

RED IMPS COMMUNITY TRUST (RICT)

Notes of the Board Meeting (BM) held via Zoom at 7.00pm on Monday 12th February 2024

1 PRESENT

- a. Rob Bradley (RB) – Chair; Ian Hodgson (IH) – Membership Secretary; Chris Baldam (CB); Jonathan Battersby (JB); Alice Carter (AC), representing Lincoln City Foundation (LCF); Gavin Gordon (GG); Kirsty Hackney (KH); Rick Lalka (RL); Stewart Millar (SM); Steve Freestone (SF) – Company Secretary; Andy Porter (AP) – Minutes Recorder plus Observers Nick Proctor (NP) and, until 7.30pm, Michael Skubala (MSK) -the Club’s Head Coach and Luke Thornhill (LT) – the Club’s Senior Communications Manager.
- b. Apologies for absence were received from Mandi Slater (MSL) – Vice-Chair, Steve Tointon (ST) – Treasurer, Mark Hodds (MH) and David Milling (DM).

2 NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a. Notes of RICT’s BM on 13/12/23 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 10/01/24 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, which had taken place on 05/02/24 at the premises of Tension Twisted Realities (TTR), where the next session would be held on 04/03/24.
- b. The joint RICT and Former Players’ Association (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.
- c. Arrangements were progressing well for the 5-a-side tournament for supporters, which would 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.

4 FAN ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

- a. The latest news items published on RICT’s website continued to attract many views. The site would be rebuilt in the summer. Departure times and ticket prices for the Red Imps Association Travel Section (RIATS) coaches had been updated whenever tickets went on and off sale. **ACTION: AP would continue to keep the website updated as the season progressed and liaise with RL for appropriate social media publicity.**
- b. RICT’s marquee in the University of Lincoln Fan Village continued to be very busy on home matchdays, particularly when sales of teamsheets on behalf of the Club commenced. The free tombola provided at the marquee and in Poacher’s Den before the home match on 10/02/24 had been very popular. A door had been fitted to the Pod, which still needed lining, fitting out with floors, a hatch, counter tops, shelving and an electricity supply, plus signage.
- c. RICT’s social media output continued to generate lots of attention.
- d. Two new exhibits had been uploaded to RICT’s virtual museum. New material continued to be received. **Action: DM would record a commentary of the Club’s 1988 GM Vauxhall Conference winning match against Wycombe Wanderers, a video of which would then be uploaded.**
- e. A “regular update” message had been circulated on 31/01/24 to all RICT members for whom an email address was held, save for those who had elected not to receive such messages.
- f. The trophy for the Player of the Month Award for December had been presented to T.J. Eyoma on 20/01/24, with the trophy for the January award being presented to Adam Jackson on 10/02/24.

- g. The unveiling ceremony for the plaque, commemorating the site of the Club's original John O'Gaunts ground, would be held on 02/03/24. **ACTION: RB and MSL would liaise to (i) invite all John O'Gaunts Club (JOGC) members to attend and (ii) finalise the arrangements.**
- h. A meeting had taken place with Lincoln Cathedral's Marketing Manager, with a view to commemorating in some way in the Cathedral's Visitor Centre the link between the Club's crest and the Angel Choir Imp.
- i. The Club had agreed that RICT should once again administer the voting for the Player of the Season Award inaugurated by Lincoln & District Football Supporters Club. **ACTION: SF would discuss the practical arrangements for the presentation with Damian Froggatt, the Club's Director of Operations and with Jake Longworth, the Club's Head of Marketing & Retail, when opportunities would be explored for sponsorship and for a young presenter of the trophy for the Young Player of the Year Award to be selected in a competition to be arranged by RICT in conjunction with LCF.**
- j. Two articles about RICT had been published by the Lincolnshire Echo since the previous BM.

5 CHARITY/COMMUNITY ACTIONS

- a. The collection tins and their contents had been delivered to MIND, along with a cheque for RICT's £100 donation. MIND had expressed its appreciation for all the money and items donated during its year as RICT's charity partner, along with the associated publicity.
- b. Footfall in Poacher's Den had increased following publicity about that facility through RICT's social media channels, in its column in the Lincolnshire Echo and at RICT's marquee on home matchdays, where a collection bucket was provided for donations to LCF. Other LCF initiatives would be promoted later in its year as RICT's official charity partner.
- c. RICT might be eligible for a Community Champions grant from Lincolnshire Co-op, to be used to fund activities targeted particularly at younger fans in the University of Lincoln Fan Village, which would also assist the Club's rating in the Fan Engagement Index. **ACTION: RB would apply for a grant.**

6 MEMBERSHIP

- a. The Club had been informed that the online presentation on 25/01/24 had been well-received by JOGC members, who had approved the proposed partnership between the Club and RICT to enhance the JOGC scheme for the benefit of all concerned. The next JOGC members' meeting would be held on 02/03/24.
- b. Lincoln Digs had become a new RICT Small Business Member. One member of staff from each of two of the RICT Small Business Members had been registered as a new RICT Bronze Member, following the messages sent to all RICT Small Business Members. The draft Membership Policy would be discussed by RICT's Nominations & Governance Working Group (N&GWG) when the enhancements mentioned in Note 6(a) above were made public by the Club. 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.
- c. Rob Noble, the Club's Head of Supporter Services, had said on 27/01/24 that he was working with Ticketmaster to enable RICT membership to be offered automatically to non-members of the Club's Gold, Silver and Bronze Membership Schemes whenever they bought match tickets (home or away) or iFollow passes. **ACTION: Progress would be reviewed at the next RICT BM.**
- d. A new member had used the online facility to join RICT during the course of the BM. It was anticipated that renewal invitations (including automatic RICT membership, unless the option to opt out was exercised) would be circulated in the near future to all the Club's Gold Members.

7 FAN LED REVIEW (FLR)

- a. The Club's FLR Working Group meeting on 27/01/24 was attended by RB (representing the Club's minority shareholders and bondholders, as well as RICT members), MSL (representing JOGC

members), JB (representing Lincoln City Banter, the Stacey West Podcast and Lincoln City Fans Player Scheme) and AP (representing the RIATS and RICT members), with NP (representing the 617 Squadron) having given his apologies for absence. The next meeting would be held on 13/04/24.

- b. Even though Politics Home's latest expectation was that it would be close to the February parliamentary recess before the Football Governance Bill received its first reading, a Chief Operating Officer had already been appointed for the proposed Independent Regulator of English Football (IREF).
- c. The Club had confirmed a willingness, once IREF was up and running, to review the Club's constitution with RICT, checking relevance and appropriate alignment with the current aims of the proposed Fans' Share. Accordingly, RICT had (i) recommended to those of its members who were also shareholders in the Club that, at the Club's Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 08/02/24, they should vote in favour of the adoption of the new articles of association proposed for the Club and (ii) itself, in respect of its own shareholding in the Club, voted at that AGM in favour of the adoption of those new articles. Over 99% of the shareholders who had cast votes had supported that proposal, which was therefore carried and accordingly the issue of the Fans' Share by the Club to RICT had been approved. The Football Supporters' Association (FSA) had agreed to act as sponsor to the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) of the amendment to RICT's Rule 4, to provide expressly for RICT to host the Fans' Share, and that amendment would be proposed at RICT's AGM, which would be held on 27/06/24, at which it would also be proposed that the adoption of the new Elections & Voting Policy should be ratified.

8 LINCOLN CITY FC/HOLDINGS

- a. MSK and LT were welcomed to the BM, during which MSK answered questions about his work.
- b. RB and MSL had represented RICT at the Club's Strategy Day on 09/02/24, 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 MSK. The Club's financial projections for 2024/25 had been discussed and, even though agreement still had not been reached on a new deal between the English Football League and the Premier League, it was anticipated that an expenditure cap would apply to all clubs. The Club was planning for long-term financial sustainability, with income generating schemes also being discussed.
- c. 102 shareholders had been present in person or by proxy at the Club's AGM, which had been followed by a Fans' Forum with an even larger attendance. Both events had been well-received by those present.

9 FAN ADVISORY BOARD (FAB)

- a. Minutes of the FAB meeting held on 20/01/24 should be published shortly on the Club's website. The next FAB meeting would be held on 16/03/24, when confirmation would be sought that fully transparent disclosure could be made at RICT BMs of issues discussed at FAB meetings, given that (under RICT's Board Membership and Conduct Policy) RICT Board Members were bound by confidentiality obligations that were equivalent to those imposed on FAB members.
- b. FAB members would be encouraged to meet supporters at RICT's marquee in the University of Lincoln Fan Village on home matchdays.

10 MULTI-PARTY MEETINGS (MPM)

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

11 GOVERNANCE

- a. The FSA had been asked to act as sponsor to the FCA of various amendments to RICT's Rules in addition to the one mentioned in Note 7(c) above. **ACTION: If the FSA was willing to act as**

sponsor of those amendments, AP would submit a draft Members' Guide to RICT's N&GWG, in anticipation of a proposal being made at RICT's AGM that those amendments should be approved.

- b. Free evening training sessions (lasting for two hours) for Board Members of Supporters' Trusts were available online from the FSA. The Role Descriptions for Fan Engagement Team Leader, Community Engagement Team Leader and FSA Engagement Director had been uploaded to RICT's website. **ACTION: RICT Board Members interested in filling any of those roles should inform SF of their interest by 12/03/24, with the situation being reviewed at the RICT BM on 13/03/24.**
- c. The signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) still had not been received from the Club. **ACTION: RB would ask Richard Parnell, the Club's Director of Legal & Football Administration, for the signed MoU.**

12 FINANCES

- a. All payments and receipts up to 31/12/23 (both in cash and by card) at RICT's marquee had been verified. RICT's annual accounts to that date were being finalised. In advance of the BM, ST had sent to all RICT Board Members a financial update for the periods (i) from 01/01/23 to 31/12/23 and (ii) from 01/01/24 to 06/02/24. The annual Zoom subscription had been paid subsequently.
- b. The extension of the main sponsorship agreement between TTR and RICT had been confirmed in writing, with SM being thanked for his ongoing support.
- c. A further loan had been made to the Club following the latest Stacey West Bond investment.

13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next BM would be held via Zoom at 7.00pm on Wednesday 13/03/24.

14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There being no further business, the BM closed at 8.16pm.