**Fan Advisory Board Meeting**

**North Stand Sky Lounge, Amex Stadium**

**March 10th 2025**

**Present**

Paul Barber (PB)

Jenny Gower (JG)

Gerry Brown (GB)

James Cassidy (JC) via Teams

Mya Choudhury (MC) via Teams

Jo Davis (JD) – Chair

Andy Goodchild (AG)

Lucy Holford (LH)

Gillian Martin (GM)

Jonathan Poole (JP) – Secretary

**Apologies**

Charlie Benny (CB)

Andy Maclay (AM)

Clive Steed (CS)

Emily Wadge (EW)

1. **2030 Strategy**

PB presented an overview of the 2030 strategy for the club. He emphasised that the strategy covers all aspects of club operations, with specific and measurable objectives attached to every area of performance. This is the fourth iteration of a strategic vision during PB’s tenure and the approach is to establish what the club should look like in 2030, working backwards from that position and identify key steps required to get there.

* PB spoke about the brand of Brighton & Hove Albion F.C., which is consistently recognised across world football, allowing the club to attract better players, more lucrative sponsorship deals and additional revenue stream. Ultimately, the strength of the club’s brand is a factor which will help keep ticket prices at an affordable level between now and 2030.
* In a wider sense, PB spoke about the BHA Foundation, which was renamed from Albion in the Community in support of the club’s brand. The Foundation has continued to grow and develop and is a key driver for the club’s role in the community. Equally, the club has now had connections with UNICEF for 3 years, with the initial approach coming from UNICEF. PB felt that their values match those of Brighton & Hove Albion.
* PB also highlighted the importance of building close affiliation with like minded clubs. Having qualified for a European competition, the club now has a seat at the table at European Club Association meetings, which helps influence how European clubs operate, how ticket allocations are determined and ultimately how fans are treated. PB stressed that it is vital the club remains true to its values, always acting in an open and transparent manner. Fans are vital to the club’s continued success and it is important to retain the sense of community and togetherness which has served the club so well in recent years.
* From a financial perspective, PB underlined the importance of the club remaining profitable and being a sustainable business. It is important to drive revenue and manage costs. In this respect, PB spoke about the importance of being realistic when it comes to investment decisions, stressing that the club wants to keep ticket prices affordable but that this must be supported by prudent financial management.
* In terms of infrastructure, PB spoke about the club’s desire to develop a suitable stadium for the women’s team in the Brighton & Hove area, with a-lot of work still required to achieve that goal.
* PB spoke about the club’s commitment to gender and ethnic diversity, noting that the Executive team is now more gender balanced. He also reiterated the club’s desire to become one of the most environmentally sustainable clubs in the world by 2030.
* On the playing side, PB confirmed that the club’s ambition for the men’s team is to remain a consistent top ten Premier League club, with the chance of qualifying for Europe on a regular basis, either through Premier League position or by winning a major trophy. For the women’s team, the goal is to regularly finish in the top 4 of the Women’s Super League and challenge for cup competitions.
* PB added that the club remains committed continuing to develop players who progress from the academy to the first team, both on the men’s and women’s side.

PB took a number of questions regarding governance, transportation & infrastructure, ticketing. The FAB members thanked him for such a comprehensive overview of the club’s 2030 vision, delivered in an open and transparent manner. PB left the meeting at this point.

1. **Recruitment**

JG led a discussion on FAB recruitment. We agreed that it is essential to maintain FAB composition which represents the club’s entire fan base. With CB’s recent relocation to Japan, we agreed to proceed for the 2025/26 season with 12 members + an international representative. We shall therefore be seeking to recruit new FAB members from the following areas:

* 1 x My Albion + member.
* 1 x 1901 club member.
* 1 x Men’s season ticket holder in the family section, who should also be a parent or guardian of an under-18 season ticket holder.

We agreed that the recruitment process would take place from April 1st to 21st inclusively, taking into account filtering of applications and interviews from 7-14 April. Final voting for new members should be concluded by April 28th.

1. **Matchday atmosphere working group**

* AG and JC provided an update. A newly formed group, North Stand Nine, have contacted AG and want to crowd fund for a flag display at the Nottingham Forest game on March 29th. There was also a suggestion that 250 honesty flags could be given out in N1D before every home match, with drop-off and collection points to be determined. JC has a list of fans expressing an interest in flags, with 30 positive responses to date, albeit an indication that North Stand Nine would take 100 flags.
* JG reiterated the need to be realistic about lead time, cost and suppliers, given the short timeframe in question. JG asked AG & JC to come through her in the first instance, so that she can liaise with her team, as required.

1. **Fan engagement working group**

* GB provided an update. Current engagement with supporters’ clubs is good, but the numbers attending meetings is relatively low. The recent webinar attracted 4/8 supporters’ clubs and 25 attendees.
* We held a ‘Meet and Greet’ session in the East Stand outer concourse prior to the Fulham game on March 8th, which was well received, although the number of enquiries was relatively low. We agreed that this points to the need to continue raising awareness of the FAB through all channels of communication.
* JP recommended that we ask supporters clubs with whom we have contact to grant us a slot at future meetings. We agreed to take this forward as an action item for the FAB as a whole.

1. **EDI working group**

* GM confirmed that 3 meetings of the working group have taken place since the last FAB meeting, with Sarah Byrne, Sarah Gould and Richard Valder-Davis. GM also explained that there have also been some spin-off meetings too, notably with JD and Julie Bettridge (BHA Foundation) trying to organise a coach to the final WSL game on May 4th for disadvantaged youngsters. The club may launch their autism packs at this time.
* GM met with Richard Valder-Davis and a team from Samaritans head office to look at ideas for Mental Health Awareness week. MC is trying to arrange a meeting with the Al Medinah Mosque in Brighton.
* In the FAB’s first 2 years focus was on Disability, given Niraj’s experiences as a wheelchair user. The Disabled Supporters Association (DSA) has now been up and running for a year and is closely involved with the FAB.
* The FAB are looking at other areas of equality and inclusion:

 Mental health initiatives

 Hong Kong Seagulls Lunar New Year Event

 Iftar meal and links into Muslim community

* There is also interaction with other groups such as SheGulls, Seagulls DSA and Proud Seagulls.
1. **Sustainability working group**

* JD, on behalf of CB, explained that they are working closely with the Brighton & Hove Museum to curate a permanent exhibit. Feedback has been positive and JG confirmed that the club is committed to providing financial support.
* JG confirmed that there has been a further approach about food banks, but that this matter has gone quiet. There would be a requirement for the food banks to be located offsite.
* JD raised the ‘bring a coat, leave a coat’ idea, which has been discussed in the past and could be resurrected.

**7. WSL working group**

* JD and LH provided an update. Away support for the team has increased at recent matches, which is encouraging. There has been recognition of the improved vocal support from the team.
* Interaction with SheGulls in the Fan Zone has been very positive.
* JG confirmed that Football Beyond Borders will be attending the Arsenal h) at Crawley on May 4th.

**8. A.O.B.**

* The possibility of fans remaining on coaches upon arrival at The Amex was raised. JG agreed to ask drivers if this was a possibility. JG confirmed that a larger pool of ‘here to help’ volunteers is required, i.e. a team of 20 with 12 present on matchday, along with an accessibility team.
* We enquired about the project initiation documents (PIDs) being published on the FAB section of the website. JG said that some formatting is required. We agreed to follow up with her.
* We agreed that JP would write an article for the men’s programme, highlighting the role of the FAB and current initiatives. JP to send JG a draft article by March 21st.
* With no further business to discuss, JD closed the meeting. The timing of the next FAB meeting will be confirmed in due course.