



## Bath City Board Meeting

1900 Monday 18 Mar 2024

Hybrid

**Attendees:** Nick Blofeld (Chair), James Carlin, Andrew Pierce, Paul Williams, John Reynolds, Chris Coles, Pete McCormack, Jane Jones, Gareth Cooper, Caroline White, Shane Morgan

Apologies: None

### 1. Jerry's update/Men's Football

Jerry gave an update on the current injury situation, loan moves and talked through the likely timings and priorities for contact discussions/extensions. 5 players are already on contracts for next season, although 2 of those may need discussions over the summer as their performance is not where it needs to be.

There was a discussion about what we would need to spend/change to compete at National League level if we were to be promoted. In overview it would probably require 2 more strikers, another midfielder and more depth in the squad overall. It is difficult to put an accurate number on the budget increase.

Also raised was if have anything specifically in the players contracts for promotion, which we do not, rather a loose phrase about a "review" of the contract. It was agreed the staff also need simple contracts, especially the younger ones.

Having pushed to get Jerry's situation agreed it is now important to crack on with re/signing players and announcing them to help with Season Ticket (ST) sales and also to keep the bulk of the squad together as they are a strong group, playing well and with a good "bond."

There was a discussion about salary "bands" for players and certain positions, and a general view that more clarity on the structure and thinking on the players budget/strategy is needed for the Board. After Jerry left the meeting it was agreed Paul would draft something to share, and it was also asked if/how we could benchmark against other Club's budgets, for players and management, which is always a bit tricky.

When 3G is delivered it will change the training pattern and allow more flexibility, a "hybrid" set up with different players training at different times.

In future there will be written short update from Jerry each month, with content to be agreed.

**Action:** Paul/Jerry to push on with player signings and announcements asap; Paul to draft topline playing budget/strategy paper; Nick/Paul to brief Jerry on monthly report content; Jerry's contract proposal to be agreed asap (Nick/Paul/Andrew).

## **2. Redevelopment and 3G**

2.1 **3G** – we are waiting for the application feedback/success, and are likely to hear in late March. We have a CIC board of 4 now - Peter Headington, Matt Crisp, Nick Blofeld and Anna Porter. We still have to sort the lease between the 2 companies and are awaiting the outcome of the application to finalise the commercial arrangement between the CIC and Club.

We still have to agree the infill for the surface, and get the council's sign off, Bioflex remains the front runner. Stride Treglown met us to discuss helping with some simple additional facilities for new guests (eg toilets/café/storage) and will come back with some ideas - either pro bono or at "very special" rates!

Post Board Paul also met with some floodlights suppliers and had some feedback from Strides about the need for a planning application when we change the floodlights/pylons.

**Action:** 3G WG to still finalise the exact increased cost of Bioflex versus rubber crumb; check maintenance regime is the same and (Joy?) see if we can get more CIL funding due to the extra drainage costs the council/Wessex Water have requested.

### **2.2 Redevelopment**

A meeting is set up for 25 Mar with Council CEO, Council (Lib Dem) Leader (Kevin Guy), Rengen and club representatives (Chris, Nick and Joy Saunders) to discuss how we can move things forward and potentially remove the PBSA restriction on Twerton Park.

Paul, Andrew and Nick met Steve George, a key urban planner in the council, to discuss our issues and how they might be able to help. It was useful but not that positive about overcoming the SB14 restriction. He did flag the opportunity to feedback on the Local Plan, and the Board agreed we should give feedback and potentially encourage our supporters to do the same. Nick will ask Strides for advice on the type/scope of such feedback, and Jane offered to help draft something.

**Action:** Nick to speak to Strides and discuss with Jane ahead of 8 April deadline.

## **3. Finance update**

The next pinchpoint for cashflow is 5 April. However, STs are now on sale and £5k is already "in." STs are being promoted at the same price as last year for renewal as an "Early Bird" offer for 2024/25 and the deadline was extended to cover pay day for many, after some supporters' feedback.

Torquay tickets are now also on sale. Paul and Gareth will have a call asap to discuss timing of commercial and sponsorship income to manage our cashflow to minimise any risk.

The majority lenders on the Board had had a call and discussed and agreed they were willing to extend their loans (which is 70% of the total) for a "reasonable length of time" and wanted to see the outcome of the Workshop and next steps from that before finalising the new date.

The communications to the balance of lenders was discussed, as it is getting very last minute, the loans are currently due for repayment in May 2024, and for those not close to the Club they have had no recent update. It was felt there is nothing we could really add at this stage, despite it being last minute. The lenders were keen to understand what comes out of the Workshop next week in terms of actions to find other investors, especially if the current Rengen project doesn't progress.

John Reynolds agreed to also extend his loan in the meeting. Paul will share the breakdown in the coming days.

**Action:** Paul and Gareth to call and discuss timings of sponsorship payments to manage the cashflow through the critical early April period, Paul to flag any outstanding issues so we can respond in time with any temporary loans/cover needed. Paul will also share the loans schedule (this is highly confidential).

#### **4. Football update**

##### **4.1 Women's update**

Both Women's Teams have now played their last games at Twerton. It looks like the 1<sup>st</sup> Team will finish third in the league, which is good, as they didn't want to get promoted again this year, but will push for it next season. The structure around the team needs enhancing a little with the right support for Matt.

The Development Team will also aim for promotion next season and also need some better training support.

Caroline and Jane had managed to meet with Wealthtime, who have been very busy re-branding etc, but remain very supportive. There is a view that we should charge for attendance (£3-5?) next season, as per many other clubs.

There was a discussion about a stronger F&B offer at Women's games, although we do make money from the current set up (T R Hayes), and any other units opened would incur staffing costs and are, therefore, unlikely to make a profit. We also think we should consider a Women's SLO.

**Actions:** James to look into a Women's SLO.

#### **5. Key SAG plans/actions**

The Sara Chivers meeting was postponed ref the grandstand, barriers etc (with Shane and Accolade).

We will need extra stewards for the Torquay game, Shane is sourcing these. He is also meeting ref the external fire risk assessor this week.

The scaffolding issue in the alleyway was resolved by James calling them after a conversation with John.

#### **6. 2000BC, Commercial, Community and WG updates**

A brief discussion over hoarding pricing was had, which clarified the different prices are due to the different sizes. Lena is going to start renewing these shortly.

Ruben is looking at a prize draw to fund a digital scoreboard in the ground. It was clarified that the best contact for The Roper Foundation was James, and they may be interested in repeating their support if we have given away the agreed tickets to schools.

We still have a back of shirt sponsorship to sell, and timing is getting urgent on this, to allow us to produce the new shirt.

#### **7. Society & Supporter update**

The AGM is 26 June. There are 3 vacancies currently, Mktg. Dir. (Caroline to be officially voted in), Ops. Dir. and Chair – as both Nick and Shane need to step down as they have completed their 2 terms. Nominations are needed by 1 May.

Pete accepted we may not get the right calibre of people applying, if that is the case there then the Society can use the “exceptional circumstances” clause and extend terms to allow time to find strong candidates and for an orderly handover and sharing of information with the incoming holders of the roles.

Nick made the point he thinks the Workshop and other activity over the summer could well “flush out” renewed interest in the Club through better awareness and knowledge more people happy to get involved in what we are doing.

Please note the next Board is shared meeting with the Society Cttee. and any agenda items are most welcome.

James again raised the point about trying to improve the F&B offer and reducing queues for supporters. Jane, Shane, Andrew and James agreed to re-look at something on the Grandstand side for 2024/25. The accessibility issue was also flagged.

James thanked the team for extending the “early bird” ST deal deadline. He is still keen to sort the location for the Lecce artwork, which he can do with the team on site. There are some simple fixes still needed for lighting problems, and he was asked to crack on and keep us in the loop as the costs will be very low, and to pick up on the drainage issue with Shane.

**8. Minutes:** Proposer Andrew and seconded by John.

#### **9. Actions from last Board & Board Minutes**

1. John to review how to extend the window in Roman’s Bar.

#### **10. AOB**

1. It was agreed we need to advertise for Quentin’s replacement asap, and also the need for a suitable send off and thank you for Q.
2. Also agreed was the need to review the structure of the Club Management, as per Jon and Jane’s draft last year. We clearly miss the roles played by Jon Bickley and Carole, and also Bob in his hospitality role, and clearly need to have the right structure for the future, especially with 3G coming. This may well be a Stadium Manager/Director type role. It was again raised that fortnightly management meetings would help with our planning/comms, and Cheryl had agreed to take notes and share these. A small sub group will work up a proposal to bring to the Board (Nick, Jane, Paul & Andrew)
3. Andrew highlighted we are £42k up on last season’s gate receipts already!
4. Larkhall have approached us about a possible ground share if their 3G plans go ahead. There are rumours they have the funding. We agreed to look at this on a commercial basis, and did explain that we may also be laying a 3G pitch!
5. Concern was raised about some young children (c11) running around and unaccompanied. Some were apparently seen climbing a fence/wall to get in. Generally, some children are not being overseen by parents/guardians and an accident may follow. We all need to speak to those involved if we see it and can also spot the adults, with a steward ideally.

**Date of next meetings – 15 April (joint with Society Cttee.), 13 May & 17 June**