



Bath City Board Meeting

1900 Monday 15 April 2024

Hybrid

Attendees: Debbie King (guest), Nick Blofeld (Chair), James Carlin, Andrew Pierce, Paul Williams, John Reynolds, Chris Coles, Pete McCormack, Jane Jones, Caroline White, Shane Morgan, Sally Harris, Christopher Flanagan, ?

Apologies: Heather Thomas, Dave Philips, Stuart Page

1. Strategy document update review and Workshop output

We had a broad discussion around the updated strategy document, with recognition that it was still pretty robust, and that we had achieved a lot of the original objectives. It was recognised that it should now become a broader business plan with financials included.

The biggest debate was about the need to challenge the original premise of having to be community owned, as, despite the very good progress made, the model doesn't seem sustainable due to the remaining debt, a challenging P&L and the lack of good quality, experienced senior volunteers to come forward and both run and direct the Club.

It was reluctantly agreed that the wording should change to something like "community focussed/influenced" rather than "owned," and that we should also seek external investment to keep the Club in a good financial position long-term.

It was also agreed that we should seek to extend the existing Club loans for a further 5 years, and those controlling 90% of the loans had already agreed to this. This will allow time to seek further investment (the loans were due to be repaid at the end of May 2024). It strengthens the balance sheet and should allow more chance of success from fundraising or grant applications for 3G.

A letter had been drafted, and will be shared, and this will be finalised and sent out, with accompanying calls, to seek approval of extensions from final few lenders. We will also prepare a reactive statement in case this confidential information "leaks" out into the public domain.

Urgency is key here. Nick gave formal thanks to this extending their loans again. Andrew raised the point that we should be more proactive if we were genuine about the desire to bring in new investors soon.

There was then a more detailed discussion about the various workstreams/projects that came out of the Workshop that Debbie and Peter Morgan had facilitated for us on 27 March, which many in the room/on the call attended.

Debbie also talked us through a "real life" case study to show how the structure/model had worked and if we stick to the process, and volunteered to come to our Board meetings to check on progress.

Comments on the draft Charters/workstreams/projects:

i) 3G

- clearly overlap between the funding needed for 3G and overall new investment plan
- there will need careful management/co-ordination
- not sure we need a CIC structure anymore?
- will need to agree the right legals/structure before seeking funding
- good idea to come up with a visual design/plan first
- c£700k cost excluding desirable extra facilities (eg café, changing rooms etc)
- Stride Treglown offer of help to be taken up

ii) Re-Development

- Club's meeting with the council CEO & Leader provided a possible route forward

iii) Short-term financials/reporting

- Gareth setting up a revenue generation review/ideas meeting
- Debbie, Al and Paul to meet up soon
- it was confirmed we use SAGE

iv) Long-term financials

- we should prepare reactive external comms – and think about proactive comms
- approach the previous contacts who were interested but lacked the funding then

v) Wider Club engagement

- need to agree a marketing budget at the start of each season

The workstream yet to be developed is the Football Strategy Charter, the long-term ability to create a genuine pathway for young players and the ability to generate income from this players, potentially with a suitable volunteer Director of Football. Jane will set up a Workshop for this with Debbie and/or Elite Performance Partners (a Bath based sports business Nick has known for some time).

2. Club Organisation & Structure

i) Key club roles/news

- good discussion ref the operational roles that still need fixing, especially on matchdays after both Carole and Bob left. Peter Headington has been doing a very good job helping on these (as well as leading the 3G project - eg hospitality, media, man of the match, children's flag waving etc). It was agreed to co-opt Peter back onto the Board but not representing the Society or having a vote;
- the League AGM is coming up and Paul will circulate dates and details to get our representatives agreed (4);
- the Club AGM is due soon dates again tbc;

- the Rec. Grd. Trust are briefed and planning works for the continued work on the pitch with the delay to 3G;
- the Community Dir. role is not getting the focus it used to and should because of the sheer workload Jane has (leading on our Communications and also th Women's teams). Sally will again have a chat with Jane to see how she can help support/lead more;
- we still lack consistent HR support and Nick spoke to Bath Spa Uni. on this recently and will follow up, they think they might be able to help us;
- ii) A brief discussion was had about the need to find and re-kindle the old succession planning document as we clearly need to have stronger plans in place (there was a previous Society document).
- iii) the elections (26 June) will close for candidates at the end of April. Those up for election are the Chair, Ops. Dir. And Mktg. Dir. Caroline will stand for the Mktg. Dir. Role but we currently do not have strong candidates for the other roles.

3. Finance

- i) as above, the plan is to get more support for Paul/finance (via Al/Debbie initially) to get better monthly reports and visibility of our finances;
- ii) revenue/income - CURO have extended by a year and are happy to make it 2 years. Bath Spa Uni. have signed their deal and we will chase for initial payment. St Austell have renewed their deal with us and it now includes a back of short sponsorship. There was subsequent discussion about not being able to sell alcohol in the same way/volume if we get promoted!
- iii) Andrew asked how we keep the ex shirt sponsors draw participants engaged/contributing to the Club now that we have (confidentially) and main shirt sponsor for the first time. Gareth has set up a call to brainstorm/generate ideas for this. A digital scoreboard has been discussed, but the need for planning permission may scupper this due to the impact on timing;

4. AOB

- Nick suggested a bbq for volunteers in the summer as a thank you.

5. BCFC Board only - Actions from last Board & Board Minutes

Actions:

- i) we now need to push on with re-signing players as agreed previously
- ii) Jerry's contract has been signed and will be announced shortly
- iii) James to follow up on Women's SLO
- iv) Nic to follow up with Stride Treglown ref "free" architectural help
- v) Joy "managing" CIL funding to try and keep until 3G delivered

Proposer Andrew, seconded by John

New AOB:

- i) Quentin's replacement - we have 2 candidates but due to personal reasons the initial meetings had to be re-arranged. And we also need a suitable "thank you"/send off for Q;
- ii) Pre-season friendlies with Bristol Rovers, Cheltenham and Bristol City U21s are pencilled in.

6. Date of next Board meetings 13 May, 17 Jun