

Date: Wednesday 18th May 2016
Stadium

Venue: Aitken Suite, Firhill

Trustees in attendance:
Foster Evans -chair (FE)
Pauline Graham (PG)
Greig Brown (GB)
Jacqui Low (JL)
Ian Maxwell (IM)

Supporters in attendance: 14

FE welcomed and thanked everyone for attending, introduced his fellow trustees and outlined the agenda for the evening's meeting.

FE explained the plethora of trusts that exist at the club and where the PTFC Trust (Thistle Club Trust for ease of reference) fits in. Both FE and PG are Trustees of the Partick Thistle Community Trust, which although carries the Partick Thistle brand, is an independent charity which should not be confused with this new trust. The Thistle Club Trust exists:

“for the purpose of holding shares in the Company to safeguard the long term benefit and integrity of the association football club operated by the Company, while promoting its growth and financial wellbeing.”

It is solely for “the purpose of holding shares” which are the shares which were “gifted” to the supporters as part of the clearing of the club's debt in the latter half of 2015.

FE noted that

The beneficiaries are supporters - with supporters defined as those over the age of 18 who have held a season ticket for at least the last three seasons.

FE noted that whilst all fans with an interest in Thistle will be able to engage with the Trust, a legal definition of beneficiary was required. It was noted that this was a starting point and through consultation that definition could evolve. - The overriding message is that this is ***a dialogue open to ALL***

After his remarks, IM explained the context of the Trust's formation and informed that the Trustees terms of office would be three years, with this boards terms staggered to allow continuity rather than have all up for election at the same time. To that end the initial terms of each trustees is as follows; GB 2 years, IM, JL and PG 3 years, FE 4 years. It was noted that due to confidentiality and timing around the formation of the Trust, the Initial Trustees (FE and PG) were chosen as they are known to the Club through their involvement with the Community Trust, understand the workings of Trusts and the roles expected of Trustees, they are lifelong Thistle supporters and will drive the Trust forward and challenge the Club board as and when required.

IM then gave a brief summary of other areas of the Club including the football department, finances, Academy etc. IM discussed the new Players Fund, which had come through discussion with supporters and would be announced the following day.

PG outlined initial thoughts and approach that the trust would take - take direction from the supporters, through openness, transparency, clear lines of communication and trust. It was noted that a fans' survey would take place in the near future to give all parties an understanding of expectations and an opportunity to engage on a variety of issues. PG stated that the Trustees had discussed holding 3 meetings per season with the supporters however this was flexible depending on requirements.

FE then opened the floor to questions at which point there was a positive exchange of views and among other things it was agreed that:

- We should not rely on internet/email and social media for communication with supporters but use to face to face, meetings, the match programme and flyers
- We should try to hold future meetings on the day of a game so as to encourage the maximum attendance
- Outline details of the Trust and the discussion would appear on the Club's website It was asked if the Trust Deed would be available online for supporters to read. It was noted that fans could review the Trust Deed at the Club Offices, however there was currently no intention to publish the deed online.
- A question was asked about the structure of the Trust and it was confirmed that it was not a charitable organisation rather it followed a standard trust structure (non charitable).
- A bespoke email address for the Trust would be publicised and could be used to raise issues at any time with them.
- A question was raised regarding where the 'Supporters Federation' now sits and it was noted that the new Thistle Club Trust supersedes the Federation and this will now be the primary vehicle for fan engagement going forward. It was agreed that as the Trust is a formal body there was accountability on the Trustees to ensure that meetings/communication happens as agreed.
- A question was asked about the supporters being involved in choosing the new kit and it was agreed this would be looked at going forward

IM discussed a post made on the We Are Thistle forum by Morag McHaffie (Chair of The Jags Trust) stating that the JT had been told that '*the bank would not*' use the JT as the supporter engagement vehicle and that the JT found this '*inexplicable*'. IM stated that this was incorrect as he had told Morag that

'there were reasons why the JT couldn't be used' and did not state it was the bank's decision.

IM added that this vehicle is to engage, communicate with, involve and be representative of all Thistle supporters and that the Club felt it more appropriate to use a new vehicle, rather than use the existing JT as the Club have minimal contact with the JT and are not aware of how the JT currently engage with the current fan base. IM also noted that if the JT found something inexplicable they should have asked for clarification rather than raise questions on a public forum. In response to a suggestion he had met with the JT on a number of occasions, IM clarified there had been one meeting to date in his 5 years at the Club.

FE closed the meeting, noting it was a positive time for the club and the supporters. The formation of the Trust had been part of clearing the club debt, it also resulted in the largest shareholder being for the benefit of the supporters and with a responsibility for the Trustees to engage and take on board the supporters' views. It had been agreed that will be done on a regular basis and through a variety of communication channels. FE thanked those present for their attendance.