

Minutes of the HUST Board Meeting

27th October 2016



Present:

Board Members: Richard Tomkins, Tristan Edwards, Mike Langford, Russell Cheasley and Andy Carr.

Non-voting attendees:

Prospective Independent Secretary: David Evans, Prospective Assistant Press Officer: Keith Hall

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Craig Goodall, Frank Williams and Peter Davies.

2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last board meeting, held on 29th September 2016, were reviewed and unanimously approved.

3. Election of Chairman

Richard Tomkins was praised for his work as HUST Chairman since his appointment in February 2016. Tristan Edwards proposed that he retain the position, Andy Carr seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

4. Appointment of Vice-Chair

The Chairman recognised that Craig Goodall and Russell Cheasley had done excellent work in the areas of governance and community liaison respectively since their appointments, and proposed that they continue in their roles. The re-appointment of Russell Cheasley was seconded by Andy Carr and unanimously passed. The re-appointment of Craig Goodall was seconded by Tristan Edwards and unanimously passed.

5. Appointment of Treasurer

Mike Langford confirmed that he intended to stand down from the position but would continue in the role until a suitable replacement could be found and a smooth handover ensured. The chairman recorded his thanks to Mike for his efforts and sterling work in bringing the Trust's position up to scratch since taking over. It was noted that with the proposed change in accountant that a new registered address would need to be used, with the Chairman and Russell Cheasley to investigate possible options.

Actions RT, RC, ML

6. Appointments to Non-Board Roles

The Chairman thanked David Evans for his work during his unofficial 'trial period' as independent secretary, and proposed that he now be officially appointed to the role. This motion was seconded by Tristan Edwards and unanimously passed.

The work of Peter Davies in the role of Membership Secretary was also praised by the Chairman, who noted that Peter's invaluable contribution had been one of the main reasons for increases

in Trust membership in recent months. It was proposed by the Chairman that Peter be re-appointed to the role, Andy Carr seconded, and the motion was unanimously passed.

The Chairman noted that Frank Williams had taken the decision to stand down from his board role at the AGM but wished to continue in his role as Press Officer, and proposed that this motion be accepted by the board. Tristan Edwards seconded and the vote was passed.

Keith Hall was formally welcomed to the meeting by the Chairman, and it was proposed that he take up the role of Assistant Press Officer, to provide backup to Frank Williams and with the opportunity to work closer with Radio Hereford FC and possible joint ventures. Keith Hall thanked the chairman and stated that he had a lot of ideas to discuss, which he would raise later on in the meeting. The Chairman proposed that Keith take up the role of Assistant Press Officer, Andy Carr seconded, and the motion was unanimously passed.

7. Consideration of Appointing Co-Opted Members and External Directors

The Chairman stated that he had been in correspondence with Tony Taylor, who had suggested at the AGM that he would be interested in being co-opted to the HUST board and had since followed up his interest via email. Mr. Taylor would be providing a brief statement about himself and a CV, which the Chairman would circulate among board members so that a vote could be taken via email on a proposed co-option to the board.

It was noted at this juncture that, with positions on the board currently vacant, Peter Davies may be interested in being co-opted as a board member, as he had previously put himself forward for election prior to the February 2016 election but subsequently withdrawn to save the Trust money when it became apparent that there were 10 candidates for 9 roles which would result in a postal vote being carried out. The Chairman stated that he would discuss the situation with Peter and determine whether he wished to be considered or was happy to stay in his current role.

It was also noted that Joanie Roberts had expressed an interest in becoming co-opted to the board, but could not commit currently due to work commitments. The Chairman stated that he would keep communications with Joanie open and this suggestion could be reviewed in the future.

Actions RT

8. AGM Review

It was agreed that the AGM had generally been a success, although there were some points to consider. Russell Cheasley commented that an earlier start may be needed in future, as members were still arriving and registering when the meeting itself was due to formally commence. It was agreed that a longer registration period should be considered for future AGMs.

The Chairman suggested that although Radfords had been acceptable as a venue, he felt that the Starlite Rooms was generally a more satisfactory venue and that it was a shame it was not available on this occasion.

Keith Hall mentioned that for future AGMs and other events, he would be prepared to provide sound equipment such as microphones and PA if required.

The Chairman asked what lessons could be learned from the failure to inform a section of the membership of the AGM details via email. Andy Carr explained that the membership system inherited by the current board had member details held separately from the mailing list, which meant that some manual entry of email addresses was necessary so that members who had consented to email communication could be contacted. The board had run a mailshot campaign to encourage members to consent to email communication in order to save the Trust on postage costs, which had resulted in hundreds of members agreeing to do so, but in compiling the final mailing list for AGM notices, a group of members who had previously consented to email communication had been missed off.

It was suggested that an integrated system should be investigated, which would hold all member details centrally and manage any such mailshots automatically, so as to eliminate the possibility of human error in future. David Evans volunteered to investigate possible software packages and report back to the board. Russell Cheasley noted that HUST can now apply for certain grants for supporter groups, as Hereford FC is now at a high enough level within the football pyramid for HUST to qualify.

Mike Langford felt that further lessons in preparedness could be learned, and stated that members had complained to him that the advance documents issued prior to the AGM for member consideration had not given members enough time to fully avail themselves of the information provided. Bulls News in particular had felt very strongly about this and had questioned whether the timing was deliberate. The Chairman noted the comments and stated that the HUST board would need to be better prepared in future.

Actions: All

9. HFC Fan Elected Director Policy

It was noted that this policy, first proposed at the AGM, was still within a 14-day fan consultation period, after which the HUST board would liaise with HFC over the outstanding items to be agreed. Keith Hall stated that he felt HUST directors should not have a specific role on the HFC board, as it may restrict the number of potential candidates. The Chairman noted that this was a point to be discussed further with HFC. Tristan Edwards commented that he did not feel that membership of the Vice Presidents Club should be a prerequisite for HFC board membership (as is currently the case), as a fan-elected director (FED) may already be a season ticket holder on the Meadow End, for example, or may not wish to join the VP Club as it could be quite costly. Mike Langford stated that this was agreed by the HFC Board from the outset as all directors were expected to sit in the Directors seating as a sign of togetherness and to ensure no-one was perceived to be getting free admission

10. Fundraising

Russell Cheasley has been discussing the possibility of a HUST-branded beer with Paul Stevens of KelPaul Brewing Co., who currently supply similar products to Westfields and Pegasus. It was felt that this could be a good source of income for the Trust, with a profit on each unit sold of around £2.10, based on a 330ml bottle. Options for selling such a beer and possible outlets to be investigated further, but it was felt unanimously that this could be a good fundraising opportunity.

Tristan Edwards read an email from Craig Goodall which had been circulated before the meeting, revisiting some fundraising ideas which had been discussed at previous meetings. Suggestions included a formal 're-launch' of HUST to introduce the current board to members and generate interest in the Trust's activities, and an event to mark the 45th anniversary of the HUFC v Newcastle United game. The related idea of having 'Legends' nights at Edgar Street was mentioned, and Mike Langford noted that HFC had already adopted this idea and that Ken Mallender and Dudley Tyler would be speaking prior to the forthcoming Larkhall Athletic game, as one of a number of such events planned for Tuesday night games.

Tristan Edwards confirmed that a fundraising sub-committee had been formed and had met recently, with ideas for the proposed revamp of the Prize Bull Lottery discussed. Keith Hall mentioned that Swindon Supermarine run a prediction game (similar to the Sky Sports 'Super 6' competition) which seemed to be popular and could be worth looking into. This suggestion was taken on board and Tristan noted that the sub-committee would be meeting again soon so he would raise the idea at that point. The Chairman added that Junior Bulls had confirmed that they did not wish to take part in any joint venture revamp of the Prize Bull, but that UITC were very much in favour.

Keith Hall stated that he has attempted to obtain costs for use of function rooms at Edgar Street but not received any response to date, and that ballpark figures were needed before any planning of events could take place. The Chairman commented that he would seek comparable costs from the Richmond Club as a possible alternative. Russell Cheasley has investigate the hire of council-owned venues for potential events and found them to be very competitive. Keith Hall offered to organise and run regular sporting quizzes as a means of fundraising, and also mentioned that the 'Tommy Cooper Appreciation Society' had been in touch and offered to bring an event to Hereford.

Finally, Keith Hall posed the question of whether HUST would consider running a supporters' away travel service. Keith felt that this came under HUST's remit of 'supporting the fans' according to the Trust's own aims and objectives. The Chairman commented that in his previous experience as chair of HUISA, away travel was not a great 'money-spinner' and that quite often losses could outweigh the gains. Keith mentioned that it had been suggested that HFC would be prepared to support the service with use of its online ticketing system, which would minimise any potential losses by taking money upfront. The board agreed that this would make the suggestion much more feasible and that it is something to be investigated for next season.

Actions RT, RC, TE

11. Feedback from HFC

Mike Langford reported back to the board from the most recent HFC Board Meeting. It had been dominated by the resignation of Jon Hale, which Mike felt was a great shame.

There is a growing feeling that UITC should come formally under the HFC banner and talks are ongoing as to how this can be achieved. Hopes are high that a fruitful outcome can be reached, given the success of the player pathway to date.

The HFC accounts for the financial year ending 31st May 2016 are being approved. Final figures would not be released until the AGM but were very positive. There are big plans ahead on the

built environment front and a 10-year extension to the lease on Edgar Street will hopefully be confirmed shortly. Keith Hall questioned whether the ACV on the stadium was still in place, David Evans said he believed it is to be renewed in 2018 and the board noted that this was to be confirmed.

The club's AGM is to be held on 14th December 2016 and HUST will be represented, although the Chairman confirmed he will not be available on that date.

12. Treasurer's Report

The total balance of the HUST account is £14,762.67, with £5965.68 held in Paypal and £8796.99 in the Co-operative Bank.

£225 winnings from the 50/50 draw have yet to be claimed. £3000 is pencilled in for the audit of accounts agreed at the AGM, and £1000 is held back for the Prize Bull fund, so an updated balance after taking these items into account would be £10,537.67.

There is a possibility that the Trust will change to a different bank as the Co-operative Bank are closing their Hereford branch at the end of November, and although payments can be made via the Post Office, this may attract a charge or handling fee. This is to be investigated further.

Action ML

13. Audit

Mike Langford will contact Kevin Tong regarding the proposed audit. Keith Hall asked why this financial year's figures are have to be audited when previous years have not. David Evans noted that the Trust was in breach of its own constitution should it not undertake an audit, and that the FCA could potentially ask for the last 3 years' accounts to be audited should they so wish. Russell Cheasley added that the Trust wished to echo the football club's aim of transparency.

Action ML

14. Approval of Board Membership & Conduct Policy.

Policy wording proposed by Richard Tomkins, seconded by Russell Cheasley and unanimously approved.

15. Approval of Board Meeting Standing Orders.

Policy wording proposed by Richard Tomkins, seconded by Russell Cheasley and unanimously approved.

16. AOB

Keith Hall proposed that Radio Hereford FC run promotional material for HUST as the station is on air 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, and there is always someone listening. A Friday-night pre-match discussion programme is planned in conjunction with HFC and HUST would be invited to contribute. There is plenty of scope for collaboration between RHFC and HUST such as live broadcasts from Fans Forums or other events. The Chairman thanked Keith for his input and for the opportunities suggested, and stated that the board would be happy to take him up on his offer.

The Chairman stated that he felt the board members should revisit the statements they made in seeking election to the HUST Board and ask themselves how much they had achieved to date.

Continual improvement is to be sought, and feedback from members, although generally positive, is that there is still improvement to be made and people always want to know 'what's next?'

The Chairman had emailed both Taunton Town and Westfields to wish them the best of luck in their forthcoming FA Cup games this weekend.

The Chairman is to attend a 'Built Environment' meeting at Edgar Street on 3rd November and it had been suggested that HUST could seek out members with construction expertise to become involved in any future works to be undertaken. More would be known after this meeting and the Chairman will report back.

Finally, Keith Hall confirmed that Talking Bull would be making a £500 donation to HUST from the proceeds of fanzine sales, with a further £500 going to Hereford FC. The money donated to HUST is to be used for share purchase.

Action: all

Date of next meeting proposed as Thursday 24th November.

The Chairman thanked all those in attendance for their time and the meeting closed at 9.45pm.