

Torquay United Supporters Trust
Special General Meeting
29th. September 2007

Present: Trust Board Members:
Chris Fleet (CF) (Chairman)
Hayden Jones
John Mowl (JM)
Laurie Noble (LN)
Andrew Fiderkiewicz (AF)
Phil Smith (PS)
Jon Gibbes (JG)
Jon Lear (JL)
Simon Cavanna (SC)
Maria Lunn (ML)

Approximately 60 Trust members were also in attendance
David Treharne of Exeter City Supporters' Trust was in attendance as
an independent observer.

Apologies: No apologies were received

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks

CF opened the meeting at 17.45 and welcomed all members to the Special General Meeting. He explained that as it was the first General Meeting it was not an "Annual General Meeting" and he welcomed Dr David Treharne from Exeter City's Trust and thanked him for attending..

He explained the agenda and said that there would be an open forum under the item Any Other Business, at the end of the meeting, for general discussion with questions and points to be raised from the floor as appropriate.

2. Chairman's Report

CF reported on the growth of TUST from it's beginnings in the dark days of the previous winter. He commented on the number of different Club chairmen that he had had to deal with until the current consortium had taken over.

Relationships with the Club have improved considerably but the Trust Board has always had to be mindful of its independent stance in representing the views of the membership.

CF outlined the various projects that TUST had contributed to in support of the Club. These had already included financial support for a sports psychologist, funding for an away game at Swindon and administering and holding a bucket collection at the Hereford home match at the end of the last season. This latter, together with top up funding from TUST, had raised the sum of £700 for a set of goal posts for the Club under their Youth Development Policy.

If this was not enough, TUST had contributed a significant amount of hours worth of labour during the summer when the ground was spruced up by volunteers. If this had been charged at prevailing labour rates then the Club would have had to pay out a significant sum.

CF outlined ideas for further support for the Club and stated that he wished to test the opinions of the members later in the meeting.

CF finished his report by paying tribute to the hard work of volunteer members of the TUST and to the members of the TUST Board who had shared the administrative workload with him in bringing the TUST thus far.

3. Membership Report

LN, as membership secretary, gave a brief outline of the number of members on record at the time of the meeting (over 400). He explained that a number had been transferred from the old Supporters' club and that, as a result of various initiatives such as leafleting and mailshots, the numbers had continued to grow regularly from the small beginnings back in the winter.

A data base of member skills and contact details etc. was being built from enrolment data and this had already proved useful.

4. Finance Report

CF reported on the financial position of the TUST.

Membership income since the start of TUST had been some £4,900 and after allowing for project costs the current balance was some £4,000 (Phil how much did we have nett in Sept?).

This had been a magnificent initial response but now was the time to move on and start to ask existing members to set up standing orders to create a regular income to spend on projects. Members had been sent a blank standing order form with their SGM papers and it was hope that this would become a regular source of income as the TUST moved forward.

5. Election of New Board

CF explained that, due to a low number of nominations, there was no need for a formal vote and that four members of the existing Board had been re-elected.

These were:

Andrew Fiderkiewicz
Chris Fleet
Hayden Jones
John Mowl

While expressing concern at the lack of nominations, he reassured members that TUST Board had the power to co-opt members (as it had done in the first period of its existence) to undertake the various roles. This would be done as and when appropriate.

CF thanked the retiring Board members for their hard work.

6. Any Other Business

SC briefed members about his and HJ's attendance at a joint meeting of Trusts at Bristol Rovers at the end of the previous season. He stated that a number of different clubs had been represented and that from it had come a number of ideas for future developments and just as importantly a number of different contacts had been established. One other outcome was that they had discovered that our trust is very well supported by members as a percentage of the average home attendance (in fact, it is actually bigger than the Bristol City Trust).

HJ spoke about various marketing initiatives which had been undertaken. These included press releases, photo shoots (for which Phil Smith was thanked) and more recently, the introduction of posters advertising forthcoming matches. This had been achieved by him striking a deal with a local printer and he showed off the latest full colour poster print. He asked members if they could help in setting up a distribution network and stated that he would collect names after the meeting.

AF spoke in thanks to the various members of TUST who had readily volunteered to leaflet at matches and who had also helped with the first match day collection. He said that without their help TUST would not be in the strong position that it now was. He also asked members to consider volunteering for the Board as the same faces could not be called upon all of the time and new blood and ideas were needed.

CF then opened up the meeting to the members to ask for their opinions and ideas on how the Trust should move to its next phase in support of the Club in the local community. A number of questions were raised and discussed on a variety of subjects such as stewarding, support for loan player wages, a junior members group, Trust involvement in the wider local community etc.

CF asked members to specifically recommend the project that they thought would be of the most benefit in the medium term future and there was overwhelming support for the idea of a dedicated area for disabled fans to be paid for by TUST.

CF then thanked everybody for attending and stated that hot food was provided for attendees immediately after the meeting. The meeting closed at 19.00.