

## **Grimsby Town FC and Mariners Trust Memo of Understanding**

**November 2018**

### **Parties**

The parties to this Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) are:

1. Grimsby Town Supporters Society (also known as Mariners Trust) a Community Benefit Society registered with the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) with number [IP29571R] whose registered address is Blundell Park, Cleethorpes, DN35 7PZ (“the trust”) 2. The Grimsby Town Football Club PLC (also known as Grimsby Town) a [Public Limited Company, Reg No 00034760, Blundell Park, Cleethorpes, DN35 7PZ] (“the club”).

### **Background**

- a) As part of the Government Expert Working Group on Football Supporter Ownership and Engagement from the start of the 2016/17 season it is a requirement for all EPL and EFL clubs to meet structured dialogue commitments, with the National League due to follow a similar path for 2017/18.
- b) The minimum level of commitment is for senior Club representatives (owners, directors, senior executive management) to meet with a representative group of supporters, that must include the Supporters Trust, at least twice a year.
- c) The matters for discussion will often be of a strategic nature and may relate to the management and day to day running of the club
- d) Where meetings are not open to all supporters wishing to attend, the supporter representatives must be elected, selected or invited in line with basic democratic principles; and individuals cannot be excluded by the Club without good reason (the Club acting reasonably).

This is not a legally binding document or contract, but it is a statement of the principles that the trust and the club subscribe to, to create an effective, mutually beneficial, structured communication channel.

The trust and club will meet these in the following ways.

### **The trust will:**

- 1) Be properly incorporated and constituted with a democratic ‘one member one vote’ governance structure, filing annual returns with the FCA, and offering an open and affordable membership to any supporter of the club
- 2) Consult with its membership regularly on issues of importance particularly ahead of structured dialogue meetings with the club.
- 3) Liaise with other supporters’ groups and stakeholders on suitable topics for discussion ahead of structured dialogue meetings, respecting other existing communication and supporter dialogue structures that exist between supporters and the club.
- 4) Send suitable non-conflicted people who understand their role as representatives for supporters, not just to voice their own views

5) The trust will put forward to the club a minimum of two suitable candidates for selection of the Trust Director at the time a vacancy occurs. Under normal circumstances the tenure for the Trust Director will be 3 years at which point he/she will be due for re-election to the club's board. The trust recognises that as the club is a PLC the election of the trust representative is ultimately the responsibility of the club's shareholders.

6) Commit to meeting the club on a minimum of a bimonthly basis as part of the structured dialogue commitments. In addition, regular ad hoc dialogue will take place on a needs must basis.

7) Commit to proactively fundraise to assist with the running of the club and may agree, after consultation with members, specific costs to support.

**The club will:**

1) Commit to meeting the trust representatives on a minimum of a bi monthly basis as part of the structured dialogue commitments

2) Provide a suitable level of information split into appropriate categories and with a level of detail that builds trust and understanding of how the club is being run but equally this will be within the boundaries of confidentiality. In addition, the trust director will have full access to all of the club's financial information.

3) Use the structured dialogue format to consult about significant decisions such as any permanent ground move, change of club badge, change from black and white stripes as the home colours, change of use of the ground.

4) Use the structured dialogue meetings to discuss wider league/national consultation that will affect supporters. As part of this agreement the club commit that they will never vote for the introduction of premier league representation into the EFL league structure

5) Take the opportunity to discuss any potential ownership changes including future opportunity for supporters to invest in their club

6) Not exclude individuals without good reason

7) Send suitable senior club representatives to structured dialogue meetings who have the appropriate knowledge of the club and decision-making authority.

8) The club will always be open to consideration of a bid from The Mariners Trust for a controlling interest in the football club.

**Both parties will:**

1) Acknowledge that there is a legally binding and confidential protocol agreement in place which must be adhered to.

2) Agree agenda items in a timely manner, circulating sufficient supporting information to be read ahead of the meeting where practical.

3) Ensure that all structured dialogue meetings are properly recorded and communicated.

4) Respect that some items may be sensitive and deemed confidential, and therefore cannot be reported.

- 5) Publish minutes agreed by both parties in a timely coordinated manner
- 6) Share key contact information including roles and decision-making powers
- 7) Ensure meetings are 'structured' so that any topics that either party wants to discuss can be done so in an appropriate and respectful environment.
- 8) Promote and educate supporters on the various methods of engagement and their primary purpose.

Each party hereby confirms its agreement to the terms contained in this memorandum of understanding.

**Signed on behalf of the trust:**

Name:

Position:

Date:

**Signed on behalf of the club:**

Name:

Position:

Date