



BWFC Supporters' Trust

Minutes

Subject: BWFC & BWFCST Quarterly Meeting No 17

Venue: The Bolton Stadium Hotel

Meeting Date: 8th August 2025 @ 10.00am

Present:

BWFC: David Ray (DR), Paul Holliday (PH)
BWFCST: Sue Higson (SH), Martin Parnell (MP), Ian Pegg (IP), Mike Smith (MS),
Alan Houghton (AH), Shane Stopforth (SS) & Robin Fletcher (RF)

Apologies: Terence Rigby (TR), Paul Wood (PW)

Purpose of Meeting:

Action

The meeting is the seventeenth scheduled quarterly meeting between senior BWFC personnel and BWFCST board representatives as referenced in the Joint Memorandum of Understanding signed by both parties in August 2021.

1. Apologies

Apologies are recorded above.

2. Previous Minutes

Minutes of the quarterly meeting held on 11th April 2025 were accepted and are available on the Trust website.

3. Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

- The proposed theming of the concourses to recount the Clubs history continues to be developed. The guided tours of the stadium are now available.
- The bringing together of the Clubs and supporters memorabilia to mark BWFC 150th anniversary, which also coincides with 30th since the move from Burnden Park to the Toughsheet Stadium. BWiTC are looking to support this initiative by applying for Heritage Lottery Funding. The Trust has been developing a similar idea, together with a project being promoted by the Youth Advisory Group. **PH/AH/IP**
- The proposed Ambassador Scheme is being developed in conjunction with reviewing the Supporters' Liaison Officer role. **DR/PH/SH**



- AH advised there had been no response from the National Football Museum. AH will liaise with David Jack's family regarding the medal being displayed as part of the 150th Anniversary celebrations and guided tours. **AH**
- At present there no plans to re-locate the Trusts' Cabin.
- The Trust are looking into the possibility of having two Q&A sessions during the coming season with both the commercial and footballing sides of the Club, possibly in conjunction with BWiTC. **DR/PH/RF**

4. Fans Forum

To encourage a wide range of fan engagement the Trust asked for questions for the Club to be emailed into the Trust. The questions and the Clubs response are recorded on the attached sheets.

5. Buses/Trains 25/26

The Bus timetable is now available on the Club website.

The Trust have established a working relationship with TFGM & GMP and with the Club aim to improve the fans experience when using the trains arriving and departing Horwich Parkway railway station.

6. Any Other Business

- A check to be made if there recycling bins for plastic beer glasses in the Fan Zone. **PH**
- MS explained his particular interest in the development of the Women's Team. He proposed the Club have a dedicated commercial manager to secure the level of investment required to sustainably grow this part of the Club **DR/MS**
- A couple living in West Cumbria (aged 78 & 80) and their son who have in the past enjoyed pre and post-match drink packages are disappointed that they are no longer available. Furthermore, they find the hotel bar too crowded and a struggle with not being able to find a seat. They attend half dozen matches a year spending £600 per match in the hotel. The Club will look into if there are measures which can be taken to ameliorate the offer for hotel residents attending matches. **DR/PH**
- Both the Club and the ST are continuously reaching out the fans and the wider community to be involved in this engagement, particularly in areas of no/low representation. PH is arranging a meeting with the Bolton Hindu Forum and will invite the ST to attend. **PH/RF**
- A concern has been raised from fans travelling to home games around the country about the maximum A4 bag rule. There is insufficient time to collect from bag drop off after the game and catch the 17.13 Manchester train. It was also highlighted that fans with young children also carry a lot of paraphernalia to matches. The Club will review the current policy. **DR/PH**
- It was reported that occasionally there are queues outside the Fan Zone even though it is not at capacity. It is suspected that those exiting are not being counted out. Further investigation is to be carried out to establish the extent, and if required, remedy. **DR/PH**



- A member of London Whites asked if the Club can negotiate with Northern Rail to ensure that trains after 5pm, at Horwich Parkway have sufficient rolling stock to fit all passengers? In reality the operating difficulties of Northern Rail are not something the Club have direct control over. On a similar vein it has been asked can Northern Rail be asked to run a Football Special to and from Horwich for home games. Both points will be raised in our ongoing discussions on the trains, refer item 5, above. **RF**
- During the meeting it became apparent that the Kit order for the 26/27 season has to be placed by the end of August and the opportunity for the fans to select their preferred design missed. The Club do intend to re-introduce the fans involvement for 27/28 season.
- The Trust have asked if there can be some flexibility in allowing away fans to enjoy hospitality in the Fan Zone? There is resistance from the Authorities (Council, Police etc.) to allow the supporters of the mix in a confined space, particularly one that serves alcohol. On the other hand more recent history shows supporters have been very well behaved and respectful to each other. Commercially it is far better for the Club to benefit from expenditure than the other venues adjacent to the stadium. The alternative opportunities to be considered. **DR/PH**
- Other members of London Whites asked the following in respect of the Club's finances:-
 1. Over the last 6 months the records show a number of FV share cancellations & allotments. Has this affected the way the Board operates? Have the allotments provided investment that opens more opportunities to improve the playing staff? The Boards structure and modus operandi remain unchanged. Further investment and improvement has been made in the playing staff
 2. Is there another bond investment scheme planned? No
 3. How concerned should fans be about the £11M operating loss last year? Is there a plan to balance the budget this year and/or decrease the debt?
DR replied that it is his role to balance the budget and provide financial stability. Furthermore, the owners of BWFC are fully committed to ensuring BWFC are a sustainable community based football club.

7. Next Meeting

RF to call DR to check the pre-scheduled meeting dates, which have gone slightly out of kilter due holidays, sick leave etc.

