



# ADVISORY BOARD

December 2023

# THIS MONTH'S MEETING

Date & Time: December 21<sup>st</sup> 2023, 3pm-5pm

## Attendees:

- Clem Morfuni– Chairman, STFC
- Anthony Hall – Chief Executive, STFC
- Henry Port– Media, STFC
- Mandie Coe – Head of STFC Women
- Jon Holloway - STFC Foundation
- David Coe – Sponsors Representative
- James Spencer – Trust STFC
- Christine Kyle – Official Supporters Club

## Agenda:

- Introduction and Welcome
- Review of Advisory Board Notes
- Swindon Town Women's Update
- Supporters Trust and OSC Updates
- Community Foundation & Sponsors Updates
- Supporters Q&A
- Review of new action Items for this month
- Close

## Apologies:

- Don Rogers

# MONTHLY FINANCIAL UPDATE

## **Fair Game / Club Financials**

Club has held a meeting with Fairgame for the first time on Wed 20<sup>th</sup> Dec which went well. They talked club financials and presenting this and how Fair Game could help here. It has been agreed that Fair Game will provide an independent assessment of the club's financials which we will use and publish on the club's website to provide gravitas and an independent view to fans on club's financial position.

As well as £250k earlier in the season, Clem has had to put in an extra £850k in the last 3 Months, this may not be the last cash injection required this season. The club is continually reviewing the cash position in line with the revenue streams that the club currently has, with a view to how these can be improved moving forward.

# GENERAL BUSINESS

Topic	Latest Update	New Actions noted from Meeting
Ticketing	<p>The Club is looking into the Matchday ticket price and agrees the £27 set for this season was too high, which we are currently reviewing alongside supporter groups and will be announced soon.</p> <p>There will be a consolidation of ticket categories as there are currently too many to manage and administer and it can be confusing.</p> <p>The Club is also looking at Season Ticket Costs – The Club is keen to keep prices for renewals at there or thereabouts of current cost this season. This to be also presented in Jan AB once decided exact details.</p> <p>All of the above will be discussed and agreed with Clem Morfuni &amp; Anthony Hall and presented at the January AB meeting for review by the supporter groups.</p> <p>The club is actively looking at clamping down on people using wrong tickets i.e at last game they found at least 20 people using children's tickets when they were adults etc.. it was suggested that potentially specific turnstiles could be used for Adults &amp; Children. To help resolve this issue.</p>	
Sales & Marketing	<p>The club is looking into all current commercial and sponsorship deals / agreements and is reviewing in readiness for next season.</p>	
PR & Social Media	<p>Fans Forum discussed and date of 30<sup>th</sup> January proposed</p> <p><b><u>Christmas Activities</u></b> Various events organised and attended by both players and management including first team management and staff members. All events were well received.</p>	

# THE COUNTY GROUND STADIUM

Topic	Latest Update	New Actions noted from Meeting
<p><b>The County Ground Stadium Custodians Ltd</b></p>	<p>Next meeting for the JV scheduled for the 5<sup>th</sup> January 2024, Actions from the meeting to be shared at the next AB.</p>	
<p><b>Stadium, Health &amp; Safety &amp; Maintenance</b></p>	<p>Don Rogers Roof – All of the roof bolts and roof panels have had their annual inspection, where all panels and fixings were all checked and remedial works that were required were completed. This again has had a cost impact to the club of £8,000.00.</p>	
<p><b>Sustainability</b></p>	<p>Cycle parking is being looked into by the Club and the supporter groups, main issue is where to put the cycle racks / enclosure and the security aspect.</p> <p>The club have engaged with <a href="#">Pledgeball</a> (tackling climate change through group based actions), and the following fixtures will be Pledgeball fixtures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men's - January 20 2024 - Tranmere Rovers</li> <li>• Men's - February 10 2024 - Salford City</li> <li>• Men's - March 2 2024 - Harrogate</li> <li>• Men's - March 16 2024 - Doncaster</li> <li>• Men's - April 27 2024 - Morecambe</li> <li>• Women's – February 11 2024 - Portishead Town</li> </ul>	

# LEGAL UPDATE

Topic	Latest Update	New Actions noted from Meeting
<p><b>Contracted Commitments</b> The club is continuing to look at several contracts signed in the past and checking whether they are enforceable and appropriate. Every effort will be made to fight these contractual claims where possible. Outstanding items include Centerplate, DPDS (legal costs), HMRC (historic issues with Covid claims), Energy Bill, historic lease and Mercedes issue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centerplate has taken over the Winding up petition, in respect of an old outstanding debt from outsourcing catering. Winding up petition was dismissed with Club putting what it feels due into a Solicitors account ahead of finalising this dispute. We have no further update on this issue and are waiting for further contact from centreplate legal representatives</li> </ul>	<p>No update, we are waiting for further instructions / information.</p>
<p><b>Car Hire</b> This is from the previous owner where the club has been left with a car hire agreement for a Mercedes that was found in Switzerland.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Club, despite fighting that the debt is not ours, has now been left with no option but to reach a settlement figure and settle this debt.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Lease Agreement</b> Previous owner allowed a lease agreement to be entered into without agreement on subletting of where the academy offices are now sited with a previous tenant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Club is now looking to settle this debt and costs.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Football Association Investigation</b> The Club has been charged with a breach of the FA's funding regulations relating to the previous owner and alleged funding relationships he had in place. The Club will defend its position and likely plead mitigation given that Clem had no knowledge of these arrangements, and the Club is now being run in an open, transparent and proper manner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Club has now made its submissions to the FA and awaits further dialogue from the FA. We understand other parties are looking to defer any hearing until after the Standing v Power case has been heard.</li> </ul>	<p>We have no update and await further information from the FA.</p>

# ACADEMY PLANS

This month's updates in **BOLD**

Topic	Latest Update	New Actions noted from Meeting
<p><b>Assess Academy Quality</b> A high-quality academy is essential for the future success of our club. It provides a cost-effective way to develop homegrown talent and builds a strong team foundation for long-term success.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Links being built with non-league teams from Hereford, Chippenham, Melksham, Wantage Town, Highworth Town, Harrow Borough, Northleigh and others to ensure Academy players get men's football experience.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First team appearances for Harry Gray, Fletcher Hubbard across the Football League and FA Cup.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Qualification to the 4th Round of FA Youth Cup, hosting Manchester United U18 at the County Ground, game to be played on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024 – tickets now available at £5.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The shooting nets have still not been completed at Beversbrook behind pitch 14.</li> <li>• Links between local non league clubs continue to be strong, with use of Melksham's pitches to host Floodlit Cup games.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Plans for Better Facilities</b> Improved facilities including training, equipment, coaching, and community outreach, can attract top talent, enhance player development, and build positive relationships.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working to ensure there are better facilities for the Academy on an ongoing basis.</li> <li>• Jamie Russell and Baillie Coupland visited Australia with Clem to look at setting up an STFC Academy in Australia with the benefits of an additional talent pipeline for STFC and generating revenue to support the club</li> <li>• Working with Royal Agricultural University as we seek better facilities for the Academy – exploring the use of buildings to host Education and other activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work is continuing with links in Australia, Sutherland Sharks visiting currently and will play against academy side.</li> <li>• Work to begin on buildings at the RAU to host education and social areas for academy players, staff and parents.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Safeguarding Update</b> Crucial activity as it protects player welfare, upholds the club's reputation, helps us meet legal obligations, promotes positive player development, fulfills the club's duty of care, and cultivates a positive team culture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 new concerns raised over the month</li> <li>• 1 player safety on public transport</li> <li>• 1 player injury</li> <li>• End of month will be the FA Play Safe Campaign (30th September/1st October)</li> <li>• All new policies now available on the Club Website</li> <li>• Safeguarding committee due to meet for the first time in October.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&amp;I)</b> ED&amp;I is essential in the academy as it promotes inclusivity, attracts talent, creates a positive team culture, provides education, fulfills social responsibility, ensures legal compliance, promotes fairness, and creates a level playing field.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Had meeting with the EFL to discuss ED&amp;I plan. Now need to review and update ED&amp;I plans</li> <li>• Hannah Peterkin from the club is our ED&amp;I representative.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>FA Cup Youth Cup</b></p>		

# SWINDON TOWN WOMEN

Topic	Latest Update	New Actions noted from Meeting
<p><b>Swindon Town WFC Integration</b> Integrating the women's football team into our football club promotes gender equality, increases visibility and profile of the club and women's football, creates a stronger club community, and leads to improvements in player development and recruitment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women qualified into the FA Cup First Round proper narrowly missing out to AFC Bournemouth.</li> <li>• Have qualified to quarter finals of Wilts FA league cup. Venue to be arranged.</li> <li>• Jonathan House appointed as First Team Assistant Manager.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Foundation Park and County Ground Fixtures</b> Playing in or near the stadium boosts prestige, attracts fans, increases revenue, and promotes equality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next games – 7<sup>th</sup> January.</li> <li>• Next planned home game at CG is in February next year. Plans are being made to make this a record breaking game in terms of attendance.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Office Space &amp; County Ground Facilities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to discuss plan for women's team for Tuesday night training when men's fixture is at CG.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Sponsorship Opportunities</b> Sponsorship can help to cover the costs of things like training facilities, equipment, travel, and accommodation. Additionally, it can help to provide the women's team with exposure and visibility, which can help to attract fans and grow the sport.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MC &amp; JW working with potential sponsors.</li> <li>• CK continuing to bring on new player sponsorships.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Long Term Strategy</b> Our long-term strategy can help to ensure that the team has the necessary resources and support to compete at the highest level, attract talented players, and build a fan base.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MC &amp; Tim Hall (Club Secretary) continue to attend online sessions to ensure that the women's club meet current criteria's set down by FAWNL and meet the new regulations going forward for clubs that have ambitions for Tier 3.</li> <li>• Media Team have significantly increased women's coverage on website, social media and in programme.</li> <li>• MC is arranging arrange another meeting with SH at FP to discuss our development team needs and creating a clear pathway to the first team going forward. We have C6 girls in side who have made first team appearances.</li> </ul>	









Topic	Latest Update	New Actions noted from Meeting
<p><b>The County Ground</b> The stadium purchase completed on 24 March 2023 and it's great that the club and supporters now own the County Ground, thanks to the generous legacy left by Nigel Eady. Supporters can play a part by purchasing a voting share for £19.69 a year <a href="http://www.votingshare.com">www.votingshare.com</a> <a href="http://www.truststfc.com">www.truststfc.com</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don Rogers Statue work completed and base on order, aiming for installation in March 24 but heavily dependent on planning approval which may push that date out. 3D scan of the statue has also been completed, this will enable merchandising opportunities in the future.</li> <li>• Landscaping tender process nearing completion, responses received as we look to create a fan zone area around the Statue. JV board meeting with planning consultants in December, to discuss options.</li> <li>• No further details on when new version of Wrenbridge report to be received.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JV Board meeting in Jan</li> </ul>
<p><b>Swindon Town Football Club Museum</b> A new charity dedicated to preserving the history and heritage of STFC. Our mission is simple: to create a space where fans and visitors can explore the rich history of STFC, from its early days to its most recent triumphs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of all missing programmes are being publicised online and many gaps have already been filled.</li> <li>• Dick Mattick gave a second tour of the ground. It was decided that numbers would be limited to 15 to allow a better experience for those attending.</li> <li>• A League Cup replica Trophy has been purchased to display.</li> <li>• Anthony Hall has kindly agreed to allow the trustees to use the Robins Suite to display artefacts and displays ref the 1969 League Cup, subject to prior approval of planned displays.</li> <li>• Hall of Fame boards are being updated from last entry in 1993. The Trustees have chosen the names, and the entries should be added in December.</li> <li>• Sponsoring the Players Centenary Plaque £420.00. The boards were not ready for the Aldershot game and the Trustees await confirmation to agree new unveiling date.</li> <li>• Ongoing: Stadium wide displays to be reviewed, costed and planned</li> <li>• Ongoing: 1969 Documentary to be progressed. Vic Morgan continues to create short videos which are available on the Museum web site.</li> <li>• The Swindon Advertiser Editor has agreed to allow Trustees access to all of its archives. He has also agreed to allow the Museum to display the Player of the Season Trophy which was first presented in the 1980's</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Environment &amp; Sustainability</b> Promoting social responsibility and sustainability in order to set an example for supporters and the wider community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Precious sustainability officer on the Trust board Chris VR has left the Trust board so activity currently paused while we recruit a new board member to own this area.</li> <li>• Currently Club are also without a Sustainability officer, and they are recruiting for this role also.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activity paused until new board member in place to own this functional area.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fan Engagement and PR</b> Encouraging supporters to participate actively and generate more noise in the stadium.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lots of activities for Christmas events now completed with lessons learnt for next year – we need to start planning for events in the spring/summertime to maximise the output here. This is a joint OSC/Trust initiative working with the club on.</li> <li>• Trust have now completed 2 meetings with the club on the club accounts which have been very positive, and an effective approach on this agreed. Club very accommodating on this and keen to ensure the output is both informative and what fans wants to see. Also James, Steve and Scott been working with Fair Game on how we can effectively present findings from the accounts review exercise to ensure all fans are clear on the output and can easily understand the details. We are using Fair Games experience working with other clubs like Exeter on this.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Other Items</b> Statue, NextGen, STFC Women, Diversity &amp; Inclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Diversity and Inclusion</b> – . The South African heritage day was great with involvement of ladies promoting football. Lots of information on STFC shared. There are great grassroots connections in Swindon and South Africa and over 1000 South African heritage peoples in the Swindon area contributing to the town.</li> </ul>	

# OFFICIAL SUPPORTERS CLUB



Topic	Latest Update	New Actions noted from Meeting
Live Event	<p>Our first live event of the season will team members from 1985/86 promotion winning season – 10 players and staff in attendance, over 200 tickets sold for the event. All money raised for Darby Rimmer Foundation Circa £3,000 (from tickets, merchandise, raffle and donations)</p> 	
Supporters Groups	<p>Sweden 10 supporters attended a recent game.</p> 	
Charity of the Season	<p>Darby Rimmer Foundation – we have raised £8642 to date– this is from our programme/book sales, remaining unclaimed match day draw monies from last season, our 85/86 live event and various raffles. We have also created some Darby Rimmer shirts (purple) pin badges to sell.</p>  	
General	<p>Continue to work with STWFC, we had a special Mother and Daughter On the Sofa on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023 Media – continue to support various initiatives such as My Swindon Journey, Christmas around the World Christmas –16<sup>th</sup> Barrow game support, OSC/Trust purchased Santa Hats to give away. Senior Supporters Lunch help &amp; Christmas Gifts for Hospital (our members donated gifts, we helped wrap them and also attended the visit to the hospital.</p>	

# COMMUNITY FOUNDATION & SPONSORS

Topic	Latest Update	New Actions noted from Meeting
<p><b>Community Foundation</b> The club's separate STFC Community Foundation (a registered charity) that does amazing work in our local community.</p>	<p>EFL Kids Cup – Primary School winning team – Covingham School We have been selected to host the EFL Regional Finals at Foundation Park on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January – EFL Girls Cup</li> <li>• Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March – EFL Kids Cup</li> </ul> <p>Christmas present donations for Ukrainian Refugees and Swindon Women's Aid were collected and wrapped, in partnership with Intel volunteers. Over 170 presents donated and were delivered on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December</p> <p>We attended the EFL National Conference on Wed 29<sup>th</sup> &amp; Thurs 30<sup>th</sup> November.</p> <p>Still Recruiting for new 'Football Fans in Training' – FREE 12-week Healthy Lifestyle course starting in January 2024.</p> <p><b>Recent Events</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dementia Friendly Memory Café – Thurs 14<sup>th</sup> Dec.</li> <li>• Christmas Drop &amp; Shop Holiday Camp – Wed 20<sup>th</sup> Dec.</li> <li>• Barnardo's Graduation Day – Thurs 14<sup>th</sup> Dec</li> <li>• Football Fans in Training Graduation – Sat 16<sup>th</sup> Dec</li> </ul> <p><b>Up and Coming Events</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dementia Friendly Memory Cafe –Thurs 18<sup>th</sup> Jan.</li> <li>• FFIT new course starting 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Jan.</li> <li>• C6 Football Education Trials – 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> Jan.</li> <li>• Hosting a FA Football Consultation on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> Jan – 6pm – 8pm at Foundation Park.</li> </ul>	

# SUPPORTERS Q&A

Question	Answer
<p><b>Sustainability</b></p> <p>My group of friends and I thought that we would ride our bikes to the Grimsby match instead of driving and found it a much better way to get to the CG without the hassle of parking. However, I thought I would ride down for the Exeter match to be told by security that there was nowhere secure to lock my bike and to leave it outside and hope for the best that its still there afterwards. This was despite the fact that the Town End was empty and could have been locked up there.</p> <p>So my question is, has the sustainable travel idea gone out of the window? Could the club provide a secure area while the match is on so we can continue to cycle to the match?</p> <p>Best wishes and keep up the good work</p> <p>3 similar questions as above on the same topic of providing cycle racks for fans to attend games/visit the CG using their bikes.</p> <p>Could the funds raised for the Sustainability Fund (Micheel Doughty event etc) be used to provide secure cycle parking ?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is money put aside for this and Anthony and Clem going to investigate, one option Clem said he would discuss with the JV was to put racks near statue area. Also see Sustainability section on Slide 5.</li> </ul>

# SUPPORTERS Q&A

Question	Answer
<p><b>Fan Behaviour – Continual Bad language – But no Action</b></p> <p>On 2 occasions recently I have felt the need to remonstrate with fans sitting nearby about their language. It must qualify this by saying it is by no means the first time that I have wanted to do this but I am not in the business of confronting other supporters, but the absence of sufficient action by the club is disappointing in this area.</p> <p><b>1<sup>st</sup> issue:</b> Against Sutton United I spoke to a man who was sitting behind me in a seat usually occupied by another season ticket holder. He was vociferous with his opinions and every other word was ‘F—k’ or ‘F—king’. When I asked him to stop using this language he response was “I thought you could say anything you like at a football match” My reply was that it was not acceptable to shout obscenities anywhere in a public place. That was the end of the conversation, and he went quiet after that.</p> <p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> Issue:</b> against Gillingham I had to move to a different row in the DR stand because I couldn’t get a ticket for my son who was visiting unless I bought different seats. There were 2 men sitting behind us who were using similar language to the man described above, but over a sustained period. When I spoke to them and asked them to stop using such language they were quite rude, although they did not swear at me. They seemed to be of a similar opinion to the man described above i.e. “It’s a football match we can say what we like” I pointed out to them that there were families with youngsters who I was sure did not want to hear this offensive language. I could also see that other fans were disapproving, and in particular those with children.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Cont.....</p>	<p><b>Club taking this very seriously and gaining support from supporters' groups to put in place relevant actions to address.</b></p> <p><b>Actions Agreed :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Club put announcements over tannoy about poor behaviour and implications of fans undertaking this</li> <li>• Signs in stands highlighting anti-social behaviors and how to report – this includes text number for immediate reporting, or emails for after matches. Supporters Groups to help with design etc.</li> <li>• Reminding stewards that if security required, they can call security to support mitigating issues of poor behavior at the CG.</li> </ul>

# SUPPORTERS Q&A

Question	Answer
<p>Given the fact that the EFL and individual clubs within it are committed to banning all forms of abuse, when is STFC going to take this issue more seriously? Stewards do nothing, and despite there being signs on the concourse saying that abusive chants etc will not be tolerated, they are in fact tolerated at every home game.</p> <p>I would suggest that as a minimum a message should be given over the Public Address System on match days. The message should make clear that use of offensive language and abuse of other supporters, officials and players will not be tolerated. This needs to be backed up by stewards who should be briefed to warn people that they will be ejected from the ground if they use offensive language.</p> <p>It is somewhat concerning that in 2023 we are still having to deal with behaviour which in this respect seems to have changed little since the 1970s and 1980s</p>	<p>See Response from previous question.</p>

# SUPPORTERS Q&A

Question	Answer
<p><b>Football Budget:</b> Several questions asked on this subject so have summarised them below:</p>	<p>Budget from summer transfer window was not fully used, we had 3 deals fall through the day before the end of the summer transfer window. There will be money there for January and Clem will add more money if needed to get what we need in the window.</p>
<p>Do you still believe the current football budget is competitive enough to achieve promotion this season, and are you satisfied with how the budget has been used so far?</p>	
<p>Can you provide some insight into the club's recruitment aims for the January window please?</p>	
<p><b>Lee Peacock leaving and Potential Youth players Exit:</b></p>	
<p>We see Lee Peacock has left the club recently, which is disappointing, will he be replaced?</p>	<p>Lee left to relocate for personal reasons and will be replaced. We wish him well for the future he has been a wonderful servant to the club over the years,</p>
<p>There has been talk of some Youth players being sold can you update us on this please ?</p>	<p>Not actively no, but there are clubs enquiring about our youth players. If the money is right we will sell, but only if deal is right for club and player.</p>
<p><b>County Ground</b></p>	
<p>Everything has gone very quiet on the County Ground redevelopment with little progress in previous months AB minutes, should fans be concerned?</p>	<p>Fans should not be worried, current consultancy company have not provided an acceptable service even after the JV providing multiple series of feedback, alternative company is now being engaged to support the JV on ongoing plans.</p>
<p>Any news on Lee Dover's replacement?</p>	<p>Yes, recruitment is underway we will provide further updates when we have news on the replacement.</p>
<p><b>Recent Video of Mike Flynn and Players arguing at Wimbledon:</b></p>	
<p>The video has been on social media where the coaching staff and players overly arguing during a break in the Wimbledon game, it came across as a potential bad relationship between some players and the manager is the club worried about this?</p>	<p>The manager has not lost the dressing room. Some players are not putting in the effort Flynn wants and needs. Flynn is showing passion and that he wants better from the players we would rather see this and no passion from our manager.</p>
<p><b>Manager Contract Renewal</b></p>	
<p>What factors are taken into consideration when deciding to extend a manager's contract?</p>	<p>The club believe Mike Flynn is the right person for the managers role and wanted to lock him into a longer-term contract for that reason.</p>