



Crawley Town Supporters Alliance AGM

2nd February 2023

7:30pm

Redz Bar, Broadfield Stadium

Welcome: Reuben Watt, interim Chair of the CTSA, welcomed everyone to the CTSA AGM

Apologies: In total there were 45 members in attendance along with 55 people who had sent their apologies to the meeting.

Chair's address: Reuben gave the following address: "For those that haven't ever been to a CTSA AGM before, one of the things that takes place is the address by the chair or in this case the interim chair. For those who don't yet know me, my name is Reuben Watt, a final year University student studying Ethical Hacking. I have been travelling up and down the country supporting the Reds for around 12 years now. We have known for a while that Sam Jordan was wanting to step down as the Chair of the CTSA and it was decided that from the 1st October 2022, that I would step in as interim chair. A huge thanks needs to go to Sam Jordan for all of his hard work as chair of the CTSA. When I took over when CTSA had only 16 or so actual members excluding those who aren't part of Reds Rollover. One of my main aims was to make signing up for membership even easier and so, with the new website, we purchased a piece of software to allow people to join the CTSA. Which we have recently seen to be a great success. I hope you agree.

Since the last AGM, Crawley Town have had 5 different people managing the team. Around 50 players have been contracted by the club, some being more successful than others! As a club, these last few months have been difficult. However, it wasn't until the news that Tom Nichols were to be leaving and that supposedly all of our squad had been transfer listed when the CTSA really kicked into first gear. We immediately asked for a meeting with Chris Galley, and after a late cancellation, Mat Cowdrey and myself met him virtually to understand what was happening at the club. We have had a manager leave after just 32 days, a promise of a meeting as soon as Preston Johnson landed in the country which did not happen, an owner in the dugout for a match, an in person meeting with Sam Jordan, Mat Cowdrey and myself along with Preston and those minutes can be seen on our website, and finally a promise of a fan representative on the CTFC board with nothing to show for this eg a board meeting. So a lot has happened. This leads us to where we are today, following the closure of the January Transfer Window. A transfer window where we have seen Francomb, Morris, Nichols, Balagizi, Hessenthaler, and Balcombe leave in one sense or another. It is worth saying that the CTSA would like to welcome all those players that have joined us this transfer window and wish them every success as they put the Crawley Town shirt on. We would also like to formerly welcome Scott Lindsey and Jamie Day to the club.

Tonight we did invite someone from the club, mainly Chris Galley, to the AGM however he did not respond to our email requests. At 15:30 today, I received a message from Preston Johnson to say that Chris Galley was not able to join us tonight as his daughter has a school event. We would like to welcome Tom Allman, General Manager of Crawley Town, who has come tonight.



We are increasingly concerned about the direction that the club is heading with the current owners. Preston is due to land in the country on the 7th February and so we will be asking for a meeting with him at the earliest opportunity and we will do our best to update you on this. As the CTSA, we will be continuing to push for transparency and honesty from the owners. We want Crawley Town to be a club that we are proud of and to ensure that our football league status remains intact. We have heard this week about Scunthorpe United who have were facing difficulties but we have just had the great news surrounding their new ownership. Another club who you may have read in the news this week is Southend United, a much loved away trip for many of us, who are currently taking the steps to prepare for a formation of a phoenix club as they creep closer to the 1st March to settle a huge HMRC tax debt. We don't want our club, the club that for many of us is our life and soul, the club where life long friendships have been made, the club where memories have been made including ones from just the other side of the Redz Bar wall, to be in a similar situation to Southend. Owners may change but it is the fans that make the club. We will stick together, work together and hopefully cheer on Crawley Town football club for many years to come!"

Accounts: Simon Smith, Treasurer, said the below: "This is the AGM for the year ended June 2022. During the pandemic AGMs became a little protracted, however we have now caught up albeit with 2 AGMs in 7 months.

To recap, the role of the Treasurer of CTSA is to ensure that:

- Proper records are maintained
- The accounts are supported by receipts and an audit trail
- The accounts are independently examined each year
- The correct regulatory process followed – including with the Financial Conduct Authority
- The constitution of the CTSA is maintained under trust rules as established by Supporters Direct.

Firstly on the accounts.

As members it is your prerogative to review the accounts and books of the CTSA at any time.

During the year the finances of the CTSA saw steady improvement with the re-start of the Festival of Football and the growth of the Reds Rollover model creating a surplus of almost £1,800 during the year.

Overall the CTSA remains in good financial health with credit balances of £24,500.

The accounts have already been independently examined and after the AGM they will be filed with the mutual registry at FCA.

It is worth stressing that as a supporters trust the CTSA has clear aims and objectives as set out in the constitution, published on the website. These rules are now used by almost 200 trusts up and down the country.



Secondly the CTSA is both registered and regulated, with accounts publicly available and the directors accountable to the Financial Conduct Authority.

The role of a Trust differs from a 'Supporters Club' type model – Trusts have never been designed to be nice chaps raising money to repair the hand dryer in the toilets or to paint the tea bar.

Government sentiment remains strongly in favour of supporter participation in football clubs and the output of the government fan led review headed by Tracey Crouch MP is likely to move into legislation in the current session of Parliament.

Inevitably Supporters Trusts generally only come into their own in difficult times. We saw this at Crawley in the Majeed era. Indeed in recent months we have seen developing situations at Oldham, York, Scunthorpe, Southend and ongoing at Bury. All these clubs were regulars in the football league who have experienced a sharp decline in fortunes. We all know that dropping out of the Football League has serious consequences and with only 1 automatic promotion spot from the National League a rapid return is far from certain.

In a recent development, the Trust at Southend United lent the club £40,000 at the end of 2022 to ensure non playing staff were paid at Christmas (the Trust has yet to be reimbursed by the way).

Interest at Crawley is also increasing and since we made membership of CTSA free at the turn of the year membership has reached an all time high of over 500 reflecting the concerns surrounding our club at the present time.

It has always been a goal for the CTSA to have a meaningful say in the running of the club and the balance of the bank account is money we have kept aside in hope that we might one day acquire a small share, even a symbolic one.

Unfortunately to date with WAGMI in charge we have made little progress in this direction, as the Supporter Representative will outline."

The accounts were then voted on and approved by those present.

CTSA Membership: Membership was made free in the middle of December. Reuben highlighted again that back in October there were only 16 members but now the CTSA have 506 members to date. There members aren't just local Crawley fans but some are from the USA and even further afield. It is encouraging and speaks volumes that Crawley fans are united towards a common cause.

Reds Rollover: This year's Rollover- just under halfway through. Money in £2745, money out is first prize £824, second prize £412, profit £1234.

The CTSA did attempt to try and give the money, raised through Reds Rollover, to the club back in the Ziya Eren days. However, we were not ever given bank details or a location as to where the money should be sent - we still have two seasons' worth to give. Members were emailed in December to decide on donating or holding money to end of the season. 90% voted no. There will be a further vote for Rollover members in the new year.



Questions re: RR (what happens if £60 paid now re: tickets (half held over to next season), and what could be helpful re: the money being held and reasons why).

There was a suggestion of putting conditions attached to handing over any money to the club for when the time comes.

Supporters' Rep: Sam Jordan, interim Supporters Representative, gave a big thanks to Mat Cowdrey. Mat has put in a big effort to build a positive relationship and has designed Terms of Reference. However, these have not been approved by Wagmi despite being sent a long time ago. There has been no board meeting and no board announced. With Mat stepping aside there is a vacancy-deadline to apply is next Thursday (9th).

When Sam and others first met Preston in April he was keen to have a rep on the board. However there was no structure to organisation. Biggest frustration from the CTSA view is that they have purchased club and haven't employed the right people (ie. CEO, inexperienced DoF) with no people around them to advise. Sam does believe that Preston does care but is naïve and perhaps a bit arrogant to realise he needs people around him.

Preston and Eben are pulling the strings (in response to question re: how much influence does Preston have?). No one owns more than 10%, but difficult to ascertain who owns exactly how much.

Praise from audience: we are doing a good job and repping fans well

Discussion re: fan review, fit and proper person test, and what powers Trust may be given after Crouch review.

Closing date is 7pm 09/02/2023. No questions.

CTSA Board members: Reuben introduced the new CTSA Board. There was also an Introduction to Hugh McKinney who is going to be joining going forward. He brings a wealth of knowledge.

Open discussion: Tom Allman, General Manager of Crawley Town, answered some questions on behalf of Preston Johnson:

Preston not commenting on legal issues, other than it is on course for Wagmi's timeline to be resolved.

Tony Craig is a footballing decision on Lindsey's part- he is available for selection.

Sam: important to note that Tom is in place of Chris who should be here, we were only told this afternoon that Tom would be in place and we were to draft questions.

Tom briefly described the role of General Manager- day to day looking after the club and ensuring that the doors and matches get played..



Tom said Everyone at the club appreciates that fans are unhappy- people at the club do care and want it to thrive on and off pitch, a lot of good people at the club (including Wagmi) who care and want the club to succeed.

Tom mentioned that there are certain things that have gone well that may have paled into significance.

Preston was happy with the transfer window. Lads that have gone out, he can't comment really. Players that were brought in are players to be excited about.

CEO and board meetings: Preston says it is ongoing and in the process of finding a CEO.

Club are confident we will stay up (of course they are). Bodies were brought in to ensure that. No one expected us or wants us to be in this situation. Take stock in the summer and have another rebuild in the summer.

How much of the NFT sales went back to the club? Reuben: half went back to the club

Who does Tom report to on a daily basis? Feeds into Chris, who takes thoughts to ownership (Eben and Preston)

Deleted twitter thread by Eben- Preston couldn't comment- is Eben still involved? Preston is more public facing and on the ground more often, Eben more in the background working stateside.

Sponsorship: damaged relationships with long term local sponsors, on basis of bringing in big names. Why haven't the promised big sponsorships come to fruition? Blue chip sponsors coming from stateside and the way the season has gone is not attractive to sponsors. Aims and conversations with big blue chip companies, led by WAGMI, so probably more a question for Preston.

(From audience) Back of shirt sponsorship dispute, impression is they don't want sponsors, WAGMI haven't got good relations with local sponsors.

From audience to Jayme Ablitt, Commercial and Community Manager at Crawley Town: what's going on with sponsors? Jamie: The dynamic has changed. Tom: There was a good core of local sponsors, it is a shame that we have lost that. That structure has changed more recently and it is something the club is working on to bring back, granted it is easier said than done. Understands the notion of lack of experience at the club but there is some experience at the club, we know what needs to be done.

What are Galley's responsibilities? Under two previous CEOs, it was chief cheerleader of the club. Should be pushing the club off and on field- making sure we are fulfilling obligations. Making sure the club is being portrayed as it should be. How can we make sure that is conveyed essentially?

How is it possible Chris Galley can't be here? He isn't capable and needs to be accountable. Parents evening- but issue is the CTSA only found out today.

Fans forum: when? The CTSA have been told shortly after transfer window closes. The CTSA will be pushing the club for a date now that Preston will be flying into the country



Simon Smith: The issue is that lots of promises are made and not kept. (eg fan rep). if there's no board and board meetings, how can these things happen? Engagement with MP and local sponsors (by CTSA) is important.

No rules broken by the club not having board meetings- hopefully reforms change this.

What do CTSA need from fans?: need an injection of new energy, experience and skill sets. 8-10 people is best practice. Does need to also get back into fundraising. We need to be able to face up to owners with inconsistencies of them not sticking to their word. If they're breaching any rules, we need to be able to say that to them.

Safeguarding: not clear who has undertaken necessary safeguarding training and who are the safeguarding officials on the board? No answer from Galley and Preston doesn't know. Follow up: is this not a serious breach? There are videos of young people whose parents/guardians have not given their permission. The CTSA are chasing a response. Tom: We have gone down the right route with safeguarding, we have procedures and people in place.

Is it worth trying to negotiate with the club that season ticket holders are automatically CTSA members? The treasurer, Simon Smith, said that it could be, we have done it in the past.

Could we have a network of orgs under CTSA (ie. GH Coaches) so that fanbase is covered under CTSA. We had failed attempts with GH Coaches previously to work closely with them.

Question to Mark Dunford, Journalist: What is your perception about what is happening at the club? His remit is to be positive, sees the bigger picture. There's not a lot of evidence to say they lie- hasn't seen anything other than that.

David Conn and Joey D'Urso are investigating the club from a journalistic point of view (nationally).

Comment from audience: we don't know the owner's intentions.

Criticism of lack of communication from the club from several members of the audience.

CTSA does not condone any death threats and abuse, we have screenshots of some messages.

We will stress we need a fan's forum.

Do CTSA want the owners out? We don't have a choice, no one is ready to buy the club. Regardless of our feelings towards Wagmi. We would be naïve to push them out with no one ready to buy.

What do we hope to achieve? Pushing for them to be more open, honest and transparent and do the best thing for the club. Our hands are a bit tied.

What good is it if Wagmi doesn't engage? We will continue to attempt to engage with them. We need to engage younger fans as well as a Trust.



From the audience: we don't want to back Wagmi into a corner, we can't force them out. Sam: worth noting they have done some good things.

Sam: everything tonight comes back to the CEO. Preston is doing too much though.

Rochdale game: ticketing initiative discussions have taken place.

CTSA will keep plugging away for board meetings.

CTSA will have another meeting towards the end of the season if there is interest and members believe it is useful/needed.

At 9:30pm, the CTSA AGM was closed.