



AGM

Annual General Meeting
Wednesday 21st March 2018 at 7pm
Goddard Arms, Old Town

Meeting Guide

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Agenda

7:00pm

Introduction

Welcome to all supporters who are in attendance

7:05pm Chairman's Review

A look at the year just gone...

7:15pm Trust Accounts

Summary report and annual appointment of independent auditor

7:20pm Looking ahead to 2018/19

Q&A - Where do things stand and what happens next?

8:20pm Election of Trust Board

Current board members and any new applications

8:30pm Meeting Ends

A chance to talk one-on-one with board members

Chairman's Review of 2017/18

A year ago we stood in this room and asked whether supporters would be willing to part with their hard earned cash in order to help TrustSTFC purchase the County Ground. The overwhelming response on the night was “Yes” and following that meeting, a subsequent Swindon Advertiser poll also reported that 86 per cent of supporters were in favour of the idea, with 55 per cent ‘fully behind’ the idea and 31 per cent suggesting the idea was ‘good – but needs some work’.

This set the challenge for the Trust over the year ahead. Our team of volunteers prepared themselves to put in the work and find a way in which supporters could purchase the stadium, and more importantly then take the necessary steps to improve the facility for the entire community.

During the last AGM we also examined the five key challenges that Swindon Town faced, and looked at how both club and supporters could play their part towards a brighter future. We asked people to suspend emotions, and analyse the issues at hand.

The challenges we listed were in relation to transparency around club finances, the atmosphere around the stadium, the lack of connection between club and supporters, the current ownership of the club, and the state of the County Ground itself.

“Let’s Work Together” was the rallying cry for fans, club, media and council - and although some good work followed, there is still so much more that could be done in this area.

After that March AGM we went on to hold a Fans Meeting towards the end of May. This was at the MECA in Swindon and attracted a good crowd, plus lots of further media attention.

We again discussed “Let’s Work Together” and the five challenges around the club. The annual accounts had been released, we praised the efforts of the Great Western Reds to get some atmosphere going, we hoped a new manager would bring about a more engaged club and community, and we also discussed how as a Trust, we were preparing for an uncertain future by looking at the fortunes of other clubs who had become fan-owned during bad times.

The remainder of the fans meeting related to the County Ground, and the methods supporters would be able to use to group together and purchase the stadium; crowdfunding, community shares, commemorative paving, grants and loans.

What followed that May meeting was another ten months of behind the scenes conversations, emails, documentation, research, preparation and discussions, both internally and with many third parties. This has taken up a tremendous amount of board member’s personal time and I’d like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in the Trust over the past year for the massive commitment they have given to the County Ground campaign.

I would also like to thank each and every supporter who has contributed toward the Red Army Fund throughout this period and in the past. We have had a lot of professional advice and services, which comes at a significant cost, and every penny we’ve raised was needed to keep things on-track.

During the year we completed a lengthy application process for 'Bright Ideas' funding, which we narrowly missed out on – a good learning curve nonetheless, and that avenue may bring funds in the future. On a more positive note, we were supported by local company Nationwide, who have been fantastic to us and we've also had some further generous pledges from individuals.

In June 2016 we wrote to the Council and put a bid in for the stadium. This was followed by a further 14 months of meetings with Council leader David Renard, Councillor Garry Perkins and Rob Richards, Head of Property Assets for Swindon Borough Council. These discussions helped us understand the process and shape a very detailed proposal that could be considered by the wider council and other relevant stakeholders. Our second offer was submitted to the Council in August 2017 and following further discussions, a third offer was tabled in January 2018.

In September we held a private meeting with local Councillors. Every Councillor was personally invited and we had a decent turnout on the night. We gave them an overview of the Trust and what we had achieved in the past, and also brought them up to speed with the County Ground proposal. It's important that we get their backing and overall, the attendees were supportive of our efforts to bring fans together, not only for the stadium but for the benefit of the wider Swindon community.

As many of you know, there is a covenant on the County Ground area and positive and constructive conversations have taken place with representatives of the Goddard Estate.

We also confirmed a £1 million matched funding arrangement to significantly boost any fundraising drive, which was an amazing achievement given the complexity of the discussions involved.

We met with many crowdfunding companies and decided to work with Crowdfunder.co.uk who seem a perfect match for what we need. Crucially, their platform allows supporters to pledge money toward the campaign, and that money only then comes out of their account if the total is reached – which was key for us. The Crowdfunder support structure is also really impressive, and gives us the confidence to believe that we can hit any financial target that we set for ourselves.

Crowdfunding usually comes with rewards for donations, so we looked into commemorative paving and also worked with Guardian cartoonist David Squires to create a great memento for Town fans.

The club announced their own plans to investigate development of the County Ground. This came as a surprise to us at the time, but didn't change anything as far as we are concerned, and we continued full steam ahead with our campaign. We were later to discover that they have put their own offer in for the stadium and therefore we are in competition. More on that later!

On the pitch, the 2016/17 season ended in misery with the team relegated to League Two. It was such a dismal year, and supporters were understandably very disappointed. This of course brought about change and David Flitcroft came in to build a new Swindon Town FC for the 2017/18 season.

With so many players arriving at the club, it was always going to be a difficult and unpredictable season, however things got more complicated with the sudden departure of Flitcroft with just 11 games to go in the season. We must look forwards, and at the time of writing we still have a great chance of a play-off position and as we know, anything can happen from thereon.

Our board members all felt it was important to show our combined support for the Club, so we personally contributed toward the sponsorship of two players, Chris Hussey and Harry Smith. It didn't quite work out for either player this season, but that happens sometimes.

Finally, back to the County Ground campaign, where do things currently stand and what next?

Although frustrating and time consuming, we have been respectful to the Council process and the alternative offer made by Swindon Town Football Club.

As yet we have been unable to engage with Lee Power on the stadium situation, but our door remains wide open and we would welcome the chance to find a common way forwards that benefits the club in every possible way.

We have always maintained a positive and constructive approach to the future of our club, and retain a consistent 'owner neutral' attitude. None of us know who will own the club ten years from now, and there are many bad stories around the world of football regarding stadiums (Coventry, Northampton, Oxford, Darlington to name a few). Just this month, non-league Dulwich Hamlet have been banned from playing at their own ground by the property company that owns the land.

We want the County Ground to become fan-owned and secured for future generations, regardless of who owns the club at any point in time, and as a Trust, we would always be willing to work with any club owner, especially if significant investment is forthcoming.

Last year we talked a lot about the "Let's Work Together" initiative - where Club, Fans, Media and Council all push in the same direction - and in our view, that approach still applies and supporters owning the stadium would be a win-win for everyone.

We would never stand in the way of any major investment and in many ways we see ourselves as an independent extension of the club - all the proceeds from our work have always been either directly or indirectly invested back into Swindon Town FC, and that will always be the case.

If the fans can own, look after and improve the stadium, that leaves the club to focus and invest in the thing that matters, getting us back up the leagues.

We've already had some very exciting conversations about ready-to-go stadium development possibilities, including a fully funded and brand new £15million Town End that would benefit everyone, football fan or not. We want the Club on-side with us on that.

If we fully embrace the "working together" concept, community ownership of the stadium would attract national publicity and prove to be a catalyst for improvements to the whole Town – however with local elections looming it's looking likely that this will now run with Swindon Borough Council until the middle of the year at least, so patience is the key for us all.

This year marks a significant milestone in the history of Swindon Town, as it is 125 years since the County Ground opened. Hopefully the next milestone will see supporters take ownership and work towards improving our stadium and football club.

Thanks for reading, and for your continued support.

Steve Mytton
Chairman, TrustSTFC

Trust Accounts for 2016/17

Swindon Town Community Mutual Limited

Profit and Loss Account for the year ended 31 August 2017

	Year Ended 31.8.17		Year Ended 31.8.16	
	£	£	£	£
Turnover				
Subscriptions received	367		1,140	
Fund raising income	-		-	
Donations received	<u>17,819</u>		<u>13,016</u>	
		18,186		14,156
Other income				
Sundry receipts	-		-	
Deposit account interest	<u>-</u>		<u>-</u>	
		-		-
		18,186		14,156
Expenditure				
Donations	2,550		168	
Printing, post, stationery and other admin	79		367	
Survey costs	-		195	
Sundry expenses	3,672		780	
RAF costs	4,648		1,275	
Membership Fees	<u>160</u>		<u>160</u>	
		<u>11,109</u>		<u>2,945</u>
		7,077		11,211
Finance costs				
Bank charges		<u>1</u>		<u>1</u>
		7,076		11,210
Depreciation				
Improvements to property	-		-	
Plant and machinery	-		-	
Fixtures and fittings	<u>-</u>		<u>-</u>	
		-		-
		<u>7,076</u>		<u>11,210</u>

Full audited accounts with commentary (from 2009 onwards) are available
for download at www.truststfc.tv/annual-accounts

Red Army Fund Update

In September 2015, the Trust published our Vision of the future and launched the Red Army Fund – with an aim to build a funding pot that was capable of delivering positive change.

The fund attracted around 125 regular contributors over the year and following last year's AGM that number grew dramatically in a short space of time, with over 200 additional people signing up.

Thank you to each and every one of you that have helped us financially, it has really made a difference and enabled us to fund professional due diligence to support our work on the stadium.

We are currently receiving around £2k per month via the Red Army Fund, but with those funds we have conducted our business professionally and thanks to a number of follow-up activities, we have received significant donations from other third parties meaning that we now have a fighting fund of over £50k – which is a record amount for the Trust.

This money will be used purely toward the County Ground campaign and means that we can do everything the right way – professional quality crowdfunding and promotion does not come cheap and to get the best results we will need to invest.

If you're struggling for money then don't feel obliged to keep up on the monthly payments, but every bit helps us and will only ever be spent on things to help our campaign.

If ultimately things don't conclude in our favour, then all contributors will decide as part of a group vote on what should happen with the Red Army Fund going forwards. If you're happy to keep contributing, thank you again.

To everyone else, please give it some thought and if you can spare a pound or more each month, sign-up at www.redarmyfund.co.uk

Note: Our supporter rewards are bought in bulk, and we are currently out of stock of TrustSTFC.TV pens. We have some shirts in stock, but not many – and these can only be ordered in batches of 12. If you join up today, you may have to wait for others to join up or you may indeed be offered an alternative reward to those currently listed on the website.

Other ways to help...

If the Red Army Fund is not for you, then please keep some money aside for our future Crowdfunding exercise. Assuming we get the go ahead from the Council later in 2018, we will offer every supporter the chance to own a Community Share and voting rights in the stadium.

We will be running a promotional campaign to get the pricing model right, but we would expect everyone to be able to buy a share for under £100 each. We had earlier suggested a much higher amount of £500, but based on feedback that will price many people out.

Each share is likely to come with a commemorative brick in a County Ground community wall (or flooring – yet to be decided) with options to upgrade via the Crowdfunding reward model.

Election of Trust Board

The Trust Board elections are relatively straightforward - we are allowed a minimum of six, and a maximum of twelve Board members.

We currently have eight elected Board members and an external director making a total of nine so therefore we can appoint another three Board members if applicable.

Regarding the elected members the rules state that half the Board must stand down (the longest serving Board members) at the AGM but can seek re-election.

Honorary Officers

Steve Mytton - Chair

Rob Angus – Vice-Chair

Cliff Ponting- Secretary

Alan Jones - Treasurer

Board Members

John Ward – Advisory Role

Greg Callard - Stadium Commercial Legal

Alex Pollock - Social Media

Mike McQueen - Advisory Role

External Director

James Phipps - Advisory Role

Application to join Trust Board

The only limitations to a new person joining the Board is that they must be a Trust member, have two people nominating them and not be subject to a bankruptcy order or subject to a disqualification under the Company Directors Disqualification Act.

For a new member wishing to join the Board they must either fill in an application form or indicate via email their intention to stand along with a summary of experience. After a recent newsletter we received a CV from **James Spencer** which meets the criteria.

James is the Chief Information Officer of Lovehoney and former Chief Technology Officer at Claire's retail group. Based in the South West, James is a long-standing Swindon Town fan with extensive expertise in online and e-commerce environments.

Any Other Business

Appendix A: Q&A Infographic for the 2018 AGM



SWINDON TOWN SUPPORTERS' TRUST

COUNTY GROUND KEY POINTS - Q&A

WHY?

WHY IS IT A GOOD IDEA FOR THE SUPPORTERS TO OWN THE STADIUM?

- Stadium revenue will always be reinvested back into the club.
- It protects our ground for future generations – there have been issues at Coventry, Northampton, Oxford, Darlington and many more clubs, most recently at Dulwich Hamlet.
- Every Town fan can own a community share and vote on decisions.
- It leaves the club to concentrate on climbing the leagues.





FOOTBALL SUPPORTERS?

I DON'T LIKE FOOTBALL! WHY DON'T THE COUNCIL JUST PUT IT UP FOR SALE TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER?

- We will match the valuation and work hard to improve the area for the good of the whole Town.
- We will give the council the first option to buy the stadium back, at the original sale price.
- We are taxpayers ourselves and from the local community.

HOW?

HOW CAN THE TRUST AFFORD TO DO THIS?

- Non-disclosure agreements in place, but we have over £1 million pledged as matched funding.
- We are asking the council for a six-month window to exercise those options and also to involve as many supporters as possible in a community share offering.
- We want every supporter to own a little piece of the stadium!





DEVELOPMENT?

HOW DO THE TRUST PROPOSE TO DEVELOP AND IMPROVE THE STADIUM AND SURROUNDING AREA?

- Immediate action on the external area, with supporter engraved paving.
- In future, we'll add statues of former players.
- We've had over six months of discussions with a developer regarding a new £15 million Town End, they have confirmed financial backing.
- We've had positive and constructive conversations with representatives of the Goddard estate, regarding the covenant on the land.
- There will be opportunities for community grants to help create a sporting hub for Swindon around the County Ground.
- We will always be very open to discussions that benefit the whole Town.

WHAT ABOUT?

WHAT ABOUT THE CLUB, WHAT DO THEY THINK OF ALL THIS?

- Our door is always open, we are owner neutral.
- Our sole interest is in safeguarding the long-term future of not just the County Ground, but also of the Football Club.
- We would be delighted to work with the club on the County Ground, at the moment it pays rent directly to the council and is responsible for repairing the stadium.
- Due diligence suggests over £1m of investment to bring it up to standard.





SWINDON TOWN SUPPORTERS' TRUST

COUNTY GROUND KEY POINTS - Q&A

WHAT IF?

WHAT IF LEE POWER WANTS TO SELL TO A BILLIONAIRE?

- We'd all love to see some amazing investment in the club, but for every example of a good takeover, there are multiple instances of bad takeovers.
- We would never stand in the way of progress. That might mean a new lease where all profits from the stadium are directed back into the club.
- We are an extension of Swindon Town, every penny we raise goes directly or indirectly toward the football club's future.
- Supporters owning the stadium simply means that we have a say in the key points that happen in the years to come.
- Ultimately we have no interest in taking any money out of the football club.



THE ACV?

ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE (ACV) – WHAT DOES THAT MEAN HERE?

- The Council must give the Trust written notice of the proposed sale and then we have 6 weeks to register our interest, and a 6-month period "Full Moratorium" to confirm our own bid. Of course, they already know of our interest and our offer.
- Realistically it means we have 6 months to complete our fundraising and lodge our bid along with other interested parties. It can't just be sold next week or next month.
- Six months works fine for us – it gives the people first option and aligns with the 2011 Localism act brought in "to empower local communities"
- We want every supporter to get involved! We have £50k set aside for a promotional campaign that will significantly raise the profile of Swindon and attract positive interest in the Town.



WHY NOT?

WHY NOT JOIN FORCES WITH THE CLUB AND WORK TOGETHER?

- We would consider joint ownership with the club as long as it is the club and not any individual owner. This can be arranged through a carefully worded legal agreement.
- Joint ownership simply means that a share of the income from the stadium is guaranteed to the club for use in any way they wish.
- As stated previously, even as sole owners of the property our focus would always be on reinvestment into the stadium or football club.
- To avoid deadlock there may need to be some form of independent arbitration, agreed by both sides, to settle any disputes.



PROBLEMS?

WHAT IF THE CURRENT OR FUTURE OWNER REFUSES TO PAY THE RENT?

- The Trust always maintain a positive approach for the people of Swindon and would operate in exactly the same way as the council in terms of rent payments and take court action if necessary.
- The Trust operate on a fully transparent basis and would stand firm on any threatening actions, if there were any attempts to move the club outside of the area, we would be forced to engage with the necessary authorities and win.
- Swindon Town Football Club will always be here regardless of individuals and under our stadium ownership will always have a home, in the County Ground.



WHO?

WHO IS GOING TO MANAGE ALL THIS? – YOU ARE VOLUNTEERS AND PART-TIMERS!

- If the Trust acquire the stadium we would allocate a portion of our funding toward a full-time stadium development team.
- That team would be professionally recruited and would be accountable to the board and supporters.
- Their roles would include the day-to-day administration around the stadium, but more importantly they would be dedicated to finding development opportunities that benefit the club as a whole.



Appendix B: Q&A from the 2017 AGM

If the Trust own the land, do the Trust also own the Stadium (i.e. the stands / pitch etc) or just the land that the stadium sits on?

We commissioned a report on the existing lease terms, and the property covers three parcels of land together with the buildings and structures, namely The County Ground Football Ground and the ticket and sales offices. Any stands and buildings that were constructed after 1988 would have required the Landlord's consent and usually this is documented by way of a licence to alter.

This document is not a public document (i.e. not registered at the Land Registry). The professional understanding and opinion always would be that any building or structure that is built on a Landlord's land would be retained by the Landlord.

If you were successful with buying the county ground, what are you buying? The land? does it include the cricket ground and pavilion the extension too but not the actual stadium or just the land the stadium sits on?

As above, we would be buying the land and the stadium buildings, the adjacent land facing out onto the Magic Roundabout, and the car park. The Cricket ground and athletics track is not included.

If the Trust purchase the land, do they intend to reduce the amount of rent the club pay per year? Could the rent payments depend on league status - e.g. £x in league 2, £y in league 1, £z in the championship?

This would be down to a vote – fans who purchase Community Shares and other benefactors would decide future policy.

My concern is that OK we buy the stadium, what if we're playing non-league football in 18 months. The club would still play in a stadium regardless of league, so could the Trust charge the club a % of yearly income plus take into account out goings as rent to ensure club can afford it?

As per the previous question, any change to the current lease terms would be down to a vote – fans who purchase Community Shares along with other benefactors would decide future policy.

Where will the rent being paid by the club go? Upkeep of the stadium, stadium improvements, payments back to individuals who have contributed to the purchase etc?

Any loans that we have taken out would need to be repaid first. Following repayment then future improvements to the stadium would be down to a shareholder vote – again, fans who purchase Community Shares and benefactors would decide future policy.

How would the Trust deal with the club if they didn't make their payments?

Our stance is that nothing changes from the current situation, we would take the same approach as the Council and ensure payments are maintained. In extraordinary circumstances, we would again put this to a shareholder vote.

Will there be any clauses in place to stop the club moving to another site? / If the club did want to move to another site and the Trust couldn't stop them, what would happen to the Trust owned land?

We believe Section 4 of the official EFL rules protects us from any alternative site moves and we are working with various parties to confirm this position: <http://www.efl.com/global/section4.aspx>

13.4 Ground sharing will only be approved at the discretion of the Board.

13.6 Each Club shall register its ground with The League and no Club shall remove to another ground (whether on a temporary or a permanent basis) without first obtaining the written consent of the Board, such consent not to be unreasonably withheld and the Board shall be entitled, if granting consent, to impose such conditions as it deems appropriate in all the circumstances.

13.7 In considering whether to give any consent to a permanent relocation, the Board shall have regard to all the circumstances of the case (including, but not limited to the factors set out in this Regulation 13.7) and shall not grant consent unless it is reasonably satisfied that such consent:

13.7.1 would be consistent with the objects of The League as set out in the Memorandum of Association;

13.7.2 would be appropriate having in mind the relationship (if any) between the locality with which by its name or otherwise the applicant Club is traditionally associated and that in which such Club proposes to establish its ground;

13.7.3 would not to any material extent adversely affect such Club's Officials, players, supporters, shareholders, sponsors and others having an interest in its activities;

13.7.4 would not have a material adverse effect on visiting Clubs;

13.7.5 would not to any material extent adversely affect Clubs having their registered grounds in the immediate vicinity of the proposed location; and

13.7.6 would enhance the reputation of The League and promote the game of association football generally.

13.8 The Club must disclose, as soon as practicable, plans and details of any proposed future move to a new stadium.

13.11 Without prejudice to the provisions of Regulation 13.6, a Club shall forthwith notify The League of any proposed change in its circumstances relating to the occupation of its ground. By way of example, and without limitation, a proposed change may include a sale of any freehold interest (with or without subsequent leaseback) or any surrender or variation of a lease or licence.

If I as an individual were to put £x amount up to be used for the purchase of the land, will the individual see a return in their investment or is it just a donation?

See Fans Meeting Guide notes - Community shares do not increase in value, however there is the possibility of a dividend if the board/supporters agree. We would look to secure a reasonable return for sizeable loans from high-net worth individuals.

Would it be possible to look at building a hotel on the land behind a new Town End so that the new meetings / function rooms can be incorporated into executive boxes overlooking the pitch?

This is one of many ideas we are working through with Supporters Direct as part of possible commercial ventures that would provide an income in years to come. We are very aware and respectful of the covenant from the Goddard estate and fully engage with them before progressing any ideas, which ultimately would be for the benefit of the Club and pursuit of football in Swindon.

Are the council insisting the club be on board with any plans for the Trust to purchase the County Ground site?

It is obviously preferable for all parties if the club are on-board with plans, but this does not prevent the deal from going ahead. We remain very open to working with the club.

Have the trust had any discussions with the club about the ground purchase since the Trust's press release - or are all discussions currently just between the Trust and the Council?

We are in continued discussion with the Council and with Supporters Direct, and as current freeholder the Council have been in discussion with the Club. We hope to bring all parties together as the deal comes to a conclusion.

Could you get the legends involved in a promo video promoting this?

We are planning a professional quality video to accompany our bid, and we have several Town legends who would be happy to help with this. It's early days, but if you are a current Red Army Fund member and want to star in that video to support the project, please get in touch!

If the purchase could be financed (at a cost of £2m+) how would the required investment in this updating be financed? I suppose the real question is does the Trust have the capacity to raise two such large sums in a short timescale?

As per the 2017 Fans Meeting Guide, we are looking at multiple avenues of funding, and there are many grant applications to consider that would support not only the initial funding bid, but also subsequent community projects that might be external or internal stadium related improvements. We've not set a timeline for post-purchase improvements as yet, the first step is to secure the stadium, everything else will follow in due course, in a controlled manner.

Is the value to the town of a properly run, stable, communicative and well supported club realistically reflected in the current negotiations with the Supporters Trust?

The Council recognise our value as a Community group and have been very supportive. We respect their need to get best value for the local taxpayer, and discussions are proceeding well.

Could the Trust via the advertiser and Wiltshire Radio ask Mr Power what he will accept for the Football Club?

Our focus is on the long-term security of Swindon Town and right now it's clear that Lee Power is not looking to sell the club. We see securing the stadium as the best way of ensuring long term stability for the football club. We can achieve a lot through owning the County Ground and we can make a significant impact in the wider football world by taking this important step.

Can I assume you will run a media campaign with the Advertiser to generate more support and spread the message of the Trusts aim? Perhaps a comment regarding the Trusts plans for the future of the club with far greater fan involvement regardless of who the owner/director is, might help in showing that the Trust is not linked or dictated to by Mr Power and will remain independent of his business model for the club at this time.

The Fans Meeting guide covers this in some depth and you have hit the nail on the head, we need to be independent of any business model being run by Lee Power or any other future owner. Taking the first step of purchasing the County Ground enables us to develop many other revenue possibilities which can be the catalyst for greater fan involvement, and a better future for the Town.

I think it would be helpful to explain what the back-up plan is in relation to the Red Army Fund. When speaking to people who are sometimes sceptical about the Trust actually coming to an agreement with regards to buying the County Ground, they often ask what the fund is to be used for if the purchase doesn't go through.

The Red Army Fund is not the fundraising vehicle for the Stadium itself, it's purely for the campaign to get a final purchase price and the associated community share offer established. In that respect it's not associated with whether the purchase goes through.

The fund enables us to run the campaign in the first place, the costs associated with establishing a Community Share Offer and doing the associated due diligence run into the thousands, which we hope to recover through grants but at the moment all we have is the fund.

Please also remember that contributions are Monthly and therefore we are not awash with spare cash. When the Community Share offer is launched (target is September) we will ask contributors if they want to continue funding our future activities, if not we will ask them to cancel their regular contribution and instead purchase Community Shares.

If anything is left in the fund at the end of this initial campaign, we will either ask Red Army Fund members to vote, or keep the money in the bank and put it towards the next set of projects.

Are there any alternative funding options available and/or being considered?

Our Fans Meeting guide from the 2017 AGM explains the various options we have available. There are many different possibilities: private donations or investment, loans, capital and revenue grants, bonds, Briconomics (fans purchasing bricks in a commemorative wall or floor) among others.

A question for the Council in negotiations for the County Ground is how much they would appreciate the ground under Trust ownership hosting fundraising concerts as we did when Elton John performed a few years ago. This should also serve the Council's interests in providing arts and cultural services to residents without the budget resources for this provision which is being cut by virtually all councils.

This is definitely something that could benefit the wider community and we would be interested in pursuing ideas such as this in the future.

First of all, I would like to state that I think your proposal to buy the County Ground is a good one and in principle I am for the idea. Unfortunately, I cannot find it in me to make a financial donation or monthly contribution because of the following reservations. My first concern and most worrying is, what on earth happens if Swindon Town becomes an even smaller club than it is now? By this I mean what happens if the club goes down to the National League or even further? What happens if the club is 'wound up' and has to start life again at the bottom of the football pyramid? In either case the club will be unable to pay a rent on the County Ground and the Trust will go bust.

Our overall reason for being is to ensure that Swindon Town has a safe and secure future and as explained in our Fans Meeting guide, we are building an organisation that is ready for anything in the future. Although rental income would form an important part of our future business model, it would not be the only source as we are looking to develop new commercial and community focused initiatives on the surrounding land. If the Club is relegated to the National League or even further, and even if the Club is 'wound up', we would be excellently placed to begin a comeback. The Trust will never go bust, the purchase will be funded by the fans and other investors, the only risk would be associated if we took out loans or bonds to help finance the deal – in which case investors would be advised of the appropriate risks during payback years.

On a more optimistic side - what would happen If STFC were lucky enough to have a new owner who grows the club to the extent that the County Ground is not big enough and wants to move the club to a purpose built ground, what happens to the Trust and the County Ground then?

We are interested in the long-term future of STFC and we feel that buying the County Ground helps ensure that future. If we were lucky enough to have a new owner who wants to invest significant amounts whilst also ensuring the long-term legacy of STFC and engagement with the Trust and the fans then we would look at their proposals and consult with the fans who would vote on how we take things forward.

In view of the current situation at the club, would it not be a better idea to devote the time and money that the above proposal will take into visiting, courting, persuading and enabling a wealthy Chinese or Arab Billionaire to take over the club?

As above, we are all about sustaining STFC for the long term and ensuring its legacy if there were owners who shared our views and were legally willing to enable this then we would look to work with them and put any proposal to our members.

Your plan is ambitious but I wish you all well, just remember to keep out of the local political arena regardless of party.

Unfortunately, we do need to consider the political arena, as to get the deal through we will need support of the local councillors who are representing Swindon communities. As a Trust we do not have any political motives and all board members have their own preferences and views, but we will take advantage of any governmental backing that is available from our local MPs (whoever they are)

I think it's a great idea to try and buy the CG, but I'm interested to know if the Trust have any contingency plan in place to keep the club running, should Power leave? I worry that a million pounds would be better spent making sure that the club could be run sensibly whilst searching for a new buyer, should we need a new owner. This would also give us a firmer grip on negotiations, because as interim owners, we could fight for a seat or two on the board in any new management structure.

As referred to in our previous answers, we have no agenda to either remove Lee Power or take a stake in the club whilst he is there. We are focused on the long-term success of the Club and if in future he leaves for whatever reason, we would want the opportunity to ensure the future stability of the club – one option might include a fan driven 51% ownership model, with the other 49% coming from extended investment, but this is not in our plans at the moment or in the foreseeable future.