

# Berwick Rangers Supporters Trust

(also known as Berwick Rangers Supporters Society Limited)

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## MINUTES

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Date: 14/01/12

Time: 11:30

Place The Black and Gold Club

Colin Pike welcomed all to the meeting.

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Elaine Mallory and Ian Patterson.

#### 2. GUEST SPEAKERS

- (i) **Brian Porteous – Director, Berwick Rangers Football Club**
- Delighted with the way the Club is going and the direction it is taking.
  - Main aim is to keep going in a financially prudent way.
  - Next aim to push for 2<sup>nd</sup> Division.
  - Jimmy and Ian gave a good account of themselves re: the Celtic match. Was a lucky break financially for the Club and cleared the Director's loans etc.
  - Have had a mixed year on the field, started well, Deveronvale was a nightmare. Had been confident but the players didn't perform.
  - Ian was voted SFL 3<sup>rd</sup> Division Manager of the month in November.
  - Ian showed enough ability in his four weeks as temporary Manager to be asked to stay.
  - Thanked Supporters Trust for generous donations in the last year.
- (ii) **Ian Little - Manager**
- Revisited his journey to manager through playing for Berwick.

- Described Brian's arrival as Chair and pledge to get back to a happy and professional team.
- Management is all new to Ian, really enjoyed coaching.
- Keen to make play offs.
- Asked supporters to bear with him and trust his change of system.
- Appreciates Trust's hard work in supporting the Club.

**(iii) Alan Harris – Chair of Supporters Direct Scottish Council**

- Explained that he was not representing Scottish Council today.
- Club is seen as being in very safe hands financially and with its management.
- Remembered old matches particularly Berwick v Rangers.
- Explained the Role of Supporters Direct.
- Stressed importance of fan ownership and influence.
- Explained the 'Fans Plan'
- Talked about ideas being discussed for restructuring of leagues and pros and cons.
- Informed members about the funding difficulties within Supporters Direct.
- Was asked about possibility of summer football, a short discussion followed.
- Discussion continued around the dynamics between Manager and Chairman and followed onto ownership of stadium.

John Bell, Supporters Trust representative to the Football Club Board then spoke, reminding members how the Trust came about and how things have moved on, most recently seeing the Supporters Trust and Supporters Club becoming part owners of the Club. Updated those present about UEFA licensing, and its cost of 20k-30k per year.

To progress the Club needs an improved attendance and John felt it was a shame that some comments which find their way into the public domain do not help.

**3. CHAIRMANS REPORT – Colin Pike.**

Colin read out a written report as per Annual Report

**4. TREASURERS REPORT – Gordon Dickson**

- Having distributed accounts at the beginning of the meeting Gordon highlighted some points.
- Finances look lower; however we no longer run the Club shop.
- Subs – income is down £1,000, people are not paying the same each month.
- Figure for Reserves programmes: we produce these as a donation to the Reserves.
- Accountancy fees are down as we no longer need a full audit.
- £17 expenses given to Colin Pike were for travelling expenses in his role on Supporters Direct Scottish Council Board. These costs are now covered by Council Board.

## **5. SECRETARIES REPORT - Karen Thorburn**

- Confirmed that the Trust Board had conducted its meetings, election arrangements and annual meeting arrangements in accordance with the model rules of the Trust constitution.
- There had been 9 meetings since the last AGM  
Guests in the year have included Trust members, Youth Section members, representatives from the Reserves set-up and a researcher from Cardiff University writing a paper about Clubs who play over the border from their base.

## **6. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARIES REPORT – Bill Purvis**

At our last AGM the Trust membership stood at 223. As at 31<sup>st</sup> May 2011, the end of our financial year the figure was 229 and as at today's date is 232 (206 full members, 20 Junior members and 6 Corporate members).

On the face of it membership has only increased by 9 over the last year but in fact we have gained 24 new members and 2 Junior members. Unfortunately however during the same period we lost 17 members (9 of these when Annual renewal was due).

There is still a steady trickle of new members but in the current financial climate we are having to work hard to stand still.

These figures do not take into account the 'Youth Section'.

## **7. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS**

Greaves West and Ayre were appointed as auditors for the next year.

## **8. APPOINTMENT OF TRUST BOARD**

David Cook explained that the minimum number of Board members we can appoint is 5 and the maximum is 15. Term of office is 2 years.

The 11 current members are happy to remain as Board members for the next 2 years. There are four vacancies on the Board and the board would welcome people to come forward to fill the roles.

There is no Junior Trust Board this year as most members have gone to university.

## **9. ADOPTION OF NEW MODEL RULES**

The constitution is regulated by law and the FSA. There were 3 proposals for amendments to our model rules:

1. Reducing the Trust objectives and changing the wording to reflect that
2. Enabling co-option (i.e. when we need specific help or guidance with a project) Setting a limit of 4 Board members by co-option.
3. Change of wording to reflect that we only require an independent examination rather than full audit now.

John Bell proposed that members digest these changes and they be posted on the website for 2 weeks then adopted if no comments were received.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

A comment came from the floor that Pie and Bovril gives more information on news with the Club than the official website. It was agreed that while some of this was 'pub banter' there were also unacceptable comments being made by some with positions in some of the groups. It was also requested that the website be kept more up to date.

It was also said that Pie and Bovril should never be taken as a representation of Trust views.

Alan Harris reminded everyone of their collective responsibilities when representing a body, you cannot speak publicly when you do not agree, and cannot disassociate yourself from that body. A member should either agree reluctantly or walk.

Colin Pike said there was a need for this situation to be resolved and would be discussed further at Board level.

David Cook said that there was sometimes a need to stand up, as a group, and be critical, if it brought positive outcomes to the Club.

A short informal discussion was held on how to bring bigger attendances to matches and how to engage with a younger audience.