

Questions from Trust Members to Candidates for the 2019 Election to the Trust Board

Responses by Clive Harrison

1. Are any of the candidates considering ways to reduce the amount of plastic used on match days? There seems to be a huge amount of plastic drinking glasses which appear to get thrown away after a single use.

There are a number of ways in which plastic has been cut from use at SJP. The Trust has financed paper carrier bags for the shop to replace the previous plastic bags. Plastic straws have been removed from the bar and in the kiosks, plastic spoons/forks have been changed to a more environmentally friendly form. FECRACE the volunteer led Real Ale & Cider bar introduced a reusable plastic glass with a deposit system some time ago. It isn't clear from the green bins around SJP that, in fact, the contents are sorted and recycled. I have suggested that we should add a number of plastic specific bins around the ground to emphasise the recycling element. We could also look at the possibility of using draft soft drinks in order to replace the plastic bottles and into expanding the FECRACE reusable plastic glass system further.

2. Have you done any unpaid work for the Trust-Club over the last 5 years that we Supporters would know about if so what and why did you get involved?

Yes, starting with the Junior Grecians when it changed from the Red Army about five years ago. This includes matchday duties in the Family Zones and providing activities for Family supporters around the ground, running the Social Media accounts, planning events, the introduction of the Family Zones, Family areas in the IPO and Big Bank, ticket offers and the business plans for these projects. Most recently, the introduction of the "My First Visit" scheme that offers children on their first visit to SJP a certificate, pitch side photo opportunity and gift, and the planning, funding and launch of the new Grecian and Lioness mascots.

I administer the ECFC Ball Boy/Girl team, liaising with parents about availability, with sponsors and the Club in providing uniforms etc. I also contribute content to the Matchday Programme.

I was elected to the Trust Board 3 years ago and am a member of the Ownership Group and the Communications Group, I consider myself to be an active member of the Trust Board and rarely miss meetings or Trust events. As with all Trustees I contribute my time freely. I also sit on a number of groups including the Gates Committee and have assisted with ticket sales at peak times.

I was elected to the Club Board by my fellow Trustees 10 months ago and hold the roles of Director of Supporter Engagement and Director with Safeguarding Oversight. These roles have their own responsibilities and include regular meetings. The Trust appointed Club Board Directors undertake their duties without payment.

3. Why did you join The Trust?

I have been involved in football most of my life, with my previous employment I moved around the country and attended matches wherever I was based. Finding the

time was always an issue but on settling in Devon I started following Exeter City. I then moved to the outskirts of Exeter, became a season ticket holder, signed my children up to the then Red Army and joined the Trust all in the same week. For me, as someone with a huge love of Football, why wouldn't you want to be involved with a Club owned by its supporters.

4. In your own household/family is anyone a Trust member if so who, if not do you think you could help them see why they should join.

Both my children are Junior Grecians members and have season tickets. My son will become a full Trust Member on his 16th Birthday in April and my Father in Law, a lifelong City supporter, is also a Trust Member.

5. Why should new members join in the future?

In simple terms, the more members there are, the more the Trust can contribute to the Club. This contribution helps provide a larger playing budget and so ultimately a better team on the pitch. We are extremely fortunate to have a Club whose majority shareholder is a Supporters Trust and to enjoy the input which that provides. It's a model that saved the Club and has survived the test of time, but in order to maintain that for the future, the Trust needs to grow and become more diverse. By joining the Trust, you are ensuring that the ownership model survives, you are contributing to the success of the team on the pitch while at the same time having a say in the Clubs future.

6. Aside from whatever technical and business skills you feel you can bring to the role, what do you think is the best personal quality you possess that will make you an effective Trustee?"

I am committed, approachable, considerate, supportive, organised, a "planner" and I follow projects through to completion.

7. Would you have liked to see the hustings on a match day, like 6.30pm last Saturday after the Plymouth game with the Centre Spot closing then would have been a fantastic time for fans to meet the candidates.

It certainly would, especially after beating Plymouth 4 nil! Although, logistically I'm not sure how possible that would have been? It's a good idea and certainly worth considering for next year as Hustings have proved difficult to schedule and attendance hasn't always been great.

8. How do you make the Elections more focused by the Club & Media to get more fans involved and understanding their vote counts.

Interest in the Trust and member engagement are always higher when the elections are contested and there is a varying field of candidates. As in society in general, there are problems with encouraging people to vote, they don't always see a choice between candidates or want to take part at all. This year there is an excellent field of candidates who have made themselves available to the membership, I welcome this wholeheartedly. There have been a few difficulties with the timing of the election, the Plymouth match being on the usual AGM date, an away FA Cup tie limiting the number of matchday voting opportunities and the hustings taking place on a Friday before an away game. Ultimately, they are Trust Elections and the Club has helped to promote the timeline and availability of candidate's manifestos, there is always

room for improvement but I would hope that this year's range of candidates will help to inspire others to stand for election in the future. Our model, with Trust representation at every level of the Club does mean that each member can make a difference and that every vote counts and counts equally.

9. The Trust Logo is missing from a lot of prominent locations within the Club how would you get more of a natural link between the Trust & Club.

In my work with the Junior Grecians I have ensured that the Trust logo is prominent. The young children may not realise the importance of the Trust or what it entails but early exposure to the brand is an important way of displaying Trust involvement in providing the experiences they enjoy at SJP. I then work in conjunction with the Trust Membership Secretary to convert Junior Grecians to full Trust membership. This has been very successful, and I'd like to think early exposure to the Trust and its logo help. There have been other areas in which the Trust has used its logo to expand the link between the Club and Trust, the current S*T*A*R*S appeal which will lead to increased exposure at the Cliff Hill Training Ground, sponsorship of the Trust Suite upstairs in the Park, the Trust logo on the paper bags in the Club Shop, sponsorship of the Woman's team. There has also been a recent member led proposal about including the logo on the playing and leisure wear which has had serious consideration. If there are other areas in which you think the logo could/should appear please pass this on to the Trust and it will be considered.

10. Do you think the Trust should take more advantage of the in house Club media departments like The 360, Club Websites, Match Day Programme, internet outlets, Local & Nation media contacts.

Yes, to some extent, the Club media team do a fantastic job, but they also put in the hours to achieve that, traveling to away matches, editing the media etc. What the Communications & Engagement Group are doing is seeking their advice on how to improve Trust media output. If you are talking about content, then yes 360's could occasionally feature the Trust logo or even a Trustee perhaps and local media would be another way of communicating with the public. The Club Media team have been enthusiastic in featuring Trust news and events, the matchday programme has several pages dedicated to the Trust, the History/Museum Group and the Junior Grecians. The Communications Group, like the other Trust Groups, are open to the involvement of Trust members, ideas are always welcome.

11. How would you improve next years Trust Elections from encouraging fans to stand for election and how the Trust Focuses on bringing the candidates to the memberships thoughts.

I think that this year's candidate list is excellent, for whatever reason, a good range of candidates have put themselves forward. That must be a positive and the Trust groups deserves some credit for that. I would like next year and the following years to be no different in this respect. Several ways in which election engagement might be improved have been mentioned during this campaign, including a specific Trust online forum, (Exweb has been used by all candidates, by choice, and has proved to be a useful and fair platform), online voting and the timing of the Hustings. I would expect, as after all Trust elections, there to be a review and if appropriate, changes made. Systems are evolving all the time and more avenues open up each year.

12. Would you like to see the Trust improve the assets for the Club and what opportunities do you feel we are missing at the moment that could bring long term gains for our football club.

Yes, there are lot's of examples of that already happening, investment in the Trust Suite in the Park building, the S*T*A*R*S academy campaign, contributions to the Junior Grecians Family Zones, the Museum, the under croft in the Adam Stansfield Stagecoach Stand, supporting the P rails in the IP Office Stand and much more throughout the history of the Trust. There are other areas that we could help improve including some of the facilities in the Park building.

13. How would you make the Trust website more prominent with Exeter City FC Fans.

I am a member of the Communications & Engagement Group and we have been working across all our Social Media platforms to increase engagement. The website is an ongoing process, it has undergone several changes in the past couple of years, the URL has been changed to a more explanatory, weownexetercityfc.co.uk and the site has and continues to undergo a full revamp. The Trust Chairman's regular monthly newsletters link back to content on the website thus increasing engagement with the site. The Trust have engaged with the Clubs excellent Social Media team and now many of the things on the Trust site are repeated on the Clubs social media outlets thus reaching supporters who may not yet be Trust members.

14. Do you think that Exeter City AFC Limited should post the full company accounts and not the edited version on company's house, and also push for all EFL clubs to do the same?

ECFC are not currently required to do so, one of the main reasons for a Club in our position not to do so is that competitors will not see detailed information regarding our accounts. This, for us, is quite important as we don't have a benefactor and so what is shown is what we have available. The Club does publish full accounts, and these are discussed at the Trust AGM.

15. What's the candidates' views on GESP "Mid Devon, East Devon, Teignbridge and Exeter City Council, in partnership with Devon County Council, are teaming up to create the "Greater Exeter Strategic Plan" and the new sports venue mentioned?
- "An sports stadium and concert arena with a capacity for 20,000 people could be built in the Greater Exeter area". No specific location for where any stadium would go has yet been decided. Cllr Christophers said it would have to be accessible for all four councils in the GESP. He said-"Making it accessible for all four areas cuts it down to around only four or five sites that can meet all the criteria we are looking at," Cllr Christophers said. "It is too early to be site specific but we are having discussions about it now. "Any stadium may need to grow over time and would have to be built so it can expand as it could be something that draws people in from all over the south west."
 - With the Exeter City Community Trust (CCT) strap line used over the last 2 years "Making Greater Exeter Greater" and Club Board Directors using Greater Exeter in the press there is an assumption that talks have taken place to move ECFC outside Exeter.
 - If we had to move do you think the best 2 locations would be Exeter Area Park Whipton inside Exeter or Westpoint outside Exeter.

As far as the councils having a "Greater Exeter Strategic Plan", they must have one, the councils have to meet targets on provision of leisure facilities for the public and as far as I can see they have been considering doing that in partnership.

- a) There are many variables mentioned in this section, including several references to no location having been identified, there is no reference made to ECFC and so the questions are hypothetical. There does appear to be a need for sizable concert venue and the possibility of drawing people to this are from all over the South West would be good for local businesses. Councils, working in partnership with a centralised location seems reasonable.
- b) Exeter City Community Trust (CCT) have indeed used this strapline and they have done some fantastic work in Greater Exeter providing many health and wellbeing projects and thus contributing to "Making Greater Exeter Greater". ECFC and CCT are a sperate legal entities, several ECFC Directors are involved with both organisations and so it wouldn't be unusual for them to use the term "Greater Exeter", it is also ECFCs main catchment area.
- c) Assuming we had to move, for me living in Clyst St Mary (Westpoint is also in Clyst St Mary) there are two ways of looking at it, it would cut my travel and parking costs on matchdays, but it would also lead to even more congestion on the Exmouth roundabout! Seriously though, there are many things that would need to be considered, one very important issue being accessibility for all supporters.

16. Under Trust Rules this would need to go to the vote of Trust members, how would you guide members if ever to be voted on.

Assuming, as you suggest, there were to be any ECFC involvement in such a plan, in order to answer the question, I would need a fully costed and tested proposal which does not exist. As you point out, any proposal of this type would need the consent of the membership, which is exactly as it should be.

17. Would you keep the younger Supporters involved and if ever to be voted on a move would you include the Junior Grecians in that vote.

The Junior Grecians are Junior Trust members, they pay a reduced contribution to the Trust (this had been waived in support of the Junior Grecians in recent years) and because they are under 16 (0-16 years old) and while I'm sure the Trust would be open to their views, they are not entitled to vote under current rules.