



## Notes of the CFU meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2017 at 7.30pm

### In the Blues Bar – Lookers Vauxhall Stadium

The meeting was attended 34 CFU members and a total of 92 members were listening via the streaming service.

1. **Welcome and apologies** – apologies were received from Mike Day.
2. **Notes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2016** – these had been published on the CFU website and were accepted as a correct record; any matters arising will be covered during the meeting.
3. **Chair's update** – Alan Povey referred to the renewal of Jon McCarthy's contract and that it had been possible to keep the playing squad together during the January transfer window in spite of the fact that some interest had been shown in a couple of players.
4. **Strategy** – AP said a meeting was planned for 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2016 to look at developing the strategy further; he identified some key issues that will need to be addressed and progress will be shared at future meetings:
  - a. Fundraising – how do we get more money in to increase the playing budget and improve facilities.
  - b. CFU membership – how do we grow this.
  - c. Disabled facilities – what can be done in the short term.
5. **Co-option to the board** – AP referred to the recently circulated advertisement for Directors to join the board on a co-opted basis, with the board currently only having 7 directors as opposed to the 10 normally there are some key areas not being covered – CFU membership and fundraising. AP encouraged anyone interested to submit their CV to [marion.needham@chesterfc.com](mailto:marion.needham@chesterfc.com) and that any director would be happy to provide further information.
6. **Youth development** – Brian Burns provided an update on all aspects of the Youth Academy, he referred to the quality fixtures that had been arranged for some of the younger age groups; these provided great opportunities for their skills to be tested against teams higher in the football pyramid. The youth team are currently in 3<sup>rd</sup> place in their league and working hard to hold on to their title, but there is some strong opposition from both Curzon Ashton and AFC Fylde. The youth team are in the semi final of the North West Youth Alliance cup and away to Curzon Ashton and also away to either Skelmersdale or Chorley in the League Cup. The colts are half way up their league and have also reached the semi final of the league cup and play St Helen's Town. For the first time they are playing in the Cheshire Youth Cup having won 11-1 to reach the final where they will play Heswall. Both the youth team and colts have a number of younger players than would normally be involved at that level and this helps to provide continuity for the future. A number of the more senior players from the youth team have been involved in recent friendly games

playing alongside the first team squad and this is evidence of the club's commitment to developing our own players.

7. **Finance** – Laurence Kirby provided an update on the financial position, he reminded members that the budget of £1.1m had been set on a break even basis with no income assumed from either cup games or player transfers. There had been an impact on income with season ticket sales being lower than planned and also pay at the gate numbers being down, but it was hoped that the latter would improve with the Tranmere game. Income had also been anticipated from Liverpool under 21s but this had not materialised. LK said he felt that it was likely that there could be a sizeable loss at the end of the season unless there is any income from a player transfer. LK also referred to the historical financial position and reminded members of how this had been explained at the AGM. There had been pressure to sell Sam Hughes but Barnsley did not meet the club's valuation of the player, but it was expected that there would be renewed interest in SH before the end of the season. Similarly an offer for James Alabi had been rejected. In response to questions LK said:
  - a. Income from TV games had been accounted for.
  - b. Negotiations are underway with players regarding contracts for next season.
  - c. The club aims to have a conveyor belt of young talent with players being developed then sold.
  - d. The club still has the special reserve of £100k and a general reserve of £20k. If there is a loss of more than £20k in the current season the board would need to make a strategic decision regarding accessing the special reserve.
  - e. Tranmere have been given 1200 tickets and it is not possible to give them the whole of the west stand as we have a significant number of season ticket holders in that area and it would not be reasonable to expect them to move.
  - f. Sales of the Cestrian 10 had gone well with people buying them instead of a half season ticket.
  - g. Police costs for Wrexham and Tranmere are £7k and were £3k for Lincoln.
8. **Communications** – Neil Bellis referred to the work that MBNA were undertaking relating to the development of a new website to replace FLi. The content is in the process of being developed together with the identification of any historical information that needs to be retained. Jonny Hughes said that a separate commercial website is being developed. He also said that work is being undertaken to replace the Blues Player arrangements and Chester FCTV was being explored and is something that would be free. The media team were praised for their excellent work, particularly in relation to the post match interviews and the speed with which they were available.
9. **Q and A session** – the following issues were raised:
  - a. PA system – there were some ongoing problems in certain areas; AP said he would speak to MM and SP would also assist with this.
  - b. Establishment of a fans forum – NB said that this had been investigated and issues that FC United had experienced had been taken into account; as a result of which the board had made the decision not to create one as it was felt there was a huge amount of work for not a lot of benefit. [Fans@chesterfc.com](mailto:Fans@chesterfc.com) had now been established and a response was always provided.
  - c. Rubbish collection at the end of the game – agreed that regular reminders should be given out to use the bins provided.

10. **Date of next meeting** – this will be 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2017 at 7.30pm in the Blues Bar, this will be an informal meeting with the speaker to be notified.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm