

Minutes of the CFU AGM held on 19th February 2007 at the Cambridge United Supporters Club, Newmarket Road, Cambridge.

The "top table" consisted of the following:

Dave Matthew-Jones (CFU Chairman)

Brian Atmore (Fans Director)

Terry Wilby (CFU Secretary)

Derek Wick (CFU Treasurer)

Justyn Medd (CFU Vice Chair)

Many CFU members were in the audience with Jimmy Quinn, Phil Law, Jez George and Josh Simpson, members of the media were also present.

CFU ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Terry opened the AGM at 8pm.

1. Chairman's welcome and report

Dave Matthew-Jones thanked the Committee and all the supporters for the help that had been given during the year. He thanked those who are leaving the Committee for their work over many years.

'There is still a crisis at CUFC, relegation fears and funding issues need to be sorted. Initiatives like Junior U's and South Stand have given a positive feeling.

We must put the past behind us and move forward, and aim to get back into the football league.

We are a Community club and that gives a good feeling. Much of the work to get to this position has been done by Brian.

The club must address the finances, increasing revenue and cutting costs. It cannot depend on more bucket collections.

CFU has done a lot of things:

Organised a New Years Eve dance in the Harris Suite, the bar takings were over £1,600.

Re-Launched the Junior U's (Thanks to Will), which already has over 100 members, and is fantastic for the future.

Young CFU have been formed to organise events focused at younger people who perhaps are not keen on bingo. They have done a fantastic job with the money raised going to help CUFC and the CRC team. A comedy night is planned for 1st May.

Formed a Marketing Group to help with club communications and commercial activities.

Football Tournaments for youths and adults, and a 5-a-side tournament at Christmas.

The South Stand initiative, organised by Will Jones and Mark Saywell, has bought 3,000 people to games, and the club has made money. It is good to see the South Stand filled with CUFC fans, it makes for a good atmosphere.

During the summer CFU paid the club wages, in exchange CFU got shares.

Many CFU members do voluntary work at the club on match days and non-match days.

The rule that CFU must own at least 15% of the issued shares has been removed by the club, so a Fans Elected Director is now a right.

For the Future:

Continue to help the club wherever possible, in the ground and in the office.

Starting a "100 Club".

Starting a Business Club, Businesses join for free, it brings businesses into the club.

Expand the South Stand and Junior U's schemes.

Continue to represent the supporters.

The Club must work with others; there is a lot of goodwill towards CUFC to build on."

2. Secretary's Report

Terry Wilby had apologies from C. Scullion, Audrey Millard, Carolyn Cater, Heather Wilkanowski, Ben Yelton and Lionel Webb.

He read a short extract from a letter from Audrey: "Would like to take this opportunity to thank the Chairman and the Committee for their hard work, it is much appreciated".

The Minutes of the last AGM held on 27th February 2006 were taken as read.

He reported a mistake on the Agenda and letter, as Secretary he was not a voting member of the committee, the letter should read that there are 7 vacancies with 2 standing for re-election.

Terry took over as Secretary from Lionel Webb in the spring, and thanked Lionel for his help in the handover, and advice when questions were asked. However Lionel didn't advise him on envelopes, so he had to lick all the envelopes for the letters, next year he would buy self-seal envelopes!

Being an Industrial and Provident Society an office has to be registered with the FSA, this has been changed from Lionel's home address to Terry's home address.

The membership database seemed to have been attacked by gremlins that has resulted in some loss of data, so they are looking to update the system. He asked that any changes of telephone number, postal or email address be put on the form and handed back.

A few years ago the CFU AGM was moved to be after the CUFC AGM so that we could report any matters to the members. This year there was an important proposal by Paul Barry that CFU were asked to support. The Committee were made aware of this proposal a couple of days before and made the decision to support the proposal in principal. At the AGM a member of the audience asked why CFU were supporting the proposal when the members had not been consulted, Dave had replied that it would be considered at this meeting. This highlights the difficulty in getting members opinions, so it might be best to move the CFU AGM to the week before the CUFC AGM.

3. Treasurer's report.

A copy of the CFU annual financial statement was available for members at the door.

Derek Wick reported that as agreed at last years AGM, CFU were exempt from full audit. The accounts showed that CFU received less income, in some ways this was good news because there had not been a requirement for bucket collections (which would please the bank as they did not have to take lots of coins).

Membership has stayed fairly level, fundraising income from the usual sources such as Calendar, Fixture lists and tournaments.

Derek thanked those who had raised funds, such as Carol for the Quiz nights, and Martin for programme sales.

Total Income had been £28,407, expenses were self explanatory, with Legal and Professional fees including £80 to the FSA, and £194 for Chamber of Commerce membership. The old shirts were CUFC shirts that had be purchased to ensure they stayed within the club.

Donation were £2,000 to Football in the Community, and £25 to sponsor a horse in a Race night at the club.

At the end of August CFU owned £240,350 worth of CUFC shares, since then more shares have been purchased and other loans converted to shares which means CFU now has 524,430 shares.

Creditors includes £4,000 where members have paid in advance, membership is spread over the year.

Note 6 in the accounts show the number of members at that time.

Derek asked for approval of the accounts, this was agreed.

Derek put the following resolution to the meeting "It is hereby resolved that subject to the provisions of section 4A of the 1968 Friendly and Industrial and Provident Societies Act, the members of the Society shall not require an audit for the Accounts covering the current financial year ending on 31st August 2007 when they are presented to the next AGM. The members of the Society agree that the Accounts for the financial year ending on 31st August 2007 and for which reports will be laid before the following AGM do not require a full Audit provided that an Independent Examination is carried out in place of the full audit, the Independent Examination is carried out in line with best practice and a report from the Independent Examiner is included within the Accounts and circulated to members". The resolution was passed unanimously.

It was unanimously agreed that Clifford Towers should continue to be the CFU Independent Examining Accountants.

4. Election of Committee members

Terry reported that the Committee must consist of between 9 and 15 members. There are 8 existing members which leaves 7 spaces. Martin Jordan and Justyn Medd were standing for re-election, and there were 5 nominations: Gary Atyes, Will Jones, Ben Phillips, Mark Stuart-Wood and Shane Kind.

As there were no other nominations a vote would not be required, so the 7 candidates were elected.

5. Fans Elected Director Report

Brain Attmore thanked everyone for all the help. His work had changed during the year, he had been CUFC vice-Chairman, then reluctantly spent 7 weeks as acting Chairman.

There had been a new Board at the start of the season, the new team didn't work out and the off pitch planning had been poor.

The Board were planning for next season, and would change how they did things. Costs were too high, and the finances had to be right so that fire fighting would not happen.

Jimmy Quinn had come in at a difficult time, with only one transfer window to get players in.

On finances, the club were being bailed out month after month. Paul Barry could not buy any more shares, he could only loan money, which has to be paid back at some time. The rent of £200,000 was a lot to find. Oxford rent their new stadium for £250,000, however they receive more in income from the stadium.

A player sale or a cup run is needed to break even.

There have been people interested in the club, but many have been shown the door as they did not seem suitable. Others were not interested when they found out about the 20% maximum shareholding rule.

At the CUFC AGM in 2006 it was proposed to raise the maximum limit to 24.9%, this proposal failed.

If a similar proposal had gone to the shareholders at the last AGM and had major shareholders against the proposal it could have been seen as no confidence in the Board. Things need to change, something has to be done. Paul Barry, Johnny Hon and Adrian Hanauer will put in £200,000 a year for but the 20% rule has to go so they have a say in where their money is spent. The club are nearly financially dead. When the club was in

administration all they could pay 19p in the £. Now the shares are virtually worthless. New money is needed, and that new money must have more say. We are at the wall, and new money is needed to see us through.

The alternative is administration, which would almost certainly lead to liquidation.

CFU Committee were told of the proposal 2 days before the AGM, when asked what we think the answer was yes to the proposals.

Question (from the audience): How many shares will be made available?

Answer (from Brian): 50 million, and anyone can buy them.

Q: What assurances are there?

A: Shares can only be sold with the authority of the Board.

Q: Could Mr Howard buy shares?

A: A majority vote by the Board would be needed to sell him shares.

Q: What happens to the existing shares?

A: The owner keeps the same number of shares, but the holding is de-valued.

Q: What is the minimum purchase?

A: £250 worth. There is a sharesave scheme where £10 a month is saved and when the holding reaches £250 a share certificate is issued. Only 4 people are doing it at the moment.

Q: 50 million shares is £2,500,000 capital?

A: the 50million is on top of the 3million shares already available (not all are issued), all new shares would be at 5p each.

Q: 2,000 shares at the moment is £1,000 worth, is it not true they will drop to very little.

A: The shares at the moment are worthless, the club has no assets.

Q: Could Bideawhile buy 2 million shares?

A: It is unlikely the club would sell shares to Bideawhile. There is always a risk as Roger Hunt mentioned at the CUFC AGM, however Colchester United have benefited.

Q: Would it be worth having a rule or clause to stop Bideawhile buying shares?

A: The club would have to look into having such a rule.

Q: Could existing shareholders sell to Bideawhile?

A: The club can veto any share sale.

Brian asked for a show of hands that CFU should support the Paul Barry Proposal. The majority were in support, with 2 against.

Robert Osbourn proposed a vote of thanks to Brian for all his work, he had been very busy with work on the CUFC Board, had fully briefed CFU Committee, and had to fight for his place on the Board, yet had been needed as acting Chairman. There was a round of applause.

Mark Saywell suggested that the 2 people who were against the proposal should talk to Brian after the meeting.

There was a 10 minute break.

6. CUFC Q & A

Jimmy Quinn, Jez George and Josh Simpson joined the top table to answer questions from the audience:

Q to Jimmy Quinn (JQ): What were your influences as a manager?

A: He had lots of clubs and many managers, some managers were very good. He had learnt from all. He wanted success, and had seen the passion of the supporters despite the doom and gloom. He noticed that the clock on the wall was dated 1951, he felt sure it would still be there in 2051 as there was lots to look forward to. When at Reading things

needed to be in place to move forward. It is all about money, and the playing budget, Oxford playing budget is £1.5million. It is also about getting results. The fans have been magnificent, and there seems to be a good feeling around the club. Injuries have been a problem, and some players such as Adrian Collins and Charles Ademenio are not being paid by the club. The next 4 games are very important, we need to win 3 out of 4.

On managers, Harry Redknapp was a fantastic man manger. Lou Macari was different, he was a fitness fanatic but could pick a good player. Billy Bingham as manager of Northern Ireland knew how to get more from a player, and when to step back. Terry Yorath at Bradford and Wales was good.

He was still learning, but was open to ideas from players.

Brian commented that it was about treating people in the right way. The club may be poor financially, but Jez and his team were achieving a lot by treating the players well with good coaching.

Q to Josh: How did he find the step up to full time?

A: Training every day had made him much fitter, and work in the gym had made him stronger.

Q to JQ: Thanks for turning things around, but after the defeat at Rushden how close was he to resigning?

A: He was not going to resign. Of the 7 defeats, 3 should not have been lost. He was confident he could turn it around. It was a difficult time, with no budget available, only the January window to get players in and out, can't afford many of the players, some did not want to step down from the football league. He was sure there would be a better team next season. The club has some good players, but the league table doesn't lie. Homework is done on players to make sure they are mentally and physically strong enough. When he got Shrewsbury promoted there were only a 3 or 4 of this team good enough to have got into the Shrewsbury team. The training facilities are not ideal for a manager or players, not knowing where they will be training. The colleges stop them playing when wet, and Coldhams Common pitches are not good enough. Good facilities are needed, somewhere to call home. He would rather have 2 players less but have good training facilities.

Q to JQ: What additions to the squad are needed for next season? A striker? Left-back?

A: He had a list of players. He felt we could get back into the league, and were very similar to Shrewsbury when he took them up, with a good fan base. He had players lined up, but needed consistency.

Q to JQ: How do you motivate and give the players self-belief?

A: The team at the moment are not doing very well, you have to be realistic and 17th is near the bottom. At Shrewsbury he had better players and a bigger budget of £1million.

Q to JQ: With your man-management you seem to be talking the team down> At recent substitutions you seem to blank the player coming off.

A: He had to get rid of a few players who were causing problems in the dressing room. On substitutions it was not a deliberate thing, he was concentrating on the game, and left it to Steve Castle to see the players off. He gives all the encouragement possible, he is not negative but realistic when comparing teams. The club had not won all season when he joined, there had been injuries and disciplinary problems meant he had to go to the FA recently and explain the reasons for the poor record. It had been difficult over the Christmas period, losing can become a habit, so the mould had to be broken. He gave credit to the players for continuing to work hard. To get into the team young players must be good enough.

Q to JQ: You said you needed experience.

A: It has been said before that you don't win with kids. Experience is needed in key positions. It was not a surprise that the recent good run started when Danny Brown and

David Bridges got back into the team. Dan Chillingworth came back because he wanted to play for the team.

Q to JQ: Self motivation comes from winning games and having a settled side and good players, and would not swap either of the Simpson. But strikers need good passes to make chances to score.

A: The team is stronger with Brown. He was disappointed not to keep a clean sheet on Saturday. Robbie Simpson has attracted interest, at the moment he is at college in Loughborough so trains only part time. He is in the team on merit. There is lots of pressure on players but the players pick themselves if they do well.

Q to JQ: We have some good players, what is the commitment from the club?

A: He has not been told to sell anyone. He came to the club to bring success, and will not get back into the league by selling the best players.

Q to JQ: There seems to be a problem with discipline, referees seem to book players for nothing.

A: There is inconsistency with referees. There are assessors in the stands who rate the referees performance, however the club do not see the assessors marks. The referees have a hard job. At Morecambe you barely knew the referee was there. At Oxford Christian Smith did a miss timed tackle, yet was sent off for violent conduct.

When up before the FA the disciplinary committee he explained that in some cases players had to come back from injury too quickly before being match fit which lead to tiredness and clumsy tackles. The club is currently averaging 9.8 points per game, if it gets to 10 there will be a fine. Since September only 2 cautions have been for dissent. Some referees seem to be like toasters, with cards popping out. There does seem to be a lack of common sense and consistency, but there is direction from above. The players are told to work with the referee, and fans pay to watch 2 teams. Some referees seem to think they are superstars, and try to be controversial.

Q to JQ: We have had a run of 4 games unbeaten, are near the top of the best supported teams, so why de-value the shares?

A: The rent is a big drain on resources, the question should really be to the board.

Follow up question: Why are we in such a bad position?

A from Brian: We sold the ground to pay off debts, but we still have debts. Our turnover is around £1million, so for every £5 of income £1 goes towards the rent. Our matchday costs are high, for example we pay around £1,000 per match for medical cover, Dagenham pay around £200. Stewarding cost money. At Morecambe there was no segregation, this was because Morecambe felt CUFC fans were the best behaved the previous season so they didn't feel they had to pen the fans in with stewards, and it seemed to work well. CUFC have a good reputation. The decision is made by the safety officer.

Q to Josh and Jez: How do you size up what the referee will be like, and how do you respond?

A: Josh: The first few decisions give a good indication of what the referee will be like, and it is important not to swear.

A: Jez: Discipline is important, with no arguing or questioning of the decision. You can't control the referee, and you should not blame the conditions such as the pitch or the referee if results go against you. The players have to concentrate on their own performance, if they get a caution for dissent it is a big problem.

Q to JQ: You said you concentrate on the game, and at Rushden showed no emotion. Since then you seem to have been more demonstrative. How do you communicate with the players?

A: Trust. There is organisation and a game plan from work that has been done before. Swearing at the players will not help. The players do not need to be told they have not played well, it is important to get eh confidence back. At Rushden the early goal was not

what was wanted, and confidence went down. The manager has to resolve problems and offer solutions. The fans want to see the team win. It is disappointing to lose but you must try to find solutions.

Q to JQ: What qualities are needed to get promoted?

A: The format of the team had to change to match the players available due to injuries. Having to play with wingbacks means Brady and Pitt are not so offensive minded. Aiden Collins has been the best player over the last few games. 4-4-2 is the preferred formation, but 3-5-2 was the formation he played in when at Reading, who were second in their division at the time. They lost 4-3 on penalties in the play-offs with Shaka Hislop in goal. Their 3-5-2 formation had defensive wingbacks.

Q: At times the Habbin looks bare, wouldn't it be better to allow the whole of the Habbin to be used?

A from Brian: There are financial reasons, it costs money for stewards to open that part of the ground. Morecambe is not a league ground, whereas the Abbey is a league ground.

Q: Being interested in the CRC results, why are the results and fixtures not shown in the programme?

A from Jez: There is publicity on the website and in the programme usually, with match reports which can sometimes take up all the space if the team has had a win. The CRC name does not help attract fans, but it is much the same team that did so well in the FA Youth Cup that attracted 2 to 300 fans to games. Since the club lost the Centre of Excellence when relegated they cannot play in the Youth Alliance. Ages 9 to 16s teams can organise friendly games, but a strength of opposition is required so the 16s play against men for good development. At Step 5 in the league pyramid a team cannot be entered as a reserve team. Two players can currently play for CRC and CUFC, Mark Peters and Danny Crane.

Follow up question: Where are the fixtures on the website?

A: Reserves Fixtures and Results in the Squad section.

7. Other Business

Dave thanked Jimmy, Jez and Josh for coming to the meeting and answering questions. He thanked Jez for the work he is doing with the Youth and CRC teams, and was glad to see Josh in the team, despite the dodgy haircut!

The raffle was drawn and raised £103.

The meeting closed at 10pm.