



All-Party Parliamentary Group for UK Parliamentary Football Club

Meeting: Online due to COVID-19. 1100, 14 July 2020

Minutes

Present:

Karl M-Cartney MP (Chairing); Brendan Clarke-Smith MP; Scott Benton MP; Ben Bradley MP; David Johnson MP; Katherine Fletcher MP; Robin Millar MP; Mark Eastwood MP.

Mark Ramsdale (MR Sport, Secretariat).

Apologies

Mike Kane MP; Ian Byrne MP, Lord Moynihan, Owen Thompson MP.

Nominations and Election of New Officers/Vice-Chairmen

It was noted several nominations for Vice-Chairmanship were received from Labour Party Members from both Houses but were withdrawn prior to the meeting.

All who put themselves forward were elected unanimously:

- Ben Bradley MP
- Robin Millar MP
- Mike Kane MP
- Scott Mann MP
- David Johnston MP
- Katherine Fletcher MP

[Secretariat's note: Mike Kane MP resigned as an Officer of the Group to the Registrar on 23 July].

Group Finances

The Group had yet to receive a formal handover of accounts or financial report from the Chairman of the Group in the previous Parliament, despite repeated informal and formal requests. This requirement had been repeated directly to the former Chairman by the Registrar.

The Group Treasurer in the previous Parliament stated via email on 22 June 2020: "At this moment in time there are no creditors or debtors and the bank account sits at £21,108.30. There are no outgoings or incoming. The last payment being £600 for referees on 18 September 2019."

It was agreed there was an urgent need to secure access to both the Group's final accounts in line with the Rules governing APPGs, and the financial statements prepared in previous years to ascertain costs and cashflow in order to prepare an annual operating budget.

[Secretariat's note: On 21 July, The House of Commons Registrar for Members Interests wrote to Mr Betts and Mr Murray as Chairman and Treasurer of the Group in the previous Parliament instructing the handover of assets and liabilities which the group had at the end of the last Parliament, and its last income and expenditure statement.]

From correspondence received by the Chairman, it was agreed that Ian Murray MP had resigned his position as Treasurer. Within the Rules governing all APPG's, the Chairman is the Chief Financial and

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Reporting Officer and it was agreed by the meeting that therefore there was no need for the formal position of Treasurer.

[Secretariat's note: subsequent to the OGM, the Chairman established Ian Murray MP did not seek to resign and retains his role as Treasurer. The Chairman is seeking clarity from Mr Murray].

Moving forward, the Group's finance reports would be placed on the Group's website once agreed at AGMs as required by the Rules governing APPGs.

Rescheduled Fixtures and Opposition

The Club's first game of the new Parliament was due to take place the day lockdown came into effect. With lockdown easing, a game prior to Summer Recess had been investigated but at the time of this meeting, guidance to enable grassroots football to be played had not been released despite personal conversations and re-assurance from the Sports Minister it was imminent, and it was therefore not considered possible to hold a game the following Tuesday.

A list of potential opposition sides has been collated, and the Secretariat is contacting more who have contacted the Club. The intention is to produce a season's fixture list comprising repeating games against specific opposition, as well as other charitable, representative, and suitable sides.

It was noted the Club is open to all, and Members are encouraged to invite colleagues to join the Group, whether playing or non-playing.

Rules for Fixtures

It was agreed that fixtures should be competitive for all involved to enable enjoyment as much as possible. To that end, the Secretariat will liaise with the opposition sides to ensure age and ability are considered when selecting their players, with a maximum stipulated guideline of three under 35 players on the pitch at any one time.

AOB

An Annual Dinner would be planned as soon as is allowed.

Asked to present the current position regarding Labour Party Members of the Club, the Chairman stated all Parliamentarians are welcome to become Members and Officers of the APPG. However, correspondence sent to all Labour Parliamentarians by the former Chairman, former Treasurer, Commons Opposition Whips and Lords Opposition Whips had called for a 'boycott' of the APPG. This correspondence had been made public and called into question the APPG's provenance, as well as the Chairman's standing.

As the APPG had been re-formed in full accordance with the Rules governing All-Party Parliamentary Groups, there was no question as to its provenance and Officers would prefer to focus on playing football, supporting football, and raising money for charity.

It was agreed that, as the Group was properly constituted in this Parliament, its focus should be on future activities. The current situation was preventing this and with no access for Officers to the Group's bank account, nor any financial reports to review running costs, the Chairman would write again, formally and privately, to the Registrar and to the Speaker for information and for them to form their own opinions on the matter in hand.

Given the longstanding service of the previous Chairman, a fixed term 'Honorary President' role was considered, subject to the outcome of appropriate handover of required information. The



Chairman was tasked with writing to offer this position and would report back to the Group at the next meeting.

The Chairman also reported that various meetings were planned with other parties and that he was confident that an appropriate resolution could and should be reached. He would report back to the next meeting of the Group, and update the Officers as and when appropriate.

Date of Next Meeting

The next Ordinary General Meeting will take place before on 29 September at 1600.

The next Annual General Meeting will take place prior to the June 2021 reporting deadline, most likely on a Wednesday at 1645 in Committee Room 14, date TBC.

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