



Minutes from Open Discussion: 'Your vision of the future' Meeting, 26 November 2014

Attendance for the Brakes Trust:

Nick Rogers (Chairing meeting) Apologies:
Peter Davis Adrian Barton
Graham Hobbins
Roy Sandison
David Falp (Treasurer)
Nick Hallworth (Secretary)

For Leamington FC:

Jim Scott (Chairman)
Russell Davies

Others including: Simon Saunders, James Saunders, Marc Weissenberger, John Glendinning, Lee Matthews, Tom O'Connell, Liam Crutchley, Paul Sandison, Kevin Watson, Peter Bowen, Paul Vanes, David Hucker, Chris Lonsdale. Apologies: Sally Ellis.

60 second vox-pops: What is YOUR vision of the future for Leamington FC

Peter Bowen: An uncertain future

Peter Davis: Having worked in kids football and in town – a bright future, if we want it. But we need to get more people involved.

Tom O'Connell: As a younger fan it is a very bright future if we want it. There are opportunities ahead. We need a connection between younger and older fans. The key word is trust; older fans will give us a club to support going forwards.

David Falp: A club that my two boys would choose to support whether I do or not.

Marc Weissenberger: If possible, a club within walking and cycling distance.

Paul Sandison: Not to lose what it has, not to become like 'Anytown FC'. If offered something better than good but not the same.

Lee Matthews: For the club to have a sustainable future. To live within its means and not be beholden to anyone. As long as [ground] is better and we don't lose what we have and own, as a club and as fans.

John Glendinning: A lot of clubs have been knocking around at this level for a long time. We have got to be ambitious for the future.

Nick Rogers: My vision is more of the same, year on year incremental gains. When first coming to the ground had an excited son who had only seen Euro 96. More of the same whatever it is, don't want to jeopardise it.

Roy Sandison: It is really good to see the younger fans coming along. Great singing this year, brilliant to see a new batch of supporters.

From the floor: The shirt on the wall here is AP Lockheed, a brilliant side. I don't trust the council, we had 12 years without football. [Responding to this, NR commented that that was the last thing that anyone wants].

Jim Scott: Explore every opportunity to continue to improve the club but never to endanger the club at any time.

Russell Davies: Community is very important. To become embedded in the town.

Peter Davis: There are probably around 200 people doing stuff for the club tonight, not just the people here. The club is growing, it really is.



Discussion topic: "Leamington FC has reached its level".

Key points from the discussion:

- As soon as you say you have reached your level, you start going backwards.
- This is a good time for consolidation
- It is difficult for Leamington FC now, and a big leap to the next level. It is not credible to progress under the current business model. The level is governed by the income.
- Sustainability and fan ownership is the key.
- Discussion underlines the need to build on what we have within and through the community: Youth system and Trust community involvement.

Discussion topic: Should supporters have a more defined role in the club?

Key points from the discussion:

- In an ideal world yes, at every club. A place on the board.
- One set of fans who do have a democratic say is Trust members. The Trust does not have a large shareholding, but it is a shareholding.
- Business model should be one member one vote and fully accountable.
- Comment from the floor that 'if it hadn't been for shareholders then there wouldn't be a club now'. PD reaffirmed that no-one is disrespecting shareholders, they are the people who saved the club.
- Club board reaffirmation (from JS) that we are all fans and the club board will not do anything which would endanger the club. Desire to be at the heart of the community and to grow club in a safe way.
- Some major shareholders appear to be negative about the proposals, but this was countered by opinions that they have the club at heart and there are different perspectives on risk. There is also a risk associated with doing nothing.

Moving onto the ground move issue, TOC queried whether what the shareholders believe is what the fans want. The fans want to hear a lot more before decisions are made. LM agreed that no-one can make informed decisions before full facts are presented. PD underlined the point that club ownership is through shares and that there are people on the shareholder list who never even attend games. Any big decision should take into account the wider people and it is very unfair to underestimate the supporters body out there.

At this point the view from the club board was requested (with JS and RD present). JS commented that the company structure from 83/84 was what was suggested the best way at that time, but you could argue that it is possibly not the best model now with regard to being at the heart of the community.

JS revealed that things were 'moving on' with Warwick District Council and that the club was holding an Extraordinary General Meeting on 21 December. Notices for that meeting had been posted out that night. There will be a presentation and a vote on a resolution. There is a deadline from WDC who want to clarify from the club what they (the club) want to do. The club are seeking authority to continue discussions.

PB queried whether WDC has confirmed that a CPO will not be used and JS confirmed this. PB also queried whether the ground had been valued. RD confirmed that it had, but this figure will be stated at the EGM.



RS shared that he had spoken with the WDC Chief Executive, Chris Elliott, and that he was open about his vision and good intentions. The topic of Corby was raised – a similar situation with a ground rented from the council but almost went into receivership.

RS asked JS what steps had been taken to engage the shareholders and Trust, and invite them to meetings with the council. JS stated that the club's board of directors were elected by the shareholders and were in sensitive discussions. At a suitable point the information will be opened out, but JS understood where RS was coming from. Ultimately though, it comes down to the people elected to do the job. The club are talking to the shareholders.

Discussion topic: Benefits of a future nearer town.

Key points from the discussion:

- It's dangerous to walk or cycle to the ground.
- Stockport issue (away fan behaviour): currently nowhere to eject fans to.
- A lot of grounds are indeed near or in town and don't have big crowds. The old Windmill Ground did not have large crowds.
- Closer to where people live gives opportunities to get a lot more people involved (youth sides etc).
- With a community stadium could have a bar open 7 days a week – increased revenue.
- Improved accessibility and parking.

The Trust thanked the club for facilitating the meeting and everyone for attending.

/ Meeting ended.