



Annual General Meeting		<b>Date:</b> 19 <sup>th</sup> February 2015 <b>Time:</b> 7.15pm <b>Venue:</b> Trinity Road stand, Villa Park	Circulation: Voting & Associate Members and Public		
Item	Subject	Action Agreed	Responsibility	Target Date	Revised Date
1	Quorum for AGM	Members present exceeded the required quorum and the AGM was duly opened.			
2	Financial Statements for year ended 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2013	Tony Barnes presented the financial report – refer to Appendix 2. The statements were duly approved by the membership.			
3	Membership subscriptions	Peter Warrilow presented the membership subscription levels as contained in the AGM notice. The subscriptions were duly approved by the membership.			
4	Elections of Directors and Company Secretary	Each Director & Company Secretary were duly elected by the membership: Peter Warrilow, David Michael, Mo Razzaq, Howard Hodgson, Stuart Griffin, Simon Goodyear, Kris Carr, and Joe Al-Khayat.  Neil James has become a co-opted Director until election at the next AGM. AVST Executive Board is now at 9 Directors.			
5	Non-requirement to conduct audit (80% majority required)	Tony Barnes explained the purpose and the resolution was approved by the membership.			
6	Authority to update the Society Rules (80% majority required)	Tony Barnes explained the purpose and the resolution was approved by the membership.			
8	AOB	Peter Warrilow chaired a session on “What do we want from AVST?” (see appendix 3 for notes) and took a list of questions for Tom Fox from the floor.  Question & Answer forum with Tom Fox (see appendix 1 for notes)			



## **Appendix 1: Question & Answer session with Tom Fox (CEO) and Nicky Keve, chaired by Peter Warrilow**

The purpose of the session was to give an opportunity for voting members to ask questions directly to Tom Fox.

Expectations on joining AVFC: Tom Fox had completed his objectives in his old role at Arsenal. Villa are a massive club and should be higher in the table with our peer group. Claret and blue thread runs through English football history from McGregor to present. Villa are commercially under-punching and Tom said he was the best person in the sports industry to perform Villa's CEO role.

Governance structure at Villa: Tom Fox reports to Randy Lerner. The Senior Executive include Robin Russell and the new Chief Commercial Officer. General Krulak is a non-executive director. Football manager reports to Tom Fox. Below the Senior Executive, there are the Heads of Department and Paddy Riley, Director of Recruitment. In addition, current recruiting a Director of Football Operations to support the manager, coaches and recruitment. It is a support role to ensure manager, coaches get what they need to achieve. It is not a Director of Football where the manager reports to them.

What changed re Lambert?: BBC interview: Best answer at time. Number of factors had changed his mind. Re. "false narrative": Tom's decision is not just about results on the pitch but what was happening wider within the club.

Standing/atmosphere: Answered by Nicky; Brigada and fans are doing a great job. Nicky mentioned the great atmosphere that Crystal Palace achieve: "rocking". Club need to get crowd levels back up. Still need to bear in mind issue with safety compliance being adhered to. It will take time to drive up crowd levels and atmosphere.

Incentives for last 7 home games: Member asked Nicky what about a 6 game season ticket? Nicky: "final 5" games now been offered as a bundle from Monday on website.

Safe standing: AVFC continue to support. Individual clubs need to continue to lobby Premier League in unison. Stewarding more lenient of persistent standing as long as not obstructing and not blocking gangways.

Disability access: Looking to move away supporters back to away fans. There will be a project at end of season to do this. 450 people can still access the ground with disabilities.

Ticket pricing/£5bn/20's Plenty campaign/Reciprocal away arrangements/home ticket freeze/young people pricing: +24% on last year on the road. Hull, Swansea, Sunderland had reciprocal arrangements + coach arrangements to Hull + reduced price on Chelsea away. 2015/16 pricing to be announced soon. A vocal away support is important to the product put on TV and pushes up the international market and hence higher TV revenue stream. Supporters are important for the product but lower share of club revenue directly. On 20's plenty campaign, not physically possible where home/away sit next to each other.

Plan for a full stadium: 4 years of football not liked so difficult to get 30,000 supporters. Difficult to plan: need to get demand higher with better football. Our CRM (Customer Relationship Management tool) has details of past season ticket holders. Need to drive long term funding so can regularly compete in top half of the table.

Contingency plan for relegation: yes, it has been discussed and we will fight to get back.



Club for sale: RAL a “motivated” seller?: No, but sports assets are for sale to people with lots of money.

Media standing/image is poor, with negative stories: 8 years ago football business was changing. It was changing when RAL bought AVFC. It was then that needed to aggressively grow revenue in partnerships and sponsorship. AVFC never had the infrastructure in place when we finished sixth to capitalise. On an international level we are known, but now need to play catch up with our peers. Follow up: should we have a football man like Steve Stride/Graham Taylor: maybe something the Club will look at in the future but not now.

Living wage campaign: AVFC do better than others. 2/3rds of staff are paid above living wage; 1/3<sup>rd</sup> exceed minimum wage – mainly match day staff. Tom Fox’s view is that Government need to legislate so minimum wage becomes living wage.

Top 4 ambition?: AVFC are a long way off. Over next 3-5 years, we just need to close the gap. It cost over £100m per annum to finish 6<sup>th</sup>. Need to build on own success, so that brands pay a premium to be associated with AVFC. And for this to be reinvested.

Tim Sherwood: AVFC did not have a potential list like other clubs pre-Lambert exit. Spent 9 hours over 3 days with Tim Sherwood at his family home. AVFC needed a motivator, a man-manager. TS ticked these boxes. Each person needs to be treated differently. Short term: motivation and get best out of squad; longer term: youth development. TS has embraced the Director of Football Operations despite his previous experience at Spurs where had a different style of Director of Football.

What’s changed RAL mind?: RAL had changed before TS joined. Fabian Delph summarised it as “never fell out of love”. RAL has invested in a sports executive (Tom Fox) and has filled voids in the governance. He has been positive in supporting acquisitions (Sinclair, Gill) and was still supportive on the approach for Ricky Lambert.

FFP: Can no longer spend on squad from owners funds. Arsenal’s move increased stadium revenue from £35m to £100m. AVFC is behind the curve and need to close the gap, whilst increasing the gap from the rest of the 15 clubs.

Forum ended with a statement from Tom Fox that he is more than happy to do the forum with AVST more regularly than our AGM.



## **Appendix 2: Finance Report**

Cash position of the Trust remains in a healthy position at £1,869, up £180 on prior year. Liabilities of £150, being the last 3 years' worth of expenses for the independent examiner have now been paid. (The remaining creditor balance is deferred income for ten year and life subs) As at 31/12/14, cash at hand is now approximately £3,750 after the increase in membership following the relaunch and fan survey.

Voting membership during 2013 decreased from 185 to 53 members as we went through a renewal process. Following the relaunch and successful survey in 2014, we now have over 3,100 members – paid and associate – of which 337 (10%) are paid. We have started to gain some momentum on memberships and we need to continue to grow so that the more members we represent, the stronger the supporter voice will be in dialogue with our Club.

The 2013 income statement reflects the cancellation of shares at renewal and 27 new member subscriptions (plus amortisation of past life and ten year memberships) Outgoings were the FCA fee £55, Supporters Direct fee £100 and IE fee £50. As we have increased in size following relaunch, our cost base is increasing as infrastructure is required to support the larger membership base. These costs include surveymonkey, web hosting at Vidahost and Madmimi email communication tool (~£300).



## Appendix 3: What do we want from AVST?

The following are key words mentioned by members at the AGM when asked the above question:

Democracy; communication both ways; lobbying & campaigning – home & away ticketing, junior incentive scheme; fan initiatives = AVST publicised; better publicity on what AVST is; voice of reason – Club must use AVST as a fan sound board; lessons from other Trusts; social meetings (manager and players); podcasts; positive messaging to council and media

Ideas for discussion with Club: season ticket renewals to include join AVST leaflet or an opt-in like Swansea?; match day kiosk for joining (near McGregor?); QR code in programme or full page advert

Facebook comments:

Independent, non-confrontational voice for the fans; open and honest link to Club; focus on pricing issues and push safe standing

Twitter comment:

Increase membership and influence with AVFC board of directors; regular updates and more interaction; average fan uninformed; open and honest dialogue between Club and AVST; where does the £5 membership go?; a new pin badge?; Skype meetings so supporters far away can get their voice heard