

QUESTIONS BROUGHT TO CUSG MEETING ON MON 12th AUGUST 2019 BY THE USERS OF THECUMBRIANS.NET FORUM

- No Group is made/forced to answer any question and does so at their own behest.
- Some Groups have answered both their own specific questions and the ones that were marked 'All in attendance', others have answered just their own specific questions.
- If a Group hasn't answered their questions, a simple 'No answer received' has been written. This is in the interests of clarity within the CUSG Group.
- TheCumbrians.net would like to thank all those who replied on behalf of those who submitted questions.

QUESTIONS FOR CUFC: NOTE – ANSWERS PROVIDED BY NIGEL CLIBBENS.

Can the club comment on the suggestions by some that the now current aim/ambition of the regime is just to maintain league football for as cheaply as possible?

Simply not the case. Not true.

We will not risk the financial future of the club in a promotion gamble but that is not the same as settling for survival.

Our immediate ambition is promotion into L1. This was restated at the recent fans forum.

The trust commented in their AGM that "We all know who runs the club" regarding EWM. can we please have yours/clubs comment on this, mainly in relation to what the current owners do?

In actual practice, day-to-day, the directors run the club and make every key decision based on the authority they have – just like every other club and every other business. Often decisions are determined by the financial resources available, so, in "running the club" we have to ensure we operate and only spend what we have available and in accordance with the terms under which we that money is provided. I explained the difference between 1921 and Holdings in previous answers in prior months.

Key duties of Holdings board directors (comprising all the "current owners" and a representative of EWM):

- Make manager appointment
- Make senior staff appointments (1921 directors)
- Set the level of the Football Player budget, football staff budget and the budget for what 1921 does (except football).
- Approves all major contracts – like player sales - I explained the role of the Holdings board (which contains all the shareholders and a representative of EWM) in answer to a question last month with regard to authorising contracts.
- They can delegate authority to other individual directors
- Decide how to spend any football fortune, cup and player windfalls
- Decide on the priorities for spending
- Approve share changes (like debt/equity swaps in recent years)

The club, in the recent forum, mentioned they didn't receive the ticket money from Bury. Can this be confirmed and has the club done anything to try to get it?

- We played Bury on 6 April. Despite seeking payment from Bury no cash was paid over
- On 18 April 2019 we contacted the EFL to get information on Bury financial position (as we still hadn't been paid but did not pursue this further with EFL)
- On 23 April we raised it again with EFL as it was still outstanding
- On 25 April Bury made an alarming statement about its debts.
<https://www.buryfc.co.uk/news/2019/april/a-message-from-the-chairman/>
- As a result, on 26 April EFL we requested EFL help and it said it would make direct deduction at source from money which EFL was due to pay to Bury in mid May, and instead pay the outstanding balance to CUFC
- We were paid on 13 May by Bury (before EFL could pay us direct).

Were told that our budget is both the same as last season (Holdsworth)

I have confirmed this previously myself:

- The budget for 2019/20 is currently set at the same level as at this time last year
- In the run up to the January window each year this is reviewed
- The budget for 2018/19 was increased in December 2018 to fund player extra activity in the January 2019 window after the first half of the season.

and in the bottom 5 for the division (Pressley). Does that mean it was in the bottom 5 last season?

No. You cannot infer a ranking in one season from a budget and ranking in another.

Even though our budget is unchanged, the ranking depends on both our own budget and also other clubs' budgets. For example, our budget may be unchanged but our ranking could be up, if other clubs reduce their budgets to be less than ours. Also, even if the 18 clubs still in L2 this season from 2018/19, all keep exactly the same budget, our ranking can change depending on the budgets of those promoted and relegated teams.

The EFL data on Player spending is issued to clubs in October/November and February each year after each transfer window closes and the contractual spending commitments can be estimated with reasonable certainty.

Is the McCarron money funding the roof repairs to the A stand?

Some of the unexpected funds from the sale will inevitably need to be used to re-roof A stand. I explained in the past that the club needed to rebalance its spending priorities to invest both in the club for the future and also in player wages for the team now. We continue to do that.

Is the club losing money on the new format Trophy games?

The group games are break-even.

Currently, I'm asked to produce evidence of my disability quite regularly in order to get a free carer ticket. Is it not possible to store my evidence on the system and include the end date (that's stated on the letter) as its quite embarrassing to be asked all the time?

We will look into this. We always try to deal with these matters sensitively.

Is there lift access to the Edinburgh woollen mill stand?

No. The lift access in the West Stand is into Foxy's.

I occasionally sit at the front row of the east stand, I have only 2% vision, but the stewards stand up throughout blocking any little view I have. Is it possible for the stewards to sit down during the game (I understand they need to stand in the last minutes) or advise somewhere else i can go?

Please contact the club direct and confirm your seat number so we can speak to the stewards in that area.

QUESTIONS FOR CUOSC:

The two board members of Jim Mitchell and Billy Atkinson got voted back onto the trust board with 60ish votes. This is less than 5% of our average home attendance. Therefore what mandate do you now have, to say you represent the supporters when you sit on the relevant Carlisle United boards?

At our recent AGM both Jim and Billy were backed by an overwhelming majority of the people who voted. We therefore consider we have a mandate from our members and we will continue to represent them and all fans to the best of our ability. Obviously, we would love more members – the more we have the more influence we would have. It is only £10 a year for adults and £5 for seniors and under 16s.

The trust have received a lot of criticism recently regarding not having the general Carlisle supporters interests, therefore Have the trust considered resigning on mass, restanding if necessary, and starting again and making the trust what supporters want it to be?

We have a number of places available on our board and indeed some of the current board members would be prepared to stand down if someone could be found to take their place. You, obviously, have to be a CUOSC member to join the board but we are always on the look-out for new blood and if anyone is interested, and has the interests of the club at heart, please get in touch. We recognise it is difficult because people who would be keen to get involved often have young families and do not have the time. Hence it would be pointless resigning on mass and we also have a duty to our members and financial responsibilities (ie debts).

Personal opinion but Norman Steele standing for re election and getting voted back onto the board shows the staleness of the organisation. Previously there was a limit on the number of years a person could be on the board for , but was removed. Do you not think that removing this policy adds to the staleness of the group, stops new people coming in and adds to the idea the trust is a closed shop?

Board members currently serve for three years and then have to be re-elected by members. As explained earlier it is difficult to find new people so if someone is prepared to stand again we are happy to let them. It does not stop new blood coming in and we are not a closed shop.

Where does the trust see us the season, in terms of football position?

We would like to see evidence of the team making progress. The Crawley game was encouraging but it is bound to take a new-look team time to gel. Like all fans we dream of promotion.

How do the trust or at least their board representatives not know the full details of the arrangements the club have made with EWM over the loans they have made to them and the

control they are currently exerting over the financial operations of the club, surely this is or has been discussed at the board meetings they attend and if it hasn't been wouldn't that lead you to believe that matters which should be of concern to the club's second largest shareholder are clearly being discussed elsewhere without their involvement or knowledge and if this is the case shouldn't they on behalf of their 500 members be taking action to stop this possibly by the use of legal remedies such as the discrimination against minority shareholder legislation.

We do know the details of the arrangements and it must be clear to everyone the club are relying heavily on EWM for financial aid. We attend meetings of the club's Holdings Board and Operational Board and we report what we can.

In the minutes published on the club website after the July meeting, you claimed the issue with Waltero not receiving an email reply had been "exaggerated" but I don't think this is a fair summary of what actually happened. Waltero was perfectly justified in asking why he didn't receive a reply, and when doubts were expressed about the initial explanation given, it was reasonable for fans to ask for further clarification. I don't think anything was exaggerated, so why have you claimed that it was?

We have been in touch with Waltero about the email and we consider the matter closed.

At the last meeting I asked if you had a Data Protection policy. In response you said you had uploaded one to your website. Can you confirm whether you had this policy in place before, or did you only create it after I asked if you had one?

We were preparing a policy that was reviewed in light of comments made. It was uploaded after the question was raised.

I notice you use Google Analytics on the Trust website. What lawful basis under GDPR are you using for this? If it's consent then you need to change your cookie consent from opt-out to opt-in.

No personal data is stored by Google analytics so no 'opt-in' is needed to use a GA cookie on the site, under GDPR rules. We do not utilise the advertising features of GA, and we use anonymised IP addresses, so there is no data stored that could identify an individual user.

Someone on the message board said that the Trust are told not to post on the forum. Is this true or not?

Not true.

Will you consider creating an official account on TheCumbrians.net as a way of connecting and engaging with more fans? Even if it was something you just tried for a couple of months to see how it went, if it didn't work out at least you'd have tried and fans would see that you are at least making an effort.

We connect with fans on social media and other many ways and we are always open for them to contact us. We reply as quickly as possible. Our preference is not to have an official account on the messageboard.

In the replies to the previous set of questions their response regarding fundraising was: "Answered together - It has been difficult for CUOSC to get financial backing from local businesses in recent times because of succession of ownership issues. Obviously, the more members we

have the more money we can raise."

Why are the trust only looking to gain funds from local business? Surely there are a number of other options they can be doing to raise funds, Exeter for instance run a scheme where members donate monthly towards funding a player for the squad. Even our own London Branch come up with ideas, like the Jimmy Glass T-shirts to fund raise. Would the trust considered a less blinkered approach to trying to raise funds for the club rather than just trying to ask local business for money?

We organise quizzes and other events and also look to support the club through sponsorship. But we believe if the climate was better we could get more support from local businesses.

The link to your Data Protection policy is blue text on a blue background, which makes it a little bit difficult to see clearly. Why did you chose to make the text the same colour as the background in this manner? Surely it would be better to make it something like white text on the blue background so it is clearly visible?

Agreed and have changed.

Your accepted Mullen's offer of IT help which I think shows a willingness to engage with fans, provided you follow through with it. Could you keep us updated on how this is going, perhaps through the cuosc twitter and other social media?

We have arranged a meeting and hopefully things will move forward after that.

QUESTIONS FOR CUSAT:

If a person travels with you to an away game and that game is abandoned/postponed on route, what is your policy in terms of refund or travel to the rearranged game?

We no longer are able to get insurance for cancelled or abandoned games and therefore of the coach has left BP we would negotiate with the company for a part refund but this would only be in respect of diesel. The driver would have been booked for the day.

We are no different from ALL other clubs who are no longer able to get insurance. Our previous insurers were through the FSF.

Any return game will be treated as a new fixture as often these are on a weekday and not everyone who travelled on the initial fixture can travel again on the rearranged fixture.