

Chairman's Report to AGM 16th November 2023

This report covers the 12 months to the end of June 2023, but I will also refer to events that have been happening since then. I think the first place to start is with the injuries to Brandon Hanlan and Luke Leahy in that awful game last Saturday. Luke is recovering well and hopefully will be back soon, but Brandon's is likely to be a longer-term injury and he'll be out for some time.

So, a quick look back to last season – we were there or thereabouts all through the season and we ended up 9th with 69 points, only 8 points off the play offs. In addition, we lost our long serving manager Gareth Ainsworth to QPR in February and as I'm sure we all know, he's now out of a job as of a couple of weeks ago. Gareth going saw the return of Matt Bloomfield to the Club, followed by an influx of new players in the summer and a pretty good first 14 weeks of the season so far. We're now 12th with 22 points, 2 points behind Blackpool in 8th and 5 behind Barnsley in 6th. With 30 games still to go, there's still everything to play for and I know that Rob Couhig and Matt Bloomfield are still aiming for at least a play-off place.

Off the pitch an awful lot happened last year.

- Probably the key thing was the negotiating the "new contract" between the Club and the Trust. This took a huge amount of my and the Board's time and it wasn't without its difficult moments. As a result, we now own 10% of the Club, Feliciano own 90% and the Trust are no longer responsible for any of the future funding for the Club.
- We still own Adams Park and it is totally free from any debt or charges.
- We negotiated a new lease on Adams Park which runs for 50 years, with rent currently set at £20k pa, rising every 5 years by £20k till it reaches £100k pa in May 2043.
- We have maintained a good relationship with Rob Couhig, which is vital in order to ensure the Trust is involved in the future direction of the Club, whoever the owners are. More of that later.
- We donated £100k of Trust funds to the Club to be used on fan facing projects. 4 key ones were identified; refurbishment of stadium toilets, upgrading stadium catering kiosks, grow lights to assist in renovating the pitch and the setting up a quiet and sensory room. I'm pleased to be

able to report that all these projects are either completed or well underway.

- The DSA continues to work well and the Trust recently donated funds to help reduce the cost of their away coach to Oxford. One part of the EDI EFL club plan is to make Adams Park a safe and welcoming place for Fans with Disability and I am working with Neil Peters to agree 'ways of working' between Club and DSA, in order to help deliver this.
- The multi faith prayer room, which was opened in April 22 by Benedict, the Club chaplain and the Imam from the Wycombe mosque, is now used frequently by players, staff and fans, both on match and non-match days.
- The Trust has continued to support WWW with funds, (£5k for this season) and a huge amount of time and effort to help drive them forward. They've raised over £35k in sponsorship, for the current season and just to remind you. all the money to run WWW comes from donations, sponsorship and players fees. As well as being Chair of the Trust, I am also Chair of WWW and I'd like to invite any Trust members who are interested in Women's football to help us run our 3 teams. If you think you can help, please get in touch with me either later tonight or email me.
- Both online auctions and the QBC continue to be big successes for the Trust and together raise over £16k pa. We're also working to get the Club more involved on the QBC in order to help to make it bigger and better.
- Let me now turn to the volunteers. There are three teams of volunteers; **weekday**, who provide help on a weekly basis at the Club and training ground, **matchday** volunteers, who run the car park, help in the shop, pull pints and help with the nets and **Litter pickers** who go round the ground usually on a Sunday morning picking up the litter from the previous day's game. They together save the Club £000's each year. But we really struggle sometimes on match days, especially at high attendance games, to get enough people to help. We really need more people who are willing to pull pints and help in the car park for a couple of hours pre-game. Please think about giving us some of your time. If you can help, either email me or Georgina Heritage on georgina@4everblues.com

- Volunteers also did the annual stadium seat cleaning in July 23, where over 2 days we cleaned over 70% of the seats and just to bring that to life, that's around 6000 seats, so a big thankyou to everyone involved.

We've also tried to keep members updated with many of the things that have been going on in the Club and in football generally. Here's a few of them.

- We send out Trust updates twice a month, which aim to keep everyone involved and up to speed.
- As part of the above, we include updates from the FSA, ranging from the potential regulator for football, to Racism in football, to Fans for Diversity and Fans behaviour in sport and football in particular and many more issues.
- We've continued with the Trust table in the car park, in our new gazebo and we're looking at how we can make this more interactive and interesting to members.
- We run Trust board meetings on a monthly basis, which you are all invited to, so you can see and hear what the Trust is doing. This is currently not well attended and I would urge you all to attend these meetings from time to time. Again, we are looking at how to make these more interesting and how to get members involved with the Trust through these meetings.
- We also act as your voice with the Club, raising many issues which you have raised with us and we try to get answers to these. Please continue to raise queries with us as your views as fans are a key element in making our Club a success.
- At this point I'd like to thank a number of people and recognise what they have done for the Trust and the Club.
- The Trust board – they like many others, are all volunteers and between them put in many, many hours work on your behalf. As you will hear in more detail soon, we are making changes to the make up of the Board going forward and as a result Lisa Bowker, Emily Isaacs, Martyn Broughton, Chris Harvey and Russell Jones are standing down today. They have between them put in a huge amount of time and effort for you and I'd like you to show your appreciation of that in the usual way.
- Thank you to you the members – your support both financially, your work as volunteers and you're backing for what we have been trying to do has been a big help.

- Last but not least, Matt Cecil and his media team and Neil Peters and his team for all the support they have given both me and the Trust.

So, what next? It looks like the owners of the Club may change in the foreseeable future and I will address this separately later in the Agenda. We've also been working on where the Trust goes from here and Jon Workman, Trust vice chair will talk through this soon.

I have taken the decision to stand down as Trust Chair from the end of this month. I've had the privilege of leading the Trust for the last 4 years, which has been at times a roller coaster ride, but now that we're hopefully on a smoother path, I think it's time for someone else to take the Trust forward. As a result, the Trust board recently voted to elect Bob Massie as the next Chair and I'll be handing over to him from 1st December. I'll remain on the Trust board till at least this time next year, when I'll be up for re-election, so you can't get rid of me that easily.

Thank you for your support and let's get the resolutions passed and then onto more interesting things.