

## QUESTIONS FOR CUSG MEETING ON MON 7<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2021 FROM USERS OF THECUMBRIANS.NET FORUM:

### QUESTIONS FOR THE CLUB – ANSWERS FROM NIGEL CLIBBENS UNLESS STATED

In the latest fans forum John Nixon stated the club wasn't for sale as it had an agreement with EWM. It was later stated that EWM were close to taking over on three separate occasions but on each occasion it hit a snag. The relationship is continuing but may have to start at the beginning and take another two years. Nixon later on in the forum stated he would sell the club if the right people came along. Therefore my questions on this are as follows.

1. We are supposedly 2nd for supporter engagement.

Firstly adding "supposedly" is a jibe which is unfair and unwarranted. See answer to Q19 for an explanation why I say that.

We are committed to engaging with fans - we do it because it's the right thing to do. It is initiatives like answering these very specific and personal fan questions that are part of it.

We were ranked in that place by an independent review The assessment was undertaken by independent specialists, unconnected with the club, looking in detail at all 92 clubs, all measured under the same criteria – with no favour, no bias. They see all the clubs and benchmark them.

Why then don't you put this to the test and ask the supporters what deal they want. Fan Engagement is not club management by committee or referendum.

The FSA [not CUFC or me] gives a good overview of fan engagement: <https://thefsa.org.uk/our-work/supporter-engagement/>

It's the shareholders that make the decision what to do with the shares they hold.

We have fan directors and a fan trust as a shareholder holding 25.4% of votes with a board representing the wider interests of fans. They understand that role in respect of any change of control. How they use that voting power is a very important safeguard for the club. Which is why I have championed their role in the succession process and governance of the club. I know the views of fans is central to how they assess succession plans and gaining their support.

In time the fan-led review may increase the role of fans in ownership change.

Do supporters want the EWM deal headed by a man that has made dubious deals or one of the ones that the owners rejected such as Lapping, Robin Browns, Chris Lumsdon's or another. I dare you to put this to the test and you'll be surprised by the answer.

Any new owner must have fan support and take fans with them on their new journey together – right from the start, if it is to be a success - along with a plan and finance.

It is in new owner's interests to do all they can to get that support – when it doesn't happen the outcomes can be very difficult for the club - Bolton (Anderson), Bury (Dale), Charlton (Duchatelet) immediately spring to mind.

The individual shareholders make individual decisions about what they do with the shares they own. That is the same in any club, in any company, whether it's football or not. It is their choice which deal to accept or not. That is the nature of club ownership – rightly or wrongly, fans have no say at all except in those individual decisions.

Clubs cannot be run by committee or fan referendum.

In my opinion the individual shareholders at CUFC have always made those choices based on what they believe is in the best interests of the club. They have taken their responsibilities very seriously and still do. They have been prepared to make some unpopular choices in the eyes of some fans, in exercising that responsibility – pursuing some deals and not others.

Whether you think those decisions in the past were correct, that was their motivation. To do what is right for CUFC – not just get out and leave it in a worse position. That remains the case now. I am certain of that.

CUOSC, the fans trust, is in a different position. What it does with its shares and the support it gives to any deal is determined by its board and its membership – the fans but also the wider fan base.

This is why CUOSC is hugely important and carries a major responsibility. This is why I keep repeating the role the trust plays in the governance of a club where it has a minority stake.

As I said at the forum, the focus on fundraising misses the main point.

In the new fan-led review – almost everyone connected with the game sees the vital role supporter trusts can play, and are looking to develop the role of fans in club decision making and governance. Ownership deals are a critical process for fan trust involvement.

At Carlisle, the club and the fans are already significantly ahead of almost all clubs; they are catching up with us. That is one reason why we lead in fan engagement! Our fans have the opportunity, they have the access and they have influence already.

It is incredible while the wider game is championing and looking to fans trusts to improve the game and their clubs, to safeguard against individual shareholder control, yet for some fans of CUFC they don't recognise the opportunity they already have in place.

Fans have the trust to represent them at the heart of the club. On all matters including deals. It is up to fans to grasp the responsibility that offers. If that is to test and ask the supporters what deal they want, so be it. It's a fans' trust and fans control it. Rather than saying CUOSC doesn't work, change it by joining in. Most fans would jump at the chance to have two directors and a 25.4% stake in their club.

Addition to the question:

If you won't do this are we lead to believe it's EWM/Day or whatever they want to be called or nothing.

As JN said in his answers to questions on 1 June - As with all plans we have a preferred route, but also plan B and C, which we could pursue if required.

And is the reason it's this is because of the debt and PGs and therefore the owners, as thought are thinking of their own plight rather than the clubs?

No. As JN said in his answers to questions on 1 June - The personal guarantees are something we think anyone who loves their football and their club would do, and so we have no worries on that score. We are not thinking of our own personal positions, rather than the club's.

2. Why are we lead to believe it will/it take two years for change of ownership to go through with sanction from the EFL.

I don't recall anyone ever saying it will take or that it takes two years for change of ownership to go through, with sanction from the EFL. I don't know where you are getting that belief from. It's wrong. It doesn't and wouldn't take two years for change of ownership to go through with sanction from the EFL.

However other clubs such as Bolton and Wigan changed ownership in a fraction of the time, therefore what's the difference and why two years for us?

Each case is different. In those two cases, they were insolvent in Administration and different rules apply. It doesn't and wouldn't take two years for change of ownership to go through with sanction from the EFL.

3. What is the interest rate or based on for the EWM loan?

Under the terms of the agreement I am not prepared to disclose that.

4. At the recent fans forum, John Nixon stated that John Jackson wasn't attending because he "probably had something on that night".

John Jackson was invited but unavailable. John N didn't know the specific reason, so what John said was true.

Please confirm that John Nixon was talking rubbish. Please confirm that given John Jackson hasn't spoken or put a statement to the fans since he joined the Holdings Board three years ago this month,

I can confirm that is true.

he was never going to attend the fans forum.

That is your opinion and I respect it, but I don't believe that is true.

I appreciate the panelists were unable to speak about Purepay Retail. It was a club forum about club issues. The best people to answer all the questions in the fullest way those on club matters were the panelists who attended.

5. I asked the question at the forum re club interference into people's personal affairs and this may be done to stop people asking questions. The reply was it's a nonsense suggestion, in reference to stopping questions being asked which I agree with to some extent as all my questions are answered to which I appreciate however:

- Has the club, including all personal recently or past ever delved into a persons private life. This includes contacting people's employers, friends and internet searches?

Not that I am aware of in my time here since June 2016.

- Can the club (Clibbens) confirm that no club employee/director will contact a supporters employer or at the very least try to make contact with the supporter first to resolve the issue before taking this avenue.

Yes – if we were to have concerns we always address them directly in person.

6. Have the club asked anyone in the PD camp if they intend to buy the club?

Yes.

7. What's the plan if EWM/Day/Purepay decide not to take it on, or if an agreement can't be met?

John Nixon answered that in the supplementary questions to the forum when he referred to other fall-back options.

8. Is there any truth in David Holdsworth becoming a shareholder?

There are no plans to issue new shares. The existing shareholders could in theory transfer/sell their personal shares but, again, I am unaware of any plans to do so.

9. I am a message board poster on the Cumbrians.net, ex-season ticket holder, and still attend some games each season when I can. It is difficult to get enthusiasm from family members to attend matches (both sons refuse to "watch that dross" and sit in pigeon soiled seats) but I do sometimes get my Grandson to attend.

At the recent Fans Forum, you combined responses relating to the questions raised by Richard, whilst referring to my posts. Please only respond to my questions here, as these are totally separate items to Richard's questions.

I posted mildly critical points on the message board (username CarlisleWhite) calling out the bluster on the "losses" due to Covid. I repeated them almost verbatim in a tweet to Andy Hall (twitter name Carlisle Leeds), which shows my full name as part of my twitter handle. Following this, someone at the club went onto my LinkedIn account to get further details on me. There was other snooping done, but I am not in a position to provide proof on these other methods.

I am sorry that you find the whole business "nonsense" (your words at the forum). Maybe you deem it "nonsense" for a professional football club to be searching for whom someone works for, but I can assure you I do not share your assertion, and neither does your media man.

You suggested I send my issues on this matter to the club but, based on the experiences of others, I have no confidence that the matter would not be ignored/glossed over, so have been fully consistent in saying I would prefer my queries to be responded to in public. I would rather only actual and specific responses to questions were given or, if you would prefer not to answer any or all questions on this for any reason, please be honest about this and just confirm this or do not provide an answer to the point/s in question.

- please confirm who at the club has access to its LinkedIn account?

Like all our social media, the account access is limited to the Media team. Since the claim specifically referred to LinkedIn searches, new access was then granted for the first time to the CEO.

- who at the club checked my LinkedIn account to see who I worked for. Andy Hall has categorically said it was not him. and you said it was "nonsense", so who was it?

AH – As I have already said in a direct reply on the forum, I did not check your LinkedIn account. I only knew your name once we received these questions on 7 June, which included your Twitter username. I never saw your tweet to me, so was not able to link it the forum post. Having now been shown your Twitter bio, using the information you just provided, I can confirm that neither of us (Andy or Amy – the only ones with access to the club LinkedIn page) knew your name until that point. I still have no idea who you are as a person, as I have made a point of not visiting your LinkedIn page or Twitter feed personally, to protect myself from sparking a claim that I have investigated you on this occasion.

NC - In the answer to Q9.7 below I have said my position.

Beyond that, we have a simple process to deal with fan concerns:

<https://www.carlisleunited.co.uk/news/2021/may/fans-how-to-get-in-touch/>

So we can look into fan concerns and answer them.

The simple and obvious reasons why are detailed in Q9.14. Until such time as you provide details in line with this process, the concern cannot and will not be taken any further.

More generally speaking, regarding LinkedIn..

You cannot search for an individual from the Carlisle United business profile page. It is a static information page to post information on.

As we understand it (we are not experts on the LinkedIn IT):

- anybody joining LinkedIn can add employment information to say they work or have worked at the football club, there are no corroboration safeguards to stop people from doing so.
- if any of those individuals search a criteria and the keyword in their search corresponds with someone's individual profile, they will show as a match – that's the aim of the system to link people
- for the matched individual, it may show as a search by someone employed at Carlisle United amongst other things
- they could have been searching in a personal capacity with no connection with CUFC now or even in the past. They could be searching for anything like a specialism, trade, business, skill etc, not even for a specific individual. One person could appear as simply a part of a very long list of matches.

Of course you cannot search Mr X if you don't know the name to search for in the first place.

- what possible cause could there be for anyone at the club to check my LinkedIn account, other than to check who I worked for (please note that the club had my name prior to carrying out the search, and my personal details are on facebook, twitter, etc)?

See answer to Q9.2 above.

- what other means of investigating my business and personal affairs did this person and/or others carry out to find out more about me, and why?

See answer to Q9.2 above.

- Andy Hall said on the message board "I would not advise anyone else to do it, and would not stand by and stay silent if I knew somebody had". Do you concur with this,

Yes I agree with the general principle.

and what action will you take against the person in question?

The specific circumstances and facts of any incident determine the action. We would follow our club policies. This is the same approach as for any incident.

- you said at the forum that you discussed this matter at the club.

Yes very briefly– when the initial accusation was made in post #64 AH texted NC to alert him. NC confirmed that he didn't know who CW was and he had no information about the claim whatsoever. The very brief exchange ended at that point.

Bearing in mind the above, do you stand by the claim you did not know who I was, That was true then and is unchanged now. To be crystal clear.

- I did not know who you were then.
- I still do not know who you are now.
- I have not ever asked anyone who you are.
- I have never tried myself to find out who you are - before or since.
- I have never asked anyone else to find out who you are - before or since
- No one has ever offered to find out who you are.
- No one has offered to tell me who you are.
- I don't need to know who you are.
- I have no desire or interest to know who you are, what you do or anything else - not since then, not now or in the future.
- I can be no clearer than that.
- That position on ID is no different to any other poster asking a question on the forum.

despite having a meeting at the club with someone who knew my name (as I gave it to him). Do you accept this is not credible?

NC - No – I refer to answer to Q9.7 above. Additionally, because a third party knows who you are, it doesn't mean I or any other members of the club do.

AH - A moderator from TheCumbrians.net came into the club to work on the archive a few days after the initial posts appeared on the message board. I made a point of telling him that I had no interest in knowing who you were, if he even knew himself, but I did ask if anyone from the club had contacted the moderators to find out anything about you at all (the moderator can confirm this, if he chooses to do so). He assured me that hadn't happened, and he did not at any point mention your name.

DM (TheCumbrians.net) – As stated, at no point has anybody connected to the Club asked me for any information on yourself. I also wouldn't simply give such information out, as we adhere to the GDPR regulations. I simply wouldn't use your real name in any conversation, unless I had your specific permission, and even then I can't think of many occasions this would be required.

- you stated at the forum "the club does not go digging up people in the forum to see what they are up to in order that they do not ask questions". Do you accept this was incontrovertibly a lie in relation to my posts (see all posts and comments made by both parties in the message board posts trail)?

No – my statement is true.

We have a process [see answer to Q9.2] to allow us to look into concerns and answer them. As detailed above, the club is not going to engage in a consideration of this unsubstantiated allegation outside that process.

The simple and obvious reasons why we adopt this approach are detailed in Q9.14.

Until such time as you provide any evidence to the club within that process, it cannot and will not be taken any further.

Despite the invitation and request and opportunity to follow this very simple and straightforward approach to address and deal with your claim - you have chosen not to do so. I am sure you have your reasons. The opportunity is still there.

- why did you not read out my posts at the forum what was written on the message board (implying and then indeed saying, it was nonsense) after saying you were going to. You clearly had prepared answers to the points, but did not provide them for some reason? The question was from Richard Mullen and was a general point of the "constitution" so I answered accordingly.

- you mention you read the forum to see what the fans are saying, so you can respond, but then said you choose not to respond to the matters I raised to you. How do the two statements marry up?

Very simple. By looking on the Cumbrians forum I can be prepared and respond to the issues fans are interested in.

That doesn't mean I then will automatically or necessarily respond back on the Cumbrians forum (in fact on the contrary, I very rarely respond on the forum, as I said).

The issues fans are interested in are responded to in different ways depending on the circumstances. Sometimes I wait for direct questions raised each month [like these]. Other times I answer at CUSG so they are in the minutes. Also in my club updates or at the public fans forums.

Finally to be clear some issues will never be answered back on the forum. The club will not address allegations against any employ or club behaviour made on the forum, by debate and discussion on the forum. That is totally inappropriate. See Q9.2 and Q9.14

- you said at the forum I said that if you did not answer the points made it was clear you were lying. There are no comments to this effect at all.

I said in the forum:

"The response of a particular poster was you haven't responded to me ... it must be true."

There are no comments to this effect at all. I refer to post #136 which says:

"So, just to sum up, the two in question [me and Andy] know of the claim [we did] and, if they do not respond, are basically condoning what they/he have done."



Do you now accept this was a blatant lie (please refer to the postings list) and do you intend to apologise for this?

No.

Post #136 is there on the record and that is what I was referring to with my comments. My comments are entirely consistent with that post.

Post 136 says:

“if they do not respond, are basically are condoning what they/he have done”

- Why did you initially respond to the points I made on the message board, I saw two questions and I was happy to answer them to clarify the facts.

but then took a vow of silence when I made the allegations about the club snooping on me?

As explained above in Q12.2 and Q12.9, the club will not address allegations against any employee or club behaviour made on the forum, by debate and discussion on the forum.

To expect to consider or ask us respond to claims or criticise us for dealing with concerns of that nature in any other way than in accordance with our procedures is totally unrealistic.

Why? It's obvious and simple...two simple examples...

What if a claim of misbehaviour is made on the forum and it's true? If it is discussed and debated and dealt with in public on the public forum and then action is required, treatment of the employee would be ripped apart. The whole process would be unfair to the employee concerned. Totally unacceptable.

What if it's untrue and an employee is put on trial on the forum? How would you feel if your employer did that? Totally unacceptable. It would prejudice any action that could be required afterwards.

It is really easy to accuse the club on the forum but in our responses we will operate in accordance with our policies.

We are a public interest organisation and are committed to fan engagement and dealing with concerns. We take them seriously. That is why we have many ways to raise concerns [to help fans we have updated the website to list them all and make it even easier (see Q9.2).

Where fans have any concerns there is a clear and transparent process to raise them and for how they will be dealt with – as detailed in the answer to Q9.2. They are clear for all fans to see.

- you said at the forum that your response to the issues raised by me on snooping into who I worked for (or "what I was up" to to use your phraseology) was "this is not the case, nothing to see here" - do you accept this is also a lie?

It is not a lie. I refer to the answers above.

10. Will the new caterers be supplying cheese XL crisps?

Still to be decided.

11. What's the clubs/players meal of choice from the viceroy?

Everyone is different.

12. Will the Brunton pasty be returning?

We are making enquiries to see if it is feasible.

13. Will the caterers be adding hot chocolate to the hot chocolate drink and meat in the meat pies?

The meat pies will be selected by a blind tasting by CUSG members. The hot chocolate will be what it says.

14. The club said that anonymous questions would not be raised at the fans forum. If a fan asks a question in good faith, is civil, and raises a valid talking point, why does it matter if they give a name or not?

The fans forum is a unique, personal, face to face format. It is challenging and deals with important issues. The fans forum is a live, spontaneous event. Questions are not known in advance by the panel and posed by live in person. No topic is off limit.

It is entirely reasonable and appropriate to expect fans to be prepared to give a name to participate in such an open event with no limits. It's the established principle of the event to give a name. This year is no different.

I have yet to see any reasonable reason for a fan not to give a name for a question. Whether the question is in good faith, is civil, and raises a valid talking point or not, is not a relevant factor in this instance. It's the principle that matters.

Covid meant every fan could not be there this time, but we sought to keep the integrity of the forum as close and consistent to the normal established event format as possible. We wanted it as near as possible to the feel of a normal forum – that means giving names as normal. "whats your name and what's your question" etc.

The panelists still did it live. They still did it with no advance notice of the questions. The questions were still posed by fans live [rather than read out by the club] and again no topic was off limit – all unchanged as normal. It was consistent with that approach that fans were asked to give a name as usual.

It is as simple as that. No conspiracy.

Beyond that, for me it's a part of civil society and life in a live forum to speak to each other on a person level – not behind a cloak of anonymity. If you want to stay anonymous you can, but not at the forum.

15. Do you think that refusing anonymous questions is fair to fans who aren't comfortable giving their name?

I think it is totally fair and reasonable – for the reasons above.

The forum gets a live response to a live question on any topic and the only condition is giving a name.

In my view if a fan isn't prepared to agree to do that, fine, they can still use an alternative route to ask their question. It will get answered – but not live at a fans' forum.

You are effectively denying them a voice and shutting them out of the fan engagement process

I say that for three reasons:

- Nobody is “denying them a voice and shutting them out” - it's a choice. Fans can give a name or not, it's a personal choice – even if they opt out there are still many other ways to ask them anonymously.
- The fan engagement process is not just about the forum. The forum is one element. There are many other ways for club and fans to engage and have their voice heard – eg CUSG, CUOSC, SLO direct questions to the club, FSA, fan groups, ask a friend. Questions here – all anonymous, if that's what is wanted.
- For fans “who aren't comfortable giving their name” they could have asked someone else to pose it for them, or in the extreme case made up a name [we don't have the time or resources to check], if that was such a huge barrier.

16. Do you think the recent fan engagement survey is representative of what the fans think, considering that none of us were asked for our input apart from CUOSC (who many feel don't represent us)?

The Think Fan Engagement index <https://fanengagement.net/> is focused on what clubs do in the area of fan engagement. It objectively measures clubs on the quality of their Fan Engagement activities looking at how we compare to 91 other clubs, looking at best practice in this area. It looks at the standard of work a club does.

That is not to say the objective opinions don't have value, they are of course relevant too, but it's a separate debate - not what this index is measuring.

Perhaps in time a consultancy will look from a fan's point of view and benchmark the view across the 92 too. If they do we will see the independent results and reflect on them. Until then this is the best independent objective information. Of course it may be different to what each fan thinks.

Fans don't have the opportunity to look closely at 92 clubs across all these areas and compare and benchmark what they do – this consultancy does that as its business.

The power of the index is that someone has done that for them. Crucially, they have done it without fear or favour, feelings or personal opinions [on me or the club or cuosc or personalities] about cufc or any other club. It's purely on the facts about what clubs do.

The index doesn't aim to be "representative of what the fans think" - that is not what the index is about.

The FSA has lots of best practice <https://thefsa.org.uk/our-work/supporter-engagement/> guidance.

The subjective opinion of "What the fans think" of the work clubs do in the area of fan engagement is a totally different matter, important yes, but not considered by this index. Why is the distinction so important? Because it is critical not to mix up two completely different things.

Why? ...

Because even if we are measured [independently by experts who look at what is best practice], as leading in the industry in England – it doesn't necessarily mean we will be also seen by our own fans in that way too. Achieving industry best practice on what we do may not be what our fans "think" is leading. That is why "what the fans think" is a totally different question to "what the club do".

We have seen this misunderstanding of the index in the response by some fans and the media - mixing an objective, independent benchmarking of CUFC vs 91 other clubs with a personal subjective opinion, or collection of opinions what fans "think" and their feelings on CUFC, creates mistaken and flawed conclusions.

If you want further information.... See below.

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The index aims to be objective – it's designed to take out the personal biases, perceptions, beliefs and preferences and look solely at facts independently – not opinions. It benchmarks our fan engagement actions and activities against other clubs using the same standard measures and indicators, with no favour.

The index looks at three areas:

**Dialogue** (the meetings and processes in place to practice two-way communication with their fanbase and its representatives)

- Structured Dialogue with supporters' trust/independent supporters group

- Structured Dialogue with wider group of representatives
- Fans Forums
- Social Media (does the club have a Twitter Help Channel or a Twitter SLO Channel)
- Any other Dialogue initiatives/innovations

We score well because of initiatives like CUSG and all its groups, answering fan questions, the forums, fan meetings I attend with CUSG, CUOSC, the London branch etc.

**Governance** (what underpins, or reinforces these relationships)

- Are there supporter directors on the board of the club?
- Customer/Club/Supporter Charter: rating based on whether it's easy to find, and contains information about
  - the SLO, fan consultation, and supporter/customer services
  - Whether or not the SLO is clearly a 'stand alone' role at the club
- Is there a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or other legal agreement with supporters' trust or other independent group governing their relationship?

We score well because of CUOSC, 25,4% ownership, two directors on the boards, our comprehensive charter and policies in relation to fan issues.

We will improve with the new SLO developments and catering panel and new CUSG developments.

**Transparency** (what is published in relation to this dialogue)

- Are reports or minutes published of structured dialogue meetings with supporters' trust/independent group and/or its structured dialogue with a wider group of representatives?
- Are agendas published in advance of any of these meetings?
- Are reports or minutes published of fans forums?
- Are agendas published in advance of fans forums?
- Does the club report on its board meetings?
- Does the club publish an agenda in advance of its board meetings?

Again we score well due to the content of our accounts, CUSG and the transparency of agendas, minutes, questions like these.

The input of CUOSC is simply to confirm facts about what they do and how the club engages with them - like have they got directors on the board? Do they attend meetings? Do they have access and meet with directors? Is there a legal agreement with the trust? It's a simple confirmation of facts to see if the club undertakes the best practice with CUOSC. Things that can't be seen publicly. Nothing else. The CUOSC answers and ranking doesn't score them - it scores the club.

**FOR BOTH CLUB & TRUST:**

1. It was stated at the latest forum there was three occasions where a transfer of shares was going through but stalled. What was the reason, on each occasion, of it failing?

Club:

Meeting the EFL requirements.

Meeting the EFL requirements.

Coronavirus.

CUOSC:

No answer received.

2. Is Nigel Clibbens, trust or any club member Kessler on the messageboard?

Club:

NC - I have no forum ID and don't post on the forum – so no.

AH - The username Fozzy is possibly registered, but it hasn't been activated for many years.

The moderators can confirm this, if required. (DM TCN – No username with that is registered, think it may have been on the old Footymad long before ours existed!)

CUOSC:

No answer received.

3. Have any discussions been had privately or publicly with other groups or your own group in relation to the banning of a user from the Cumbrians.net messageboard?

Club:

Not club to messageboard.

Not club to CUOSC.

Administration of the forum is a matter for the forum, not the club.

CUOSC:

No.

**FOR CUOSC:**

1. At the latest forum, John Nixon mentioned the amalgamation of A and B shares. Atkinson mentioned this wasn't agreed unless it was the first agreement. What is this 1st agreement?

The status of all issued 'A' and 'B' shares in the Holdings company has not changed. As we said in our statement of 23.05.21, 'We do not intend to comment further on the details of the succession plan until we have met again and had discussions with the other parties to it.'

2. In the fans forum John Nixon mentioned Billy Atkinson was a pain in the bum at meetings. In the forum there was plenty of examples of the Trust doing other things to the owners/clubs bums but not so much causing them pain. Therefore can we have some examples of Billy being a pain in the bum please?

We aren't going to detail Billy's contributions to meetings at CUFC, but as with his contribution at CUOSC board level, he has always been very forthright in his approach and we know he has always done everything he can to get answers to difficult questions.

3. The trust are very active on diversity issues. Jim Mitchell at a fans forum said to a host "you've had too many pizzas" implying his fat. The trust released a statement that admitted Jims guilt and an apology given. This was then picked up in an article in the local newspaper by Jon Colman and wasn't resolved, therefore the apology wasn't accepted. Therefore:

- Has the trust(Jim) accepted fault in the statement and the local newspaper reported it, can you therefore confirm rule 5.6 and 5.9.1 was broken?

- Can you confirm rule 6.1 was implemented and what was the outcome, if it wasn't implemented why not?

- Does the trust feel Jim is the right man to represent it and represent it at 1921 meetings after this latest gaffe?

-Why should supporters/members trust Jim is the right man to represent the supporters at these meetings?

CUOSC have dealt with a private complaint over the course of the last two weeks. We have done this in line with our Board policies and procedures and the EDI Statement signed up to by all CUSG members. The outcome has been communicated to the complainant and the disciplinary outcome was deemed appropriate and proportionate, in line with our procedures and agreed by our governing body the FSA. Jim Mitchell will continue in his role as CUOSC Board Member and Supporter Director on the 1921 Board at Carlisle United. We now consider the matter closed.

4. We keep hearing from you that joining the trust will give us a voice in the club. However you admitted you can/will/would dilute shares without a members vote. Why then should I join the trust and exactly what do you mean by having a voice?

The Trust being diluted wouldn't affect the voice that fans have through our board reps. The shareholders' agreement states that any shareholding we have guarantees us a board place. The board of the Trust, like any other board of a Trust has the right to agree to dilution without consulting members. It would always be our intention to consult via (for instance) an SGM, but this may not always be possible due to the usual issues of confidentiality. You will recall that in March 2015 we held an SGM to vote on the 'Lapping proposal' which aimed to bring £1.2m of funds into CUFC. This was preceded by a members' meeting which hosted some very frank discussions about the merits of that proposal. There were also member votes in 2003, 2004 and 2006 about the acceptance of new shareholders' agreements and variations to them.

5. You currently have 400ish members. What's your target for next season?

We don't set specific targets. Our aim is to retain as many existing members as we can and add new ones. Last membership year, 2019-20 was our best year for new members joining since 2015 (when most ST holders were given free 1-year membership).

6. In Dec, you co-opted Mark Middling onto your Board. With the greatest respect to Mark, who is he? And what is his history supporting our Club? I ask purely so that people are more aware, as co-opting is a big deal, especially when someone appears from nowhere!

Mark Middling hasn't just appeared from nowhere, as confirmed by his recent responses to some similar Twitter questions, giving some insight into his background. He has been mentioned on a number of occasions in the CUOSC weekly briefing. Carlisle United is his second club, hailing originally from Stoke on Trent, with Stoke City being his first team. He has family ties to the Carlisle area. Latterly he has been co-opted onto the board and will stand for election in July. CUOSC has been actively looking for people with skills in the accounting and legal professions and Mark comes to us not only as a qualified accountant, but with a particular focus on football finance and he is proving to be a valuable addition to the CUOSC board in this capacity.

7. Your Carlisle REUnited fund has raised approx £13,500. To date you've paid approx £3k towards some medical equipment. What are you going to do with the rest? People didn't donate for it to be sat in the bank! When launched the idea was "to support the Blues through the Coronavirus crisis" and "will target assisting the club to get back on its feet next season". The 20/21 Season is now over with very little assistance provided by the fund, so what is the plan?

The £3k pledged towards the NordBord covers first year's use. CUOSC are in discussions with the club about potential funding of second year costs. The remaining funds have now been agreed after further discussion with the club to go towards refurbishment costs for the new 'Murphy's Bar' (new name for the Sporting Inn).

8. Have the Trust actually asked anyone in the PD camp if they intend to buy the club? Our statement issued 23.05.21 ( <http://cuosc.org.uk/news/succession-in-ownership-of-cufc/> ) lays out what happened regarding succession during 2019-20 and we don't intend to expand on that. It stands to reason that we had meaningful discussions with representatives of the third party involved.

9. Trust board member Nigel Davidson @nbd69 has seemed to have blocked a lot of people from his Twitter account. The people he has blocked seem to be those that have had a different opinion to himself. Considering he is the trusts diversity person and although its his private account, isn't it very strange behaviour from someone who promotes inclusion, diversity and difference?

No answer received.

10. What gives the Trust the right to call themselves the "official supporters club" when they represent only a small proportion of the support and are in pockets of the owners? Surely a Supporters Club should be independent of the club owners?

No answer received.

11. Have the trust tried to get a Cumbrians.net user banned from their site?

CUOSC has not tried to get any member of another group banned from that group.

12. Do the trust monitor the Cumbrians.net site for inappropriate content and how does the trust know a username corresponds to a person and trust member.



CUOSC DOES NOT monitor the Cumbrians.net or any other site other than their own website & social media for inappropriate content. That is the job of each individual group. CUOSC would not ordinarily know if a Cumbrians.net username corresponds to a trust member, unless it had already been publicly stated.

13. Has the trust ever asked the Cumbrians.net sites moderators for any messages to be used as evidence, for any reason, or any other information from them?

CUOSC cannot discuss the details of any cases which come under the auspices of the EDI Statement as agreed by all members of CUSG. Now that statement is in full effect, all members of CUSG have agreed to abide by it.

#### **FOR ALL GROUPS:**

1. Have any of you ever asked the mods on TheCumbrians.net to delete or disable a users account and remove their posts? If so, which user(s) and why?"

2. To the best of your knowledge, are you aware of anyone else who has asked the mods on TheCumbrians.net to delete or disable a users account and remove their posts? If so, who was it that asked, which user(s) did they want removed, and why?"

**London Branch:**

1 - No requests have been made by the London Branch to delete/disable a users account or remove any posts.

2 - We are aware of occasional friction between users on The Cumbrians.net and appreciate that the mods will use their judgement on matters where it may be necessary to intervene. The recent CUSG statement on diversity hopefully will lead to a consistent approach adopted by all supporters groups.

**CUSAT:**

No from me 2 both questions to the best of my knowledge but no one as ever approached me to say they were trying to get an account disabled and I've not asked anyone to do that. I'm guessing if it ever occurred they'd have done it in confidence anyway, hope that helps. Cheers Keith.

**Scottish Branch:**

No to both questions, Keith.

**TheCumbrians.net:**

1 – We have not received any request from the Groups who attend CUSG to delete and/or disable any of our users accounts and/or posts.

2 – We have occasionally had users of our forum contact us, asking us to delete another user, usually due to a difference of opinion or strong views on a particular subject. To date we haven't banned any user following such a complaint.

No answer received from other Groups – CUOSC, R66 or Disabled Group.

Compiled – Thurs 10<sup>th</sup> June 2021.