

TRUST MATTERS

'Baptism of fire' has ignited the enthusiasm Kimbell has for role

Pompey Supporters' Trust (PST) media manager John Kimbell was appointed to Pompey's board of directors last month, after successfully passing the Football League's owners and directors test.

Kimbell replaced Mick Williams, who resigned from the PST board last month and stepped down as a Blues director at the same time.

It's fair to say I have been very busy. There's been a lot going on from a PST perspective in recent times, with the departures of both Mick Williams and Steve Tovey.

And likewise, since I have joined the club's board there have been some big decisions obviously with Andy Awford going.

There was never going to be a quiet time to join the Pompey board – there is always something happening here.

From that point of view, it's been good to get involved straight away because that is what you are there for.

You are there to make decisions, make a difference and give your view.

In terms of how I arrived in the role, following Mick's exit, everyone on the PST board was asked if they wanted to stand to join the club's board of directors.

Lots of people talked about it but for various reasons didn't do it.

I put my hand up as being happy to represent everybody at board level.

That was it – the decision was made.

It is a hugely-privileged position for me to be in and I fully appreciate that.

I don't have a defined role as yet, although – among a number of other things – I am ultimately there to put forward the views of the PST and its members to the club board.

It was odd, though, because the day

by **JOHN KIMBELL**

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I passed the Football League's fit-and-proper-persons test for owners and directors was on the morning of the March board meeting.

That meant I was entering the boardroom on the very same day my approval came through.

I was able to have my say and cast my vote immediately and that proved to be a bit of a baptism of fire.

It was one of the biggest meetings of the year because we were all talking about budgets and what not so I was able to sit in on that, which was great.

It was a little bit surreal to go from being a fan in the stand to sitting in the boardroom but I feel I have taken to it quite well and I am looking forward to the challenge.

Talking of challenges, this week saw the board gather together to consider the next Pompey manager.

We were all agreed that it was a good first meeting.

Appointing a new manager is a delicate process, so we are never going to comment on individuals.

But everyone was there and everyone had prepared very well for it and been very considered in who they felt was the right person for the job.

We are now awaiting the next step, in terms of where the whole process will go.

Finally from me, I would just like to take this opportunity to welcome Geoff Paul to the PST board as treasurer. He is very experienced in that role and will be a great asset to us going forwards.



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There has been plenty for new Pompey director John Kimbell to ponder since he joined the Blues' board last month – not least the decision regarding who will replace Andy Awford, above, in the Fratton Park hot seat

New arrival keen to put across views of Pompey's youngsters



Young and passionate Pompey fans are the lifeblood of the football club

Pompey fan Olly Birch, 24, was co-opted to the Pompey Supporters' Trust (PST) board in March to oversee the development of the newly-formed PST youth committee.

He is a Fratton end season-ticket holder and passionate about increasing youth involvement within the PST and also at the football club.

It's great to be involved with the PST and it's also great that they have given other youngsters a chance to get involved as well.

by **OLLY BIRCH**

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The club had forgotten about youngsters for as long as I could remember.

But now I have been given the chance to change that.

I head up the newly-formed PST youth committee, comprising of 10 of us of all different ages.

We meet up on a monthly basis to go through ideas – usually with a

representative from the club and the PST board as well.

There, we look at ways to improve youth involvement.

We want to get students more involved, so we are looking at student deals.

Atmosphere-wise, we are looking at a potential new section where younger fans can make a bit of a noise – it's a work in progress.

The overriding message, though, is that we want to improve matchday experiences for youngsters.

All over the country youth

factions are appearing in the ground and Pompey seem to be missing that.

The Blues fans are largely formed from an older generation of people.

We (the youth) have missed out because of the Premier League years.

So we need to get young people back and are looking at different things to get them involved.

If young people lose interest then in a few years time there will be a lot less fans coming to Fratton Park.

