STEVE BENTON

Proposed by: Sarah Turner

Seconded by: Paula Martin

I have been a passionate football fan for over 45 years and a Reading FC season ticket holder for the last 10 years and expect to be a happy one for many years to come.

I am keen to continue using my wide range of business, project management and IT skills to improve the experience of Reading FC fans, STAR members and STAR board members – making any kind of difference, rather than just grumbling and posting about everyone and everything being wrong.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my involvement in the STAR board to date, including:

- Deploying and setting up the new online membership system this summer. This makes it easier for members to join and renew, gives members full control of their personal data, reduces the STAR administrative workload and incorporates the Stripe payment processing system (which is easier to use and more reliable than the previous PayPal system used).
- Championing, launching and continuously developing the online travel booking tool, to complement the highly regarded STAR travel team. This system now takes a significant proportion of the overall travel bookings.
- Continuing to develop the STAR board IT strategy to help the board make more effective use of IT – extending the use of the industry standard WordPress web-site, use of zoom for hybrid board meetings (to support board members not able to attend f2f board meetings at the stadium) and simplifying the tools (e.g. google drive) used by the board to remotely share data and effectively manage travel, membership and board meeting operations.
- Developing the (wireless) Internet connectivity in STAR base, to make it faster and more reliable, whilst continuing to be cost effective for STAR. This has enabled additional STAR member capability, e.g. being able to take electronic card payments in STAR base for travel and membership.

I would like to continue to build on this during the coming years – to further increase the connectivity between the supporters and STAR, increase the simplicity, relevance and value of the activities STAR undertakes and further improve the effectiveness of the STAR board operation.   At the same time ensuring we don't create digital exclusiveness - by supporting people who are less comfortable or able to do this.

Going forward, I would like to:

- Further progress the integration of the new membership system into the way STAR works.
  - Continue to support the deployment of the new system as the season starts. In particular ensuring that we have the support in place for the people who are uncomfortable with or do not have the skills or means to use a fully online system.
  - Ensure the system can be used to deliver regular informative bulletins to members and share relevant information with non-members who follow STAR. Closing down the complex Mailchimp email application.
  - Over the coming season - actively pursue ways to enable members to securely store/display the new electronic membership card with the aim of further reducing the need for duplicate paper cards.
  - Improving the capture, storage and validation of safeguarding information for unaccompanied youth travellers – so we can continue to operate this service (which

many other clubs have chosen to stop doing) with the confidence that we have effective safeguarding in place.

- o Establish how, if anything, the system can be used to enhance the engagement of and interaction between our exile supporters.

- Continue to modernise and simplify the operation of the STAR board IT, enabling more STAR board effort to be focussed on delivering member benefits and achieving greater Reading FC engagement. Move to a model where monthly board minutes are published for our members.

- Continue to increase the use of IT for member's interaction with STAR (e.g. Online Travel Booking, including evaluation of online ticket and Print at Home Ticket options), in a way that complements the existing traditional methods. At the same time ensuring we don't create digital exclusiveness or break our reliable travel booking operation.

- Continue to introduce technology and processes to enable STAR board members to operate more effectively in board roles. Become less dependant on board members legacy role knowledge and the reliance upon considerable/frequent hours of admin activity to enable these roles to be delivered.

- Improve agility of the STAR board by having better onboarding and offboarding capability – IT, tools and processes.