

RED IMPS COMMUNITY TRUST (RICT)**Notes of the Board Meeting (BM) held via Zoom at 7.03pm on Wednesday 13th March 2024****1. PRESENT**

- a. Rob Bradley (RB) – Chair; Mandi Slater (MS) – Vice-Chair; Ian Hodgson (IH) – Membership Secretary; Chris Baldam (CB); Alice Carter (AC), representing Lincoln City Foundation (LCF); Kirsty Hackney (KH); Mark Hodds (MH); Rick Lalka (RL); Tony Smith (TS - deputising for Jonathan Battersby (JB)), Steve Freestone (SF) – Company Secretary; Andy Porter (AP) – Minutes Recorder plus Observer Emma Crellin (EC). TS and EC were welcomed to the meeting.
- b. Apologies for absence were received from Steve Tointon (ST) – Treasurer, Jonathan Battersby (JB), David Milling (DM), Stewart Millar (SM) and Observer Nick Procter (NP).

2. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a. Notes of RICT's BM on 10/01/24 had been published on RICT's website, with their availability being announced via RICT's social media channels.
- b. Notes of RICT's BM on 12/02/24 would be published on RICT's website, with their availability being announced via RICT's social media channels.

3. EVENTS AND FUNDRAISING

- a. Everyone present had enjoyed the latest RICT Bingo Plus Night, held on 04/03/24 at the premises of Tension Twisted Realities (TTR), where the next session would be held on 08/04/24.
- b. Details had been announced on RICT's website and through its social media channels of the 5-a-side tournament for supporters to be held on 01/06/24 at Active Arena in Moorland Way, starting in the afternoon and finishing in time for participants to watch on television the UEFA Champions League Final, which would be played in the evening. **ACTION: RB would ask Gavin Gordon whether the Former Players' Association (FPA) intended to enter a team.**
- c. The joint RICT and FPA "Evening with the Legends" event would be held at TTR's premises shortly before or shortly after the start of the 2024/25 football season.
- d. Raffle tickets, costing £1 each, were on sale at RICT's Pod in the University of Lincoln Fan Village before home matches for a draw on 27/04/24 for the prize of a home shirt and match ball, signed by the Club's players, to raise funds for the FPA.
- e. A player's shirt and a photograph from the 2016/17 National League winning season had been received. **ACTION: Fundraising suggestions were requested from all RICT Board Members.**

4. FAN ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

- a. The latest news items published on RICT's website continued to attract many views. Departure times and ticket prices for the Red Imps Association Travel Section (RIATS) coaches had been updated whenever tickets went on and off sale, including details of the re-arranged match at Oxford United. **ACTION: AP would continue to keep the website updated as the season progressed and liaise with RL for appropriate social media publicity.**
- b. Even though some internal work was still required, RICT's Pod had been used instead of the marquee on home matchdays from 02/03/24. Club Director Herman Kok, representing the Pod's sponsor, Lindum Construction, had conducted an official opening ceremony on 12/03/24. RICT's base continued to be very busy on home matchdays, particularly when sales of teamsheets on behalf of the Club commenced, with "freebie" items for children being popular. An Imptoons pop-up shop had been hosted on 17/02/24. **ACTION: RB would invite Mr Twists to visit the Fan Village before the match on 27/04/24.**
- c. The unveiling ceremony for the plaque, commemorating the site of the Club's original John O'Gaunts ground, had taken place on 02/03/24. Enquiries were being made as to whether a similar plaque could be placed on the Cowpaddle, to commemorate the facility previously used by the Club for player training purposes.
- d. There had been a steady increase of traffic using RICT's social media channels, with good feedback in particular about initiatives relating to the John O'Gaunts Club (JOGC) Scheme and the Pod. The sharing of many images by the Club's Photographer, Graham Burrell, was greatly appreciated.
- e. Five new exhibits had been uploaded to RICT's virtual museum. More would be added when items donated by the granddaughter of William Sellars (who played for the Club in 1935) had been sorted.

- f. A “regular update” message had been circulated on 03/03/24 to all RICT members for whom an email address was held, save for those who had elected not to receive such messages.
- g. The trophy for the Player of the Month Award for February had been presented to Reeco Hackett on 12/03/24.
- h. A response was awaited from Lincoln Cathedral’s Marketing Manager as to whether the link between the Club’s crest and the Angel Choir Imp could be commemorated in some way.
- i. Voting for the Player of the Season Award, inaugurated by Lincoln & District Football Supporters Club, would be administered by RICT between 08/04/24 and 22/04/24. Practical arrangements for the presentation on 27/04/24 would be discussed with the Club closer to that date.
- j. Two Lincolnshire Echo articles about RICT had been published since the previous BM.

5. CHARITY/COMMUNITY ACTIONS

- a. Donations to LCF (including from the sale of surplus stock in RICT’s library of old matchday programmes) were accumulating in the collection bucket at RICT’s Pod on home matchdays. They could be supplemented by a donation from RICT to enable a sign to be installed at the entrance to Poacher’s Den and to provide some Scalextric equipment. **ACTION: AC would discuss LCF’s needs with Brittany Bell, LCF’s Placement Leader.** Leaflets advertising Poacher’s Den would be handed out in the Fan Village before the game on 16/03/24, as it was both Junior Takeover Day and a “Kids for a Quid” match. A feature about the Den had been published on RICT’s website and mentioned in a message circulated to all RICT members for whom an email address was held, except for those who had exercised the right to opt out of receiving such communications.
- b. Notification was awaited from Lincolnshire Co-op of whether RICT had been short-listed for a Community Champions grant, to be used to fund activities targeted particularly at youngsters in the Fan Village, which would also assist the Club’s rating in the Fan Engagement Index.

6. STACEY WEST PROJECT

Construction work was progressing well and was on schedule. It was not known whether a sensory room would be provided. **ACTION: RB would check the situation with Martin Hickerton, LCF’s Chief Executive Officer, at the next Multi-Party Meeting (MPM).**

7. FAN LED REVIEW (FLR)

- a. The next meeting of the Club’s FLR Working Group would be held on 13/04/24, when RB (representing the Club’s minority shareholders and bondholders, as well as RICT members), would attend, along with MS (representing JOGC members), JB (representing Lincoln City Banter, the Stacey West Podcast and Lincoln City Fans Player Scheme), AP (representing the RIATS and RICT members) and NP (representing the 617 Squadron).
- b. The Football Governance Bill had not made any further progress through parliament. Premier League clubs had failed to agree on 11/03/24 the terms of an offer to be made to clubs in lower leagues for the sharing of broadcasting revenues. The Club had allowed for such a possibility when setting its budgets for 2024/25. Caroline Dinéage, Chair of the Parliamentary Culture, Media and Sport Committee, had subsequently stated that the government should urgently introduce an Independent Regulator of English Football.
- c. The approval of the Fans’ Share had been publicised through RICT’s social media channels, on its website and in an interview of RB on the “The Price of Football” podcast. An article about it had also been submitted to Bees United, for publication in its newsletter.

8. LINCOLN CITY FC/HOLDINGS

- a. RB and MS had represented RICT at the Club’s most recent Board Meeting, with ST attending as a Club Director in his own right. Presentations had been delivered by Jez George, the Club’s Director of Football, and by Jason Futers, the Club’s Director of Innovation.
- b. Releases through the Club’s social media channels of interviews with MS about the JOGC Scheme and about International Women’s Day had been well received.
- c. The Club had held a Unite for Access Day on 02/03/24 in conjunction with Level Playing Field, to highlight its efforts to make football accessible to as many people as possible.
- d. Kevin Grix, the Chief Independent Football Ombudsman, would be the Club’s guest at the match on 16/03/24.

9. MULTI-PARTY MEETINGS

The next meeting between representatives of the Club, the FPA, LCF and RICT would be held on 21/03/24.

10. FAN ADVISORY BOARD (FAB)

- a. Minutes of the FAB meeting held on 20/01/24 had been published on the Club's website following the announcement of the pricing structure for the Club's 2024/25 Gold Membership Scheme.
- b. Attendees would be informed at all future FAB meetings of any discussions that should remain confidential, with disclosure of all other decisions being permissible. TS, JB and RL would attend the next FAB meeting on 16/03/24.

11. MEMBERSHIP

- a. The first window for the purchase of 2024/25 Club Gold Memberships (which included automatic RICT membership, unless an option to opt out was exercised) would close on 02/04/24 for both renewals and new members. People who were not Club Gold Members had used RICT's website facility to join during the preceding month, including a resident of Texas whose membership had previously lapsed. Notification had been received of the death of one long-standing member.
- b. The Club had announced details of its new John O'Gaunts Club (JOGC) Scheme, launched in partnership with RICT, with the Club being responsible for the day-to-day administration. Considerable interest had been generated. **ACTION: MS would ensure that contact details for members of the new Scheme were shared with IH.** New admissions to RICT's Gold Membership Scheme, which had been renamed as the JOGC Gold Legacy Scheme, were no longer being accepted and RICT's website had been updated accordingly. Members of the Legacy Scheme would retain their original benefits and had enjoyed a meeting on 02/03/24. MS was conducting the day-to-day administration of the Legacy Scheme.
- c. Ticketmaster still did not automatically invite non-members of the Club's Gold, Silver and Bronze Membership Schemes to join RICT whenever they bought match tickets (home or away) or iFollow passes. **ACTION: RB would raise the issue at the next MPM with Rob Noble (RN), the Club's Head of Supporter Services.**
- d. A draft RICT Membership Policy was being reviewed by RICT's Nominations & Governance Working Group (N&GWG). **ACTION: The N&GWG would recommend a suitable Membership Policy at the next BM.** When a Membership Policy had been adopted by the RICT Board, IH, SF and AP would review the documentation required to process membership applications, both online and in hard copy form.

12. GOVERNANCE

- a. The Football Supporters' Association (FSA) had agreed the wording of RICT's proposed new constitution, for which it would act as sponsor to the Financial Conduct Authority. It was noted that the new constitution increased from three to four the number of external Board Members who could be co-opted. The N&GWG was reviewing a draft RICT Members' Guide to the new constitution, the new Membership Policy and the new Elections & Voting Policy. **ACTION: The N&GWG would recommend a suitable Members' Guide at the next BM.** When that Guide had been approved by the RICT Board, it would be published (along with the proposed constitution and Policies) on RICT's website, with RICT members being invited to attend an informal Information Meeting to be held online before 30/05/24 if they wished to raise any queries or to make any suggestions.
- b. Due to problems experienced by users of the Google Chrome browser when opening Microsoft Word documents on RICT's website, the Word versions of RICT's Role Descriptions had been replaced by Portable Document Format files. **ACTION: SF would similarly replace the Word versions of RICT's Policies and Standing Orders.** More people had expressed an interest in joining the Trust Board. A meeting between one of them and representatives of the N&GWG had been postponed at his request from 06/03/24 to 20/03/24. Correspondence was ongoing with another, who had a particular interest in enhancing the matchday experiences of fans with disabilities. **ACTION: RB would introduce him to Charlie Beeston before the next meeting of the Disabled Supporters' Association, which was expected to take place in April.** RB had volunteered to take on the Fan Engagement Team Leader (FETL) role. RB would be appointed as the FETL on a trial basis until RICT's Annual General Meeting (AGM) in 2025.
- c. The signed Memorandum of Understanding had been received from the Club. **ACTION: RB would liaise with RN to synchronise the publication of details on the websites of the Club and RICT.**

13. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- a. In order to implement the restructuring of the RICT Board agreed at the BM on 13/12/23, elections would take place at the 2024 AGM to (i) the Fan-Elected Director (FED) role currently filled by RB, to which he did not intend to seek re-election, (ii) the new Community Engagement Team Leader (CETL) role, (iii) the new FSA Engagement Director role and (iv) up to three Board Member positions without a specific portfolio, with elections taking place at the 2025 AGM to (i) the other FED role, (ii) the Treasurer role, (iii) the FETL role and (iv) up to three other Board Member positions without a specific portfolio. It was noted that any nominees who were unsuccessful in elections could still attend BMs as Observers and could still join the teams supervised by the FETL and/or CETL. **ACTION: (1) AP, SF and RL would organise advance publicity of the arrangements on RICT's website and through its social media channels. ACTION (2): SF would set up an "AGM 2024" tab on RICT's website and populate it with the relevant documents as soon as they were due for publication, circulating to all RICT Members (as required by RICT's current constitution and Election Policy (EP)) links by 30/04/24 to the Nomination Form and by 11/06/24 to the Notice of the AGM.**
- b. Under rule 61 of RICT's current constitution, it would be necessary to select one more Board Member for retirement by rotation at the 2024 AGM, in addition to CB and IH, who had volunteered to retire. Retiring Board Members could seek re-election. Lots should be drawn by the N&GWG to determine which one of KH, MH, RL and SM should retire by rotation. **ACTION: Lots would be drawn by the N&GWG, with RB announcing the outcome.**
- c. As required by the EP, an Election Management Group (EMG) would be formed, comprising SF and (if he was willing to act) Richard Parnell (RP - the Club's Director of Legal and Football Administration) as two non-RICT Board Members and (if willing to act) an officer of another supporters' trust as the Independent Chair (IC), not being a RICT Member. Board Members who might be seeking re-election (CB, KH, MH, IH and RL) neither voted nor took any part in the discussion. **ACTION: RB would ascertain the willingness to act of RP and an IC.** The EMG would determine the date by which completed Nomination Forms should be submitted.
- d. Under rule 26 of RICT's current constitution, the deadline for receipt of members' resolutions was noon on 30/05/24. In addition to the customary resolutions for matters such as the independent examination of the accounts, there would be resolutions for the adoption of the new constitution and for the ratification of the new Membership Policy and of the new Election & Voting Policy.

14. FINANCES

RICT's annual accounts to 31/12/23 were still being finalised.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next BM would be held via Zoom at 7.00pm on Wednesday 10/04/24.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There being no further business, the BM closed at 8.32pm.