



**Bath City FC Supporters Society  
Interim General Meeting  
7pm on Monday 21 November 2016  
Charlie's  
Twerton Park**

**Minutes**

The IGM was attended by 36 members, including members of the Society board.

Society Chair Martin Powell welcomed members and introduced the Society board members in attendance. He noted that David Nation, a loyal supporter of the club and a stalwart of the Society, sadly passed away two weeks ago.

**1. Apologies.**

Apologies received from Peter Metcalfe, Nick Francis, Andy Lewis, Peter Lewis, Peter Foster, David Pegler, Neil Hughes, Christine Freestone, Steve Tanner, Chris Cox, Susan Cox, Gill Rixson, Laurie Levy, Jonathan Blain.

**2. Minutes of the AGM on 23 June 2016 (MP)**

Shane Morgan proposed to approve last AGM's minutes, seconded by Colin Voutt. Passed unanimously.

**3. Election of Supporter Liaison Officer (JC).**

Martin Powell ceded the chair to Elections Officer James Carlin.

234 votes were cast. By agreement among the candidates, the final vote tallies were not made public at the IGM itself. The winner was Martin Powell, who is duly elected as Supporter Liaison Officer.

Following the IGM, it was determined that the vote tallies should be made public in accordance with the Elections Policy. The final tally was:

Jon Blain: 40  
Martin Powell: 125  
Phil Weaver: 66

Over 200 votes were made online. It was asked whether photos could have been included with the candidates' statements – all candidates had the opportunity to do this, but next time, the Elections Officer will flag this to the candidates.

Thanks were recorded to James Carlin and Elections Observer Paul Brotherton for running the election, and to the candidates for running.

**4. Community Ownership update (MP)**

Martin Powell resumed the chair.

The final community share offer total is now approximately £354,000, with seven potential investors still sorting out their payments or being chased.

The Big Bath City Bid and the Bath City Supporters Society are now effectively one and the same thing. The Supporters Society does not own the club yet - there is still a process to go through.

The Community Share Register has now been created by the Society Secretary, which means that the community shares have been officially issued by the Society. A physical copy of the Community Share Register will be created and held at Twerton Park. Printed share certificates (which are purely ceremonial) are behind schedule but will be ready for Christmas! We are working with the designer and the printer to find a cost-effective deal.

Lawyers (Royd Withy King on behalf of the existing majority shareholders, and Onside Law on behalf of the Society) are working on the loan and shareholders agreements. We hope that shareholders of the club will receive details of a forthcoming club EGM as soon as possible, as this work progresses.

A "shadow" meeting of the incoming board was held on 1 November. Cheryl Bradley, who has handled the finances and admin for the Bid, will become secretary of the new board.

This meeting identified the following priorities:

- Recruiting a General Manager. A job description has been agreed and the post will be advertised shortly
- Creating volunteer working groups, to share the burden with our excellent existing volunteer force – this will happen once the incoming board is in place
- Consulting with supporters, members and the local community on the partial redevelopment of Twerton Park. The board formed a working group / sub-committee to focus on the redevelopment. We need to take time over this to get it right.
- Appoint a Volunteer and Partnerships Co-ordinator

Regarding communications, there is the possibility of a new club website, in consultation with the current webmaster and the 1000BC promotions group. The Society website will stay active, while the Bid website will be archived. All parties will also look to streamline the various social media channels and email distribution lists. We will also ensure that offline members are kept up to date. In terms of media communication, Society member Steve Bradley is sharing news stories with the Chronicle, and contact is being kept up with the universities.

Incoming chair Nick Blofeld has met with people who work with the club in a paid or volunteer capacity, including the manager, to explain the process and reassure them about the transition.

Nick Blofeld has also met with the chair of the Bath City FC Community Sports Foundation to ensure that an even closer partnership with the charity can be built.

On the community front, Society member and incoming club board director Sally Harris is organising, along with local charity Time Bank Plus, a special screening of I, Daniel Blake, the Palme d'Or winning film directed by Society member Ken Loach. Ken will take part in a discussion after the film. The screening is intended to be family and community friendly, with the aim of engaging local people who perhaps have not engaged with Twerton Park before. Tickets are available from the club shop, from Time Bank Plus and Eventbrite (online), priced at £2, £10 and £20 (buyer's choice). Proceeds will go to Time Bank Plus and to fund equipment for future, similar events.

Finally, the Society board is making contact with other community-owned clubs with a view to meeting with them and learning from their experiences. Any members with contacts at such clubs are encouraged to share them with the Society board. It was confirmed that all such learnings would be captured on paper and shared among Society members.

Questions from the floor:

Q. Will the “shadow” board publish its minutes?

A. This will be brought up at its next meeting. There is a commitment to publishing club board meetings (with confidential items removed) once the new board is in place, but no such agreement has been made for the shadow board meetings during the transition period.

Q. The Bid prospectus asked for a minimum of £300,000 to buy new shares, with a group of supportive investors putting in £350,000, which would go towards buying c. £50K of existing shares and providing a £300K interest-free credit facility. Does the fact that the Bid raised over £350K change this arrangement at all?

A. No – the monies raised by the Bid above £300K will be loaned to the club. The first £300K will be used to buy 300,000 new shares in the club as planned.

## **5. Convening of the Constitutional and Democracy Working Group (OH)**

The Society Secretary explained that, during the Big Bath City Bid, we made a commitment to introduce more democracy to the Society and to Bath City FC – more opportunities for people to both give feedback and to receive feedback.

This was set out in a document on the Bid website, entitled Democracy, Accountability and Governance. Following the success of the Bid, the Society board adopted this as the Standing Order on Democracy and Accountability. This standing order is available on the Society website ([bathcitysociety.org](http://bathcitysociety.org)).

In drawing up this plan for greater democracy, however, we were aware of one major shortcoming. That is, the plan was being drawn up by those who are elected, not the membership at large. It seemed appropriate that new, expanded membership that would be created after a successful bid should be able to have their say in how democracy works within the Society, as soon as the Bid was successful.

Members were therefore invited to volunteer to create a members-led working group to assess the suitability of the current arrangements and develop any proposed changes for approval at the 2017 AGM in June.

No volunteer was found at the meeting. It was asked from the floor whether such a group would be solving a problem that does not exist. It was also suggested that the members' right to form such a group could be maintained as a sort of “open offer”. Finally, it was suggested that information gleaned from fact-finding missions to other community-owned clubs would provide useful insights to any future work on this subject.

It was recognised that the wider membership should be consulted. By consensus, it was agreed to communicate to the wider membership the mood of the meeting, and to extend an open invitation for members to form a democracy working group. No vote was taken.

## **6. AOB**

There were several questions about the timings involved in the planned redevelopment, during which some members expressed surprise and frustration at the inability of the Society board members present to give clear answers.

It was explained that, given that we are still only in the early weeks of the transition, only a small group of people has had sight of recent progress on the redevelopment. No details have been shared at a Society board level. This is, in part, why the “shadow” transition board created a subcommittee to focus on the redevelopment – to ensure that the Society is represented. Club chair Paul Williams is also on the subcommittee, ensuring the club’s existing shareholders are represented.

To help clear things up, Paul Williams made a short statement:

“The club has been looking at a proposal from a developer for some time. This developer has been speaking to local councillors and the planning department, among others, to determine what might be suitable at Twerton Park. The club has taken legal advice to ensure that any future proposal does what the football club needs it to do. As soon as we are in a position where the proposal is ready to be discussed with the club’s shareholders, a presentation will happen. At the same time, the incoming directors also need to look at what’s been worked on to date and give their input. A meeting is scheduled for early December, and we hope to be able to offer a clearer picture after this.”

Paul also confirmed that the club will have technical representation during the redevelopment process.

The meeting closed with two requests. Oliver Holtaway plans to step down as Society Secretary in the coming months, and members are encouraged to read the job description on the Society website ([bathcitysociety.org](http://bathcitysociety.org)) and consider stepping forward. Ideally, the Society Secretary will not be an elected Society board member, as part of the Secretary’s role is to defend the democratic interests of the membership at large, which can include acting as a “check and balance” to the elected board.

James Carlin, the Society’s membership liaison officer, would appreciate to hear how offline members receive information and hear about events, so that the Society can do a better job of communicating with members who do not use email.

**The meeting closed at 8.10pm.**