



Stockport County Supporters' Trust

**Open "What's Next" Forum
3rd September 2009**



Stockport County Supporters' Trust Open Meeting 3rd September

AIM OF MEETING AND NOTES

To review what next steps should happen for the Trust and gauge level of interest going forward. This meeting was open and informal and the notes below are meant to provide an overview of the discussion but are not "word for word" detailed.

PRESENT FROM TRUST BOARD

David Hoyle, Adam Gazeley, Pauline Lawson, Martin White, Paul Kershaw

Introduction from David Hoyle

- Rough time in Administration and afterwards
- Trust Board as a collective all want out as soon as possible
- Keeping going until into calmer waters
- Then needs someone else to run it
- AGM will be in November
- Tonight's meeting in anticipation of November to figure out what to do next going forward; Do we want a Trust? What form would this take place as? We want you ideas...
- Jacqui Forster is here from Supporters Direct to assist
- Adam will run meeting tonight as newest Trust Board member that's "untainted" from experience of past/outgoing regime

Handover to Adam Gazeley

- Trust is basically back to square one
- Membership is falling and will continue to do so and will need to be addressed
- If it still is viewed as tainted then it can be wound up, and Trusts can be resurrected
- To wind the Trust up requires consent of 75% of the membership (all members by vote)
- Short term view is that it needs to run for another year even if in limited form
- We would need 4 elected members to keep it running for a year (rather than ten)

Open Session

Q: We need to know what the objective of the Trust is to be – what does the Trust now intend to do?

Summary of relevant rules remaining:

- b) to encourage the club to take proper account of the views and interests of its supporters, and of the community which it serves, in its decisions;
- c) to help raise the profile of the Club and encourage new support within the community;
- d) to obtain from the Club a commitment to provide facilities for the enjoyment of professional football within the Area;
- e) to strengthen the bonds between the Club and the community which it serves and to represent the interests of the community in the running of the Club;



f) to support and encourage the further development of the Club's School of Excellence and its promotion of and involvement in Football in the Community;

g) to benefit present and future members of the community served by the Club by promoting, encouraging and furthering the game of football as a recreational facility, sporting activity and focus for community involvement

h) to be an inclusive, democratic organisation that seeks to represent the views of all supporters of the Club through open, affordable membership, and consultation and liaison with all supporters and supporters' groups, regardless of whether they are members

Jacqui: Nearest Trust to our situation is Rushden & Diamonds, they were given ownership of the club but it was a difficult task – they have relinquished control and carved out new role since after time

Q: Is there a formal process to get the owners to listen to the Trust ?

Jacqui: There isn't one currently except to say we represent x% of the membership and keep plugging away

Q: What was the original purpose of the Trust?

Ian Watts: Stockport County gave the info from Supporters Direct to HISC – the key motivation was idea of having a legal identity for protection and to get campaigning or a person on the board – it ticked over with about 150 members for a few years until peaking at around 1,000 members around the time Kennedy was trying to sell the club

Graham Privett: It was also set up to make it more credible, and to exert authority on the Club and try and hold the Club accountable for their actions and ideally get a member of the Trust on the Club Board as a representative. Manstock County was the catalyst to organise - The idea for owners to talk via a single channel is appealing to owners, hopefully – and there is no point in having a Trust if it's not going to try and influence the Club

Open: We have three options – go forward / look to reinvigorate or lie low

Tony Gibbons: It would need complete rebrand with a clean sweep

Matt White: Feel falling into trap of setting the aims just need to engage with the fans need open mind to work out best way to further those aims.

Tony Gibbons: Can't name three things that fans could see the Trust do – e.g. cheap travel to the games

Open: Rebranding an option / fresh faces – aim to get all supporters groups together under one umbrella

Mike Davis: the one function we can do is to continue the dialog about thinking about what can be done and keep people coming forward to redevelop the Trust

Graham wants to see letter go out to the membership that gives positive upbeat message and that there is still a role and we spell out what the objectives are that the TB are duty bound to try – but if there isn't enough interest to get 4 people on the board then it should wind up

Jacqui: You can't mothball the Trust as the Annual Returns go in to the FSA and audited accounts but there may be a possibility that it can be changed with Trusts that turn over a lower amount (via Rule Amendment)

Tony Gibbons: The Trust needs to rebrand and restart from afresh with a clean sweep



Potentially new board could look to Co-opt people from HISC/PoW – all supporters groups

Go more grass roots – stuff that doesn't compete with other organisations (quiz nights/5 a side)

Debate ensues about if it's the current Tb's job to do that – general agreement it should be the next one that re-invents to give a completely fresh start and cut all links to past Board

SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

Letter going out to the Trust members that should say new ideas welcome and the new board will be fundamentally different to before – content to be finalised by working group and posted including announcement of the AGM

Supporters Direct are doing meetings Sheffield on 13th Sept and Manchester at end of November and will specifically run training for SCFC only to get new board members up to speed