

## Vote David Maples

Shortly after Tornante purchased Pompey for £5.67m, new owners paid £210m for 80% of Southampton FC, valuing the whole club at £262.5m – an inflated value reflecting their Premier League position. We all know SFC isn't worth 47 times as much as Pompey, but was Pompey sold cheaply?

Barnsley is a better comparison. 98.5% of a then Championship club with a larger capacity and more modern ground, but lower attendances and a less distinguished history sold for £20m. So how much Pompey should have been sold for?

The Trust Board minutes (4 March 2017) included 'The recent PCFC Board Meeting had discussed the intended issue of shares by the Club. A price of £1750 was agreed by the PCFC Board'.

This valued the whole Club at just under £10m. Adding a premium for the extra value a new owner would hope to achieve by developing the Club, then a price of £20m would have been reasonable.

If shares were valued at £1750 when the PCFC Board had received reports on the condition of Fratton Park why was an offer of £1000 per share put to shareholders shortly afterwards?

The Trust Board should provide a full explanation.

## The News

I campaigned against Tornante's takeover. Unfortunately The News, after initially saying it would be neutral, provided almost no platform for fans opposed to the takeover. The News owner's Readers Charter commitment "to give a voice to those who struggle to be heard" was forgotten. The vote could have been different with fair coverage.

## A missed opportunity?

The last eight years have shown it is much easier to get relegated than promoted, so every opportunity must be taken to get back to our historic level in the top two divisions.

In December we were sixth with a good chance of the play-offs. The January transfer window left us with an inexperienced squad and the opportunity was squandered. League results in 2018 were:

Bench	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points
Experienced	7	4	1	2	13
Inexperienced*	14	3	3	8	12

\*Bench included players who did not complete a full league game during season

## Fratton Park

Detailed work by Trust members demonstrated there is no current alternative site within the city and there is unlikely to be one for the foreseeable future. Rather than spending ever increasing amounts patching up Fratton Park, phased redevelopment should be a top priority.

Tornante clearly carried out detailed research before tabling a takeover bid and has a history in top quality leisure industries. If they are ambitious for Pompey, they need to bring forward proposals for this, including a ground big enough for everyone who wants to support Pompey.

## **Fans Ownership**

I am standing for the Trust Board because I still believe in fans ownership. I have supported Pompey for fifty years and we made more progress in four years of fans ownership than in any other period. This was a period of unprecedented progress for our club including acquisition of a training ground, initial work on Fratton Park and promotion.

At our AGM in September 2016, we adopted the PST Strategic Plan 2016-2021. This included, in the Future Opportunities section *'We wish to remain a truly "community" club, reflecting the aspirations and loyalties of our local fan base in SE Hampshire and W Sussex as well as our supporters throughout the world – and not beholden to wealthy foreign owners with no long term commitment.'*

We have now lost fans ownership. During the takeover Michael Eisner said the club could still progress under fans ownership. If the share issue had taken place we could have made further progress. Tornante need to develop the club's infrastructure including a training ground which can accommodate a development squad and expansion of Fratton Park.

## **What role does the Trust have now?**

Our Club only exists because the Trust, supported by the Presidents, saved it. With no guarantees about the conduct of future owners, the Trust might have to save it again.

A Heritage & Advisory Board has been established as a forum for the Trust and Presidents to discuss key issues with Tornante. The Trust Board should consult widely about issues discussed to ensure that all key issues are covered. Trust members should feel fully informed about the development of our club. Trust representatives should not be bound by secrecy.

## **Why do I want to be a Trust Board member?**

Football without fans is nothing. The Trust Board are the collective custodians of the fans emotional stake in the club. I want to make supporters' views heard at all levels and to help fans really feel that this is our football club. I will continue to campaign for fans on the club Board.

Football finances are skewed by owners treating clubs as short-term investments and then walking away if they turn sour. Aston Villa are the latest club to suffer this. I want the Trust to continue to develop its role in supporting fans to develop trusts at other clubs and to work with trust-owned clubs. This should include campaigning for financial rules that promote fair competition.

I welcome the higher profile for equality issues at Pompey. This makes the whole community welcome. I want to see this developed further.

## **Who am I?**

I am a North Lower season ticket holder. This is my fifty-second season supporting Pompey. I went to school in Portsmouth. I joined the Trust at its inception and was a member of the long term stadium options group.

I am standing for election to the Trust Board because I believe I have the skills, experience and vision to contribute to the next steps in re-building our club.

I have experience of membership involvement through being a trade union branch officer. I have experience of building contracts, including managing significant capital budgets. I believe that this experience would complement the skills and experience possessed by existing Board members. To discuss this statement, please come and chat to me at the hustings or email me at [notothetakeover.wordpress.com](mailto:notothetakeover.wordpress.com)