

Directors Report
For the
2023 AGM of the Bristol Rovers Supporters Club

This time last year, Helen Wigmore and I presented this report in the capacity of “Associate Directors” of Bristol Rovers (1883) Ltd. The term “Associate Director” is defined in the Football Club’s Articles of Association and, simplistically, refers to someone with an entitlement to attend Board Meetings but without the right to vote on issues discussed.

We enjoyed those positions as a result of David Thomas’s great work in repairing the fractured relationship that had existed between the Football Club and Supporters Club at the time. Whilst it didn’t fully fulfil the terms of the Share Agreement, it nevertheless, gave us a much stronger base from which to represent the views of both the Supporters Club and the fans, in general, to the Board of the Football Club. It also gave us the opportunity to prove the benefits of having supporter’s representation at Board level. At the time of the last AGM we had already attended 2 Board Meetings and, I would like to think that we had begun to cement a much higher degree of trust between us than had previously existed.

Since then, quite a lot has happened:

- There has only been one further Board Meeting, which Helen and I attended. We were pleased to report that, in an attempt to achieve additional transparency, the Club agreed to publish an abridged version of the minutes of that meeting. This contained all of the information which we would ordinarily have been able to report to the Supporters Club and it went down well with the Supporters.
- At that meeting, the decision to proceed with the new South Stand was made. Unfortunately, whilst building work has commenced, the project has been slowed down by problems in attaining Planning Permission.
- The Board Meeting was immediately followed by the AGM of Bristol Rovers (1883) Ltd. At this AGM, it was announced that Helen and I were to be offered Full Non-Executive Director status on the Board of the Club and the appropriate documentation was forwarded at the end of February 2023. I have completed mine and am now registered with Companies House as a Full Director, whilst Helen felt that she could fulfil her duties better by remaining an “Associate Director”.
- We have held a series of Fan’s Directors Q&A Sessions prior to one of the away matches and two of the home games. I would like to thank all of those who attended and for the constructive nature of their questions and suggestions. All of these comments have been put to both the Board of the Football Club and the EC of the Supporters Club and are currently being considered. The results will be published as soon as they are available.
- The control of the Football Club has been assumed by Mr Hussein Al Saeed following the purchase of a 55% holding of shares in Dwayne Sports Ltd from Wael Al Qadi. We have publicly thanked Mr Al Qadi for his unstinting support of the Football Club since February 2016 and I am sure that you all share those sentiments.

The new owners have already stated that they share the same objectives for the Club: To achieve a sustainable future for the Club and to push the Club forward into a higher division. As part of the takeover deal, the debt of the Club has been securitized, leaving the Club debt free, to all intents and purposes. They have also supported the Manager during the last transfer window.

There has not been a Board Meeting since the new owners took control. The Board structure has obviously changed and the new details were announced at the end of September and are now published on the Companies House register.

However, I have had a very positive meeting with them. At that meeting they reiterated some of their hopes for the future of the Club and we discussed the role of the Fans Directors and the role and activities of the Supporters Club in pushing the Club forward. The new owners were keen to involve the Supporters Club with this objective in mind. We have agreed to establish a meeting in early November where, together with Helen (and the new Chair), we can put some flesh on the bones of a new working partnership.

I hope that I will be able to answer any further questions that you might have during the meeting.

Stephen Lamble

Supporters Club Director.