



NUNEATON TOWN SUPPORTERS' CO-OPERATIVE

Meeting with Football Club, Liberty Way, 16th December, 2014, 7.35pm

Present: J. Skuce, M. Ball, P. Davis, D. Cook, M. Turner, J. Hobson, E. Stevens, A. Briggs, P. Barnes, D. Hall, C. Bird

Football Club: L. Thorn, G. Brown

Apologies: P. Burdett, H. Thompson

Football Club Board: Board consist of persons registered at Company House, Ian Neale resigned as CEO, but 50% owner of Football Club and Stadium, Tony Reeves not registered at Company House.

Financial Stability of Football Club: No overdraft at the Bank, no HMRC debts, just normal trading debts. Chairman said that the budget was set, before he became involved, on 1,000 gates. It is now falling well short of that, which means he's had to make up the shortfall, so that the club meets all its obligations, he's made a substantial financial loan to the club in the last month, and would continue to do so, because he had made that obligation and he would see it through. He had some hurdles to get over when he came to the club. The sacking of the previous manager had been a financial cost, and some of the players who had been signed on contracts (employees) were proving difficult to move on, some had gone.

Although money was very tight, highlighting the Grimsby Trophy game, which was a financial disaster for the club, coming out with very little once expenses had been taken out, when questioned about possible new players in January the chairman seemed positive, saying he believed we would stay in this league, which is what the manager also wants. He says the club will be OK, and realises fans follow a winning side.

No one, other than the two main directors, have come forward to put money into the football club, including those rumoured to be waiting in the wings. No one had come forward when they were offered the chance. The chairman thought these rumours only served to have an unsettling effect on the club, but slowly and surely this club would become a board-run club. One other associate director had contributed financially in that capacity. Two others had shown an interest.

When he came in, the deficit for the season was projected at £80,000, it is probably now somewhere in the region of £100,000. So that shortfall will have to be made up, at the same time, hopefully, giving the manager slightly increased resources. He will continue to back the manager, and he stated again that he believed we would get out of the present situation; fans should have no concerns this season. Every club in this league is running at a loss and it is extremely difficult to compete in this league on gates of 600/700.

He also admitted that the attraction to him, at the time, was the land asset. It was £500,000 in 2006/7, and that must have increased after having £1.5m spent on it.

Lee ended these questions by saying the club was financially no worse off now than when he joined, he had expected more support, and it was not forthcoming but he was here and he would remain committed to it.

Gemma Brown said it was a constant battle to raise funds through the commercial side, but some progress has been made with some small sponsorships and ground boards. Sponsorship in the Board Room has dropped off due to performances on the pitch.

Supporters' Director: Andy Briggs has agreed to take the position on behalf of the Co-operative. Lee Thorn said that there was no financial commitment on whoever took the position, other than clear and concise communication between the board and the fans of the club, and that the person attended Trust meetings and football club board meetings, there would be no director's privileges involved.

They hope to have board meetings every 6 weeks with an agenda, and also an agenda from the Trust, it was a role that both sides would have to grow into, but a very positive step all round. The club chairman said that they would try and keep things as transparent as possible, but there would be times when financial items would be discussed without the supporters' spokesman attending. The Trust had submitted a code of conduct to the football club, which they are happy with. Andy was welcomed on board.

Community outlook: The Co-operative chairman suggested that there was perhaps a lack of community involvement at the club. The Football Club chairman said he thought the Trust could be more involved with publicising the football club around the town, flyers posters etc. He used the schools as an example, saying this had to be in school time when most people had work commitments so it would fall on volunteers, who clubs like ours rely on, if people had to be paid that was money that could go to the manager to improve the first team squad to improve performances on the pitch which creates more people through the gate, into the board room etc.

It was suggested that the manager could be involved with the schools, but Lee Thorn pointed out that this week the club had lost two people, the football secretary and the kit man, so this would have to be covered by a full-time employee, the manager. The club have provided the manager with a flat to save travelling and he has been helping Gemma Brown on the commercial side at the club. The chairman described the manager as an honest and loyal guy. The club would appreciate any help on the community side.

Disabled facilities: The Football Club chairman said he could not commit funds towards a shelter for disabled supporters but had no objection to the Co-operative funding the project, pointing out that insurance would be needed for any ground donated by the football club for the shelter. Matters left that the Co-operative formulate a proposition and submit to the club.

Youth/U16s teams: Eddie Stevens, Chris Bird and Dave Cook asked the football club chairman what the club's plans were for the youth teams. Little communication had taken place between the youth set-up and the football club. The Football Club chairman said he appreciated that the youth teams were an asset to the club and did they realise that it probably cost the football club £500 to stage any game at Liberty Way, he pointed out that the Team Mini-Bus cost £3,000 to insure. He said he had no issue with setting up a U21 side, at the same time pointing out the costs involved, so long as it didn't impact on the first team budget, but it would have to be done together, involving the first time manager. The youth representatives pointed out that they have had no dialogue with Liam Daish at present, and would look forward to meeting him. The chairman pointed out that the contact with the youth set-up had been through the football secretary, now, not at the club. Any future contact should be with the chairman. Gemma Brown will co-ordinate a meeting to discuss further.

200 Club: Dave Hall pointed out it was run 2 years ago by the football club, and losing money. The Trust was invited to take it over by Ian Neale, which they did. Now, with contracted players leaving the club, membership had dropped by 4 or 5 and perhaps people working in the office could make up the shortfall. The chairman said he would look into it and Gemma said she would post it on the club's social media. The chairman said he appreciated Trust members asking for the 50/50 and Golden Goal tickets at the office on match days and doing the selling.

A.O.B.: Pete Davis asked if the Chairman should make himself more known to the fans. Lee pointed out that he felt he needed to stand with the away fans at Dover, so that if people needed to complain he was there. Pete invited him to come and sit in the stand and meet people, he said he would.

The chairman pointed out the off-field improvements that had taken place recently. In-house laundry, saving the club money. 4 floodlight bulbs at £500 each had been purchased and were waiting for fitting. Work had been done on the speakers around the ground and two new hand mics had been purchased. The electronic ticketing was starting to be implemented, providing the club with valuable information. The whole site would be re-roofed and cladding fitted to improve the port-a-cabins. Frost covers were onsite, but it was pointed out by members that they needed rolling on to piping for easy rolling out. Tony Reeves is doing a full risk assessment on the ground. The pitch would be verti-drained this week.

The Trust said they needed to ask the contractor to come in a have a look at the driveway potholes. The first fillings had remained in place but new ones opened up.

