

**Farnborough FC Supporters Trust (FaST) AGM**  
**Thursday 15th June 2023 - 7:30pm**  
**Held at Farnborough FC**

**Present:** Garry Ward, Phil Martin, Kevin Dyer, Brian Dodge, John Stevens, Bob Perry, Jim Hardy, John Davey, Trevor Stevens, Suzanne Martin, Alan Simpson, Luke Burford (via Zoom), John Barrow, John Ayer, Brian Blewett, Malcom Upward, Kelly Jobber, Mike Long, Lorraine Buckley (via Zoom)

**1. Welcome**

The chairman, Garry Ward, welcomed the members to the meeting.

**2. Apologies for absence.**

Apologies had been received from Andy Soltysiak, Linda Soltysiak, Paul Spicer, Paul Vandell, Sarah Hoyle, Geoff King, Paul Sampson, Dennis Bullock Jr, Miranda Penells, David Pask.

**3. Review and approval of 2022 AGM minutes**

There were no discrepancies raised by the members present and the minutes were thus recommended for approval.

Proposer: Suzanne Martin

Seconded: John Davey

**4. Chairman's Report.**

Garry read out his report on the activities of FaST over the last 12 months.

*I would like to welcome you all as members of the Farnborough Supporters Trust (FaST) to the eighteenth Annual General Meeting of the Trust. FaST has had a busy year and has maintained our close links with Farnborough Football Club (FFC) for which we thank Club Owner and Director Rob Prince and his fellow Directors for their support.*

*The makeup of the FaST Board has remained unchanged since the last AGM although there has been the addition of Lorraine Buckley as a co-opted representative. Lorraine is Chair of the Farnborough Community Trust and has made outstanding efforts over the last few months in getting the Trust off the ground with her new team, setting up many projects and obtaining funding through the National League Community Trust. Our Treasurer Paul Spicer has kindly agreed to carry on his duties as Treasurer remotely having moved out of the area and we are grateful for his services in preparing the draft*

*accounts and fulfilling the role. I mentioned in my report at last year's AGM that I would be stepping down as Chairman tonight but in the absence of any Board Member volunteering to take over the role, I am willing to carry on for a further year if re-elected. On the administrative front we also welcome Kelly Jobber who has kindly agreed to take the minutes of our meetings.*

*In accordance with the rules the following Board Members are due to stand for re-election for a further two-year period this evening: -*

*Garry Ward – Chairman*

*Paul Sampson – Board Member*

*Subject to the aforementioned members being re-elected the ongoing Board has a full complement of members, and the two other co-opted representatives will remain.*

*We are fortunate to have a Board Member in Phil Martin, our Honorary Secretary, who is also a Director of FFC and this enables the Trust to liaise with the football Club Board and put forward ideas for consideration as well as receiving feedback as to the club's plans.*

*Our total membership in the past year has almost doubled from 64 to 119 thanks largely to the initiatives FaST promoted to supporters when running the subsidised coaches to Sutton United and Wrexham. Not only were coaches run at a subsidised rate but if supporters joined FaST they could look forward to traveling at a reduced cost on subsidised coaches in the future. There was one further subsidised coach which ran to St Albans for the last away league game of the season. Whilst we must not rest on our laurels, we are indeed very pleased with the progress we have made in this area. Junior membership can also be secured for the payment of £3 annually.*

*FaST is also pleased to report that we were able to maintain the running of matchday minibusses to away games and a huge thank you goes out to Sue Reason who very commendably organised the running of the buses including taking all the bookings for supporters and to Kelly Jobber for collecting the fares. We must also offer great thanks to the club for allowing FaST the use of their minibus thereby allowing us to avoid rental costs and sustain the service without financial loss.*

*On the football front I think that we can all agree here tonight that it was an exciting and rewarding season both for the club and our loyal supporters which I am pleased to report are growing in numbers and volume at matches. Playing at the higher level of National League South and an excellent FA Cup run to the second round proper until we finally succumbed to Wrexham, brought much pleasure and excitement. We offer our wholehearted thanks to Spencer, the team management, and the players for all their efforts. FaST wishes them all success for the 2023/24 season.*

*FaST have supported the club in the past financial year ended 31 December 2022 with floodlight maintenance of £841 and Cherrywood Bar improvements of £643. Paint was*

*also purchased in the sum of £250 to refresh the ground. FaST also incurred expenses in the sum of £477 on various items including a card reading machine, website, lottery licence and presentation trophies.*

*Whilst the level of financial support to the club by way of projects has dropped in the last 12 months we can now confirm the long outstanding project to complete the cladding at the far end of the PRE stand and also to install water drainage down pipes will go ahead with the object of finally completing all work on the structure. This has largely been delayed due to lack of manpower and it is possible working parties may be organised. FaST in a joint initiative with the club is involved in installing a FanZone for the new season and outside furniture has already been purchased for approximately £1,100. This will be a designated area in the corner of the ground between the club shop and PRE Stand. There will be a bar and it is planned for a TV to be installed to catch the lunchtime kick-offs. Improvements are also scheduled to the Burger Bar and a partial refurbishment of the downstairs men's toilets. The overall outlay for these projects will account for the funding we currently have in hand.*

*Sales of 50/50 tickets have shown very good growth and at the end of last year have increased again from an average of £97 to £108 per game. In fact some of the winning prizes as the season progressed were over £150 for some games. A card reading machine was made available which again helped to boost the prize. A special mention of thanks goes to Bob Perry who kindly continued on with sales despite wishing to retire! Also to all the other operatives that chipped in to make it our best ever income from this source. FaST is very grateful to you all as it could not be achieved without you.*

*FaST also thanks Derek Mills for again making a donation from the sale of programmes in the club shop. A further £550 has been donated this season. Needless to say we are very grateful.*

*Administration of the fund raising Scheme Cherrywood Chance continues under our Treasurer Paul Spicer. There is only a small number of members left in this scheme although FaST hope to find ways of boosting numbers and income. Thank you for looking after this Paul.*

*FaST again sponsored the Supporters Player of the Season Award for season 2022/23. There was always going to be several players in contention having had such a successful season on the pitch but even so the winner Selim Saied was a comfortable winner in the supporters vote. Thanks go to Luke for organising the online vote and Sue for the paper vote.*

*Finally, I would like to collectively thank all Board Members and other members for their contribution to our work and support to me.*

*Garry Ward - Chairman*

## **5. 2022 Accounts.**

Firstly it was requested that the members present vote on a resolution for the current financial period to negate the requirement to appoint an independent auditors, worded as follows:

*Under section 84(2) of the Co-operative & Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 an option to disapply section 83 (duty to appoint auditors) exists. The committee wish to take advantage of this option in respect of this year of account. The committee are content not to require a qualified accountant conduct an independent review of the company's affairs for the Directors and to have it's accounts published without an independent report attached. An independent accountant has in fact reviewed the financial records and confirms that the accounts for the year reasonably reflects the documentation provided.*

Proposed by Suzanne Martin

Seconded by Brian Blewett

This was passed with no votes against.

Full copies of the 2022 accounts were available for all members present, plus Paul Spicer had prepared a summary sheet of the accounts, which was presented by Phil. A review has been carried out by K. Kovascova, a financial representative from BR Saunders Transport Ltd, who is happy that they are in order.

Suzanne Martin raised that figures in the accounts are different to the summary. Following a review, they are correct, and summary does match and all is as expected

Brian Blewett asked how we invest the funds, and should we consider some kind of investment account - Phil advised we have already investigated this, and we agreed an option to invest £5000, but following further investigation, the required minimum investment was £10,000, with a withdrawal notice of 32 days. The board has, however, agreed to continue to look for a suitable investment.

The accounts were recommended for approval.

Proposer: Brian Blewett

Seconded: John Davey

These were passed with no votes against.

## **6. Election of Directors.**

The following board members were happy to stand for re-election:

Garry Ward

Paul Sampson

Proposer: Kelly Jobber  
Seconded: John Stevens  
There were no objections.

## 7. AOB.

- **Bob Perry:** What is the Strategy for the cost of season ticket and matchday prices. Fans needed to understand and have a justification for these..
  - **Phil Martin answered:** We were going to raise the price last season, and this was not done as we wanted to reward the fans. We kept the prices down and additionally, with the increased attendances, the VAT threshold was reached and thus the club had to pay VAT on ticket purchases, leaving a considerable shortfall as costs increased due to playing at a higher level. We feel we gave really good value for money for the season and overall, everyone was happy with results.  
This season the club has raised the prices in line with the majority of the other clubs in the league, to a level that it is commercially comfortable with, considering the rises in costs . It may not be the cheapest, but we feel it is the right level for the club, and still represents good value for money.
  
- **Bob Perry:** As there are now two “Trusts” supporting Farnborough FC, what is the difference between the two, and is there any crossover between the two.
  - **Garry Ward answered with input from Lorraine Buckley:**  
The main focus for FaST is to work with the club to enhance the match day experience for the fans. It also subsidises travel to away matches . It is a registered company and submits accounts to the Financial Conduct Authority. However, it does have a community aid element to it’s objectives which has been falling short due to a lack of manpower and time.  
The Community Trust is currently run as a not for profit trust but will be converted to a charity once it is set up and running. The Community Trust has a team of volunteers that are able to get out in the community and support projects, such as Ladies Recreational Football, Farnborough FC Ladies Team, teenage football and other projects aimed at community engagement. It was also noted that the national league now expects clubs to run a community trust.  
Fast will continue to run their own projects as highlighted in the Chairman’s Statement, and will be a sponsor of Community trust initiatives, thus fulfilling our community element.
  
- **Brian Blewitt asked:** What is happening with the ladies’ football, where will they be playing, have we got players and what league will they be in.
  - **Lorraine Buckley answered:**  
Lorraine started by clarifying the difference between ladies Recreational Football and the lady’s 1<sup>st</sup> team.

Rec football provides 1 hour of free, non competitive football for any lady in the community every week at the club.

The Women 1<sup>ST</sup> team is completely separate and is a fully competitive team, playing in Hampshire FA ladies leagues. It will be managed by Craig Shields, who already has local ladies football experience. They will play in the stadium on a Sunday afternoon, with an admission charge of £2.00 a game. Players have been signed up and are sizing up for kit which is sponsored by the Village Hotel, Farnborough, and we are currently looking for more sponsors.

- **Suanne Martin:** Communication from trust to the Members has been somewhat lacking – Can we have a quarterly newsletter.
  - **Phil Martin answered:**  
Agreed this is something we have been lacking and has already been raised in previous board meetings. There are plans for a quarterly news letter and we will be looking to be better at in the coming season.
  
- **Suzanne Martin:** The board is only made of a certain demographic. Would it be good to add younger people to the board?
  - **Phil Martin / Garry Ward answered:**  
We agree, and we are aware. Currently the board has the full set of members so we can't add anyone at this stage, and board members need to be at least 18 years old. Board member, Geoff King, is a fan's representative and brings updated feedback to meetings. Additionally, a survey on social media for younger fans to give opinions was suggested by the floor..  
Phil and Garry to take this forward and look for ways to engage with the younger fans and get their opinion on what they would like to see. Phil said he knew of a younger person who might be interested, who had already been in contact looking to be more involved, and will reach out.
  
- **Brian Blewett** –Last season we had the unfortunate experience with the flooding of the pitch causing several games to be called off, is there a strategy to not have the same experience again as it lost the club money and fan experience and believed it hurt us getting to the playoffs.
  - **Phil Martin answered:** The pitch had a lot of traffic last year with matches and the men's team training once or twice a week. The men's and ladies' teams will not be training on the pitch this coming season. There are no plans to add drainage at this stage but we are looking at better management and less traffic and hope that the weather is on our side this season. The ladies will hopefully be playing at home the same weekend as the men to help with pitch management.  
**Kevin** clarified we have checked all the drainage and it is working; we did Vertidrainning and sanding last season to try help, but weather was against us.
  
  - **Follow up from Brian** - Is there anything FaST can do to help

**Phil** confirmed that FaST has already supported pitch maintenance and they have gone 50/50 with the club on equipment.

**Lorraine** acknowledged the work Phil Martin and Kevin Dyer put in every week to get the games on and said they should be thanked.

- **Bob Perry:** How many games will the Ladies team be playing?
  - **Lorraine Buckley answered:** Hopefully, approx 10 league home games and additional cup games.
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- **Malcom Upward:** Are FaST going to do anything for Andy Smart
  - The club will be holding a game dedicated to raising money for the MIND charity in Andy's Memory. **Phil** advised he was sure FaST could make a donation.
  - Additionally, it is believed that the media centre, in particular the radio broadcasting station, will have some sort of dedication.

#### **8. Close.**

There was no further business, so Garry thanked everyone for their attendance, and brought the meeting to a close.