

Bath City Supporters Society

Interim General Meeting 10 December 2020 (via Zoom)

Present: 33 members

1. Welcome

Society Acting Interim Chair Emma Sparks welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Update on Football and Finance

Paul Williams, Club Director, reported that the club was going through a very challenging time financially due to the covid 19 pandemic. However a number of factors were helping keep the club running. These include supporters buying season tickets early, online merchandise, the play-off fundraising campaign, income from sponsors and financial support from the job retention scheme, the local authority hospitality grant, business rent and bank loan holidays. Since the season started there has also been funding from the national lottery and the Football Foundation. These have made a massive difference to the club and the position is reasonable. Details of the Sport England financial support are awaited. The club still has three members of staff on full or part furlough.

The team's position in the league reflects the unsettled period, with big changes to the team needing time to settle down, covid in the squad resulting in matches being cancelled and injuries to key players. It has been hard to maintain momentum but recent performances are much improved.

3. Football and Finance – Q&A

Q. Will there be spectators allowed at the home FA Trophy match on 15 December?

A. It looks unlikely, but there is hope that spectators will be allowed in for the next round (19 December) if the team gets through. Shane Morgan, Operations Director, reported that he'd submitted all relevant Covid information to BANES Council in September but it was only today that a meeting had been held and a site inspection is due to take place on Tuesday 15 December.

Q. Can members lobby BANES on the issue of allowing spectators?

A. At the moment this wouldn't be appropriate.

Q. What is the key issue affecting results on the pitch and can the Society help in any way?

A. PW felt that the squad is a good one but that it still needs time to gel. For example the usual three day training & bonding event at Bath University wasn't able to happen this year. The playing budget is the same as last season and there is good support from sports science at the University. Gerry Gill is very much trusted to handle the situation and would ask for help if he thought it was needed.

Emma thanked Paul and Shane for their sterling work in keeping the club running under very difficult circumstances.

4. Update from the Club Chair including redevelopment

Nick Blofeld reported that after the big disappointment of the Council Planning Committee's decision in the Spring a revised plan for Twerton Park has been drawn up. This is a slimmer version of the previous design. The covid pandemic has made the economic environment much more challenging and NB reported that one of the companies that Greenacre was using to run the project has gone into liquidation, which leaves the redevelopment in limbo at the moment. Paul Duffen, CEO of Greenacre, had attended the last Club Board meeting and had reiterated that Greenacre are still committed to the redevelopment and were seeking a new partner to support the project. NB and Jon Bickley are working on a public update on the situation. Some scenario planning (looking at other options if the plan doesn't come to fruition) is being carried out behind the scenes.

5. Update/redevelopment Q&A

Q: What is the scaled down version of the TP development?

A: NB stated that the revised scheme at present is slightly smaller than the previous version and that the revised grandstand which would still be a massive improvement on the current one, together with a smaller hub and commercial space. The ground would be compliant with National League requirements but would need further work to meet League Two requirements. Greenacre haven't shared their ideas for the rest of the site with the Club, but it is believed to include removing the basement floor accommodation and the top floor of the residential/student block. Further work is being carried out and the new partner will be involved in this. He felt that if we met the specific objections of the planners then we would be in a strong position for a successful outcome.

Q: Is the 3g pitch necessarily linked to the redevelopment or could it be installed as a separate project?

NB replied that it could potentially be a separate project but there strong reasons for carrying out this work at the same time.

Q. What are the debt implications of the smaller scheme?

A: NB reported that the position is unchanged – the club would still receive £1.5m from Greenacre upon agreement of the new planning application by the council. This is part of the agreement with Greenacre.

Q. Could you tell us more about the scenario planning?

A: NB did not feel able to give any further information.

Q: We need to discuss other options and, as the majority shareholder, engage in discussions about the plan. What do people think about this?

A: We have a development agreement with Greenacre but are looking at other options and other organisations have approached the club. There will be presentations and wider discussions in due course.

ES thanked Nick for his update.

6. Supporter Liaison Officer Election Result

Paul Brotherton, Election Officer, reported that a total of 214 votes had been cast out of an electorate of 472 members of the Supporters Society and Supporters Club (45% turnout). The result was:

Cheryl Bradley 136 votes

Michael Clayton	76 votes
Abstentions	<u>2</u>
	214

PB congratulated Cheryl on her election and gave commiserations to Michael. He thanked them both for standing and thanked all who voted.

MC thanked all who took part in the vote and wished Cheryl all the best in her role. She has his full support. CB thanked Michael for his comments and thanked all involved. She looked forward to working across the Club Board, Supporters Society and Supporters Club and building on the good work of Martin Powell.

ES thanked PB and Oliver Holtaway, Election Observer, for organising the election.

7. Any Other Business

Ken Loach referred to the 2016 Bath City Bid and its commitment to making sure that everyone could have their say and take part in key discussions about the future of the club. It's important that we hear and consider each other's opinions as well as ask questions. There needs to be a genuine exchange of views and more involvement of Society members in decisions on the long term future of the club. He appealed to members to express their opinions.

ES very much agreed that we need more open discussions, particularly about the redevelopment, and will encourage this through regular communications with members.

ES thanked everyone for taking part and closed the meeting.