl Bradley, Matt Falk, Chris Flanagan, Shane Morgan, Andrew Pierce, John Reynolds, Joy Saunders, Paul Williams

**Observers**: Bob Chester, Chris Coles, Carole Banwell, Jerry Gill

1. **Football Update**

Jerry expressed his delight at signing a new contract, he is excited about the next couple of years and appreciates having the support and confidence of the Club.

The disappointment in the pre-season matches has been the lack of defence, we’ve been scoring lots of goals but haven’t been able to put our strongest defence out, so looking forward to being able to do that for the Hereford match this weekend.

Jerry ran through the players, with most being fit and those who are returning from injury doing well. Two injured players are still receiving treatment.

We have two new loans – Callum Wood from Bristol City, left back, and Mo Touray, a striker from Salford City, (ex-Newport) till 15 January.

Colchester have thanked us for the help in developing Noah Chilvers.

There may be an additional player coming on loan, which would be a big bonus, but Jerry is confident with the squad he’s got.

**Staff:** there has been a big change, as we lost Steve Lock for personal reasons, Toby is concentrating on his paid job, and Mark Harrison who had been helping recently has gone back to Africa. However, all the vacancies had been filled quickly. Steve Book will be joining us subject to contract agreement, he played with Jerry at Weston, was the Cheltenham goalkeeping coach recently and is known in Bath. Lee Williams is back as lead physio, he’d been with us previously and now has the time required. Sarah Carr, ex-Bristol Rovers, has met with Lee and will also join subject to contract. She has her own clinic which will be a help during the day.

**Recent Saturday Open Day**: very good turnout of around 150, up from 100 last time with lots of local walk ins. It was a positive day but had a few organisational frustrations, and scope for additional fund raising and for video-ing the event. A couple of things had been out of our control such as the ice cream van not showing up and the fire engine being called out on a job. Mark Stillman was very good. The Foundation were a huge support on the day.

The sense from this was that the Club team are still getting back to our usual positive footing after months in “survival” mode. The plan is to re-introduce the weekly Friday planning meetings. JG is also going to the first one to talk about the “Bath City Way” and how he works with the players.

**Team photo**: a date needs to be set to include all the directors. 10 August suggested but too close.

**ACTION**: Bob to co-ordinate team photo date a bit further out, likely 6 for 6.30pm on a Tues or Thurs prior to 7pm training.

Bob thanked Jerry for all his help with the shirt sponsorship draw. Kit will be done with sponsors logos this week and will be worn at the first home game.

**Pitch**: There was a problem with getting drainage done due to self-isolating issues, and similarly in constructing the surface. There is some concern about it getting too close to the season. The work done so far should have some effect, with plenty of sand there was caution about the extent of the impact on the playing surface.

1. **Redevelopment Update**

Notes from redevelopment working group dated 22 July were circulated by Nick after the meeting for all those who hadn’t previously received them.

Although BANES consultation process continues for the remainder of the year, the latest document released in the planning review, SB14, has quite a lot of detail on what the Council wants, which we didn’t have before, and more on the needs of the football club, so there is more certainty. We can take from the report that the efforts of the past 3-4 years have resulted in an acceptance of what we are seeking to achieve for the Club.

Discussions to continue with current partners on how to we can meet requirements, also consider alternative sites (as last resort option).

There was a recent presentation to the Redevelopment Working Group, but needs further investigation.

**ACTION**: Andrew to circulate presentation visuals.

**AGREED**: Discuss with McLaren current planning policy before it changes and how to proceed.

**ACTION**: WG - check if there are any restrictive covenants.

**Update on Other Discussions**: discussions are ongoing with other interested parties.

The Society & Club need to continue working closely together and the Society needs to be, and is, satisfied the Club is exploring all possible options.

1. **Finance Update**

PW spoke to his report circulated prior to the meeting. The friendly matches exceeded budgeted expectations, with the open bar at the last game answering the question around whether people will be prepared to spend! 165 season tickets have been sold to date and 49 rolled over from last season. This compares to 230 last year.

Curo parking is still missing. It’s hoped 15 or so parking spaces will be rented but we would lose match parking revenue.

There have been quite a few bookings since function space has been made available again.

1. **SAG Actions & Update**

The temporary Safety Certificate was done, but now concerns raised about use of the Grandstand pending work by Accolade on 10-13 August (pandemic delay), the next match being on 14 August. Two staircases still need work doing and signed off by B&NES. Pending that they are happy to give us the Safety Certificate for the rest of the ground, with 3,900 total capacity.

**ACTION**: Nick to try SAG Chair in the morning.

**ACTION**: John R & Shane to catch up re whether possible to get work done in advance of Accolade being available to test.

SAG – we need to review our processes to ensure we did everything we could to avoid the potential Grandstand closure.

1. **2000 BC, Commercial, Foundation & Community WG Updates**

**Hospitality**: although the Government has changed the rules now, we still have a responsibility to staff and everyone at the ground to follow relevant guidelines. The capacity document and league COVID memo have been circulated to staff but we still need to do our own H&S assessment (eg should staff in the bar be wearing masks). The Board was asked to consider whether we should keep lower than permitted capacity in the hospitality lounges, after discussion capacities were agreed for both lounges.

**2000 BC**: Jon circulated note prior to meeting.

**Foundation**: Carole circulated note prior to meeting.

**Commercial**: Bob circulated note prior to meeting. Thanks were expressed to Mark Stillman and Dave Phillips for their live streaming of the shirt sponsors draw, which elicited positive comments from the sponsors. Thanks to John for help in installing toilet. We’re already above last year on revenue.

**Women’s football** – full discussion scheduled for October Board meeting.

1. **Society/Supporter Updates**

Chris F gave a report on the Society AGM: there has been fairly major changes of responsibility. Shane & Nick were re-elected to the Club Board. Chris F is Chair of Supp’s Soc. Board and looking forward to working closely with the Club Board. Oliver Holtaway & Pete McCormack are Vice-Chairs to help with support. Paul Brotherton is Secretary and Marc Thomas, Membership Secretary.

The Society has two initial priorities:

1. Redevelopment – CF commended the good work of the WG in exploring possibilities. Any move away from Twerton Park would be of material interest to Society members and it is therefore important to keep them in the loop on any developments in that direction.
2. Building & reinforcing good relations between the Board & Society. Oliver Holtaway has picked up the joint strategy, with an initial draft to be shared for joint development.

Other AGM motions:

1. Society board to ensure stadium name change for more than one season must be subject to

ballot of members.

2. The Club strategy is to be published on the Society website from August 2021.

3. All Society board elections should advertise skills and roles.

**ACTION**: CF to come back to Nick on his question at the AGM – re-doing survey.

**ACTION**: Matt to liaise with Joy over questions on community on his survey.

**Fairgame:** has been introduced to the Club by Richard Irving of the FSA by email to Society. It aims to be a lobbying group/trade association for disenfranchised clubs. NB circulated information in advance of the meeting. CF has become involved as a policy adviser. Fairgame would like Bath City as a member along with Wimbledon, Cambridge Utd, Accrington Stanley, Bristol Rovers & others. Nial Cooper, from the Dons’ Trust at Wimbledon, is also very keen for BCFC to be involved. While there is the possibility to feed into policy, time & commitment is entirely up to the clubs with nothing more than the Club name on the list being asked. Their aims & objectives very much aligned with CFs view of what BCFC is about. Fan led review is likely to result in sea-change in regulation anyway.

**Supporter Liaison Officer**: There are no issues coming through in supporter feedback, people are very positive about the new season & signings. Planning the next “Meet the Manager” starts shortly.

1. **Actions Carried Forward from Last Meeting**

Next steps on Foundation funding – still in the air.

Nick to arrange call re debtors.

Oliver is picking up on the Society lead on the joint strategy document.

Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted: proposer Joy Saunders, seconder Andrew Pierce

1. **AOB**

Hospitality team working on maximising the use of the Directors’ guest list lounge to bring in new people.

**Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 6 September.