Bath City FC Board Meeting

Monday 16th May 2022

Hybrid

**Attendees:** Jon Bickley (Chair in room), Nick Blofeld, Cheryl Bradley, Paul Brotherton, Peter Headington, Shane Morgan, Andrew Pierce, John Reynolds, Joy Saunders, Paul Williams

**Observers**: Carole Banwell, Chris Coles, Jerry Gill, Jane Jones

Jerry and Jane joined the meeting for the first item only.

Nick thanked everyone involved in the team, the Society and the Board for the huge amount of work over the past year and for the continued work on the redevelopment.

1. **Football Update**

**i. Senior Team** Jerry reiterated Nick’s thanks. It feels like the players, staff, fans and the Board are galvanised, there was a great atmosphere in the Club after Oxford match and a phenomenal end to the season with 300 fans at the Yeovil match. Things had been tense in March but the character of the Club has pulled things round. Changes such as moving training to Wednesdays and treating the remaining matches as a mini-season produced the focus necessary to pick up 18 points. Obviously, we can’t look at those games in isolation, for example the number of goals conceded is being addressed.

Thanks to the Board for allowing the team to stay over for the Billericay match. This was important as the team isn’t often able to spend that amount of time together. It also meant they could stay behind after the match for a bit longer with the fans in the bar.

The team is now reflecting on the season with reports being pulled together by Statsbomb and by the medical team, who are analysing injuries over the season with an eye on whether there is a correlation with 3G/grass, as is discussed within the league.

Building the squad for next year is underway and a lot of change is expected. A certain profile of player is being looked for, with the new recruitment process as previously discussed. The players have been on holiday and when back Jerry will be talking to everyone individually. Jon Haile has been helping with scouting and building database.

Eight pre-season games have been arranged, half each home/away, the 3-day camp at Bath Uni has been booked for 15-17 July and there will be an evening meal at Hare & Hounds.

Jim’s testimonial will likely be on Sunday 17 July, which Bob & Dave Clarke are organising.

The new training kit is being produced, with the shirt being a bit retro and looks good with jeans. Replica shirts should be here by mid-July.

The Open Day is on 24 July and will be all about children’s interaction with players with dressing room tours and a green screen activity. It would be possible to do week after as well.

**ii. Women’s Football** A paper was circulated in advance of the meeting. There is widespread community support for setting up the team and doing it properly. BCFC is in good position to cover the gap in Bath. Larkhall & Keynsham are tier 4 but there is nothing below that. We would be looking to go in at tier 7, over 18s.

The potential sponsor has confirmed sponsorship for the Women’s team. Ideally, we will have a team by September although we would rather get it right the season after than do half a job this coming season.

We will work with the Foundation to ensure whoever is appointed to run the team will collaborate where appropriate.

We would rather be in Div 1 than 3 and anticipate playing lots of friendlies to build the team. Players at this level are still amateur – pay subs, no match fees. Our aim is to be best in class on and off the pitch. There are regional differences between the leagues. The aim is to play at Twerton Park from the start as a demonstration of intent.

Jerry will help where possible and there will be a player recruitment day rather than “trial”, which has been found to be off-putting. The Somerset FA allow players to sign with two clubs to get enough games. The right coach could bring 4-5 players with them. The ideal is to get a pathway for local players working and reduce barriers to entry such as subs, cost of kit. We’d expect the head coach to have a say in the case of particular talent.

There is a history of women’s football excellence in Bath. During WW2 when men’s football wasn’t played, Bath were one of the top women’s teams and drew good crowds. There are photos around somewhere.

Administrative issues to be ironed out include whether the team will be the same Club as BCFC, public liability/personal injury cover etc even for training, safeguarding policies etc.

**AGREED:** unanimously, to support the development of the team as outlined in the paper/above.

**iii. Boys Football Pathway** A briefing note was circulated previously setting out some ideas on engaging with Bath City Youth. It is essential to create a pathway to move from U16s into men’s football and even to the 1st team. Peter Headington to explore further.

John Reynolds has been asked to present the end of season trophies for BCY. We need to sit down with the committee to explain our plans and offer opportunity to participate.

**ACTION:** Nick to try to speak to BCY

**ACTION:** Peter to formulate proposal to take to BCY committee

Jerry & Jane left the meeting.

**iv. Pitch** There is a costto re-seeding pitch following the recent BCY tournament, being 2.5 days continual use in rain.

**ACTION:** Jon to ask BCY to promote season tickets

Hand-over of pitch maintenance is all going well.

1. **Redevelopment**

**N**ext Redevelopment Working Group meeting 17 May. The Council and relevant officers are being kept in the loop in broad brush terms.

**ACTION**: Nick will circulate to Board the valuation when gets full doc.

1. **Finance Report**

This was circulated in advance of the meeting. P&L forecasts a loss for the year. There is no big issue on cash flow.

Curo parking has started.

Looking forward, some costs will increase eg energy costs are expected to double, and there is new cost for pitch maintenance. The anticipated player budget is only slightly more than initially last year. Anticipated income is much higher, with gate receipts being highest for some time and 3 extra games expected.

Gate money should be up next year with more attractive matches. The assumption on money from league/donations remains the same. The cost of the central heating system is less than anticipated as Charlie & Randalls are not too bad. The budget doesn’t include increased revenue from alcohol sales in the ground.

**ACTION**: Nick, Andrew, Peter, Jon to discuss budget with Paul offline, to confirm player budget by the end of the week. Can we benchmark versus other Clubs in the league?

**ACTION**: Andrew to discuss outdoor bar physical structure with John.

1. **Working Group Updates**

**i. Community/Foundation**

A report on community projects was circulated in advance of the meeting. It is proving tricky to find a replacement Community Director, they are big shoes to fill! We have spoken to potential candidates and the Society is putting out feelers as well. The deadline for nominations is 28th May.

**ii. Ops/SAG/Capacity/Alcohol**

**Ground/Maintenance:** There is a visit booked for 24 May to look at grandstand capacity.

There is still no information from SAG on how regularly we must get certain work done, such as electrical and structural surveys.

We need more volunteers to get the ground up to scratch. Lots of volunteers now doing bits but we could do with a working party.

**ACTION**: John to come & look at everything that needs doing.

**ACTION:** Jon, Carole & Shane to take forward “Paint the Park”

**Toilet**: Additional funding has been announced by the Premier League, for which we’ve submitted an expression of interest to pay for toilet upgrade and central heating. We had expected to hear back by 13 May. Further funding is expected at the end of the season. We will make decision on our aspirations when we hear back.

Other clubs tend to use portaloos but we don’t have flat ground. We could put in another application for CIL funding if nothing from the Premier League.

**ACTION:** John to pass on contact details for potential free paint to Shane.

**Alcohol**: The application has been done but needs additional documentation which has to be put into the correct format to be sent off.

**iii. Commercial**

The team has come up with potential target for all the possible media opportunities we “could” sell.

Agreement has been reached with Bob on his role going forward, which is Club Ambassador. He was happy with the presentation at the Oxford match on the last day of the season.

**ACTION**: Nick/Peter to discuss re speech at Shirt Sponsors Draw

Income this year was better than expected. The team is changing to a revenue ownership model rather than account ownership and jobs are being allocated to people based on their strengths. Peter will take over hoardings, which is currently difficult as all different models so simplifying that will be looked at over the summer. Stewart will join Peter on community partnerships; Fred (London based) will focus on programme ads & renewals & William on Match day hospitality, match & ball sponsorship, more meals etc.

As discussed under Women’s football, we have our first community partnership.

1. **Society & Supporter Updates**

i**. Society:** A proper update on governance would be worth doing separately. The draft code of conduct and governance documents have been circulated a couple of times. It is mostly done with just a few things left to be bottomed out.

**ACTION**: Joy to circulate invite to discuss and latest documents with note of changes/implications and highlight of the outstanding.

The Society AGM is 16 June with attendance from as many Board members as possible appreciated. The agenda will be finalised next Thursday then circulated.

The supporters survey results are on the Society website without comment. The survey was to gauge people’s opinions, the information has been banked to be used when it comes to decision making in the next year or so. The sustainability of the Club came top with no change in direction indicated.

**ACTION:** Society: what feedback can be drawn/given to the members on the outcome of the survey – ie conclusions and what has changed/stayed the same since the previous survey 5 years ago?

**ii. Supporters:** A “Meet the Manager” session/Q&A at the Open Day would be worthwhile.

The Obituary page is now live on the website and has had some good reviews on the forum. It is open to anyone now to send in content. This goes to Cheryl who sends on to Simon for uploading. Thanks to Simon for all his help on this.

1. **Actions from the Last Meeting to be Carried Forward:**

Single payment method across the ground:

**ACTION** AP to pick up with CB now the season is over.

**Minutes of the last meeting were accepted**: proposed Andrew Pierce, seconded John Reynolds

1. **AOB**

* If anyone wants to go to the League AGM with dinner on 11 June, please can they let Paul Williams know.
* The “My City, My Shirt” campaign has been brilliant – Carole & Joy are looking at taking that forward.

**8. Date of Next Meeting:** 20 June