



CARDIFF BLUES LIMITED (CBL) AND CARDIFF ATHLETIC CLUB (CAC) RELATIONSHIP

It is with great sadness that we publish this open letter to the management boards of Cardiff Blues Limited and Cardiff Athletic Club. The poor relationship which exists between the two inextricably linked organisations is doing immeasurable reputational damage to Cardiff rugby and is a major factor in our fall from grace in the rugby world.

The current situation must be affecting the morale of players and staff; commitment of sponsors and enthusiasm of supporters. In fact, if social media is any gauge, many fans are now at the end of their tether.

The payment of rent arrears and the withdrawal of legal action yesterday is to be welcomed but it's only an immediate problem solved which awaits the next catastrophe.

Each side blames the other but the fact of the matter is that both sides have to take responsibility for the poor relationship which exists between them. Each continues to ignore, and fails to communicate with, their principal stakeholders: their shareholders, members and supporters. The voice of spectators has been ignored for far too long and we would go so far as to say there has been a lack of respect shown to stakeholders by both parties.

There appears to be a belief that the Boards and Management Committees are only accountable to themselves and not to those they are meant to serve. As a result, there is currently a complete lack of confidence that the challenges facing Cardiff rugby can be effectively solved. This cannot continue.

Both sides need to come together and agree a way forward with each working to the mutual benefit of the other. Cardiff rugby will only be successful in such circumstances. Issues to cover include:

- 1 Relationships and behaviour change: establishing trust and confidence between each other.
- 2 A vision for Cardiff rugby: including the professional team; the semi-pro team and the development of players.
- 3 The redevelopment of Cardiff Arms Park (CAP) as a partial means to achieving the above and not as an end in itself.
- 4 The means by which the above will be achieved and the actions which each party commits to undertake.

There is nothing terribly radical or new in this list and we have advocated that you pursue such an agenda for at least the last two years. We want to be absolutely clear with both parties that supporters don't simply want to see another meeting, EGM or AGM take place; there have been enough of these and further warm words will achieve nothing.

We expect to see a commitment to change and to see clear actions resulting. It is a matter for you to decide collectively whether this could be achieved with the support of an independent mediator or

not, but the likelihood of achieving resolution without one does not appear great. For too long, you have collectively hidden critical discussions from your stakeholders under a blanket of confidentiality and, while no one expects to know every detail of every discussion, it is time for you to jointly publish a clear and measurable plan of action so that you can be collectively held accountable to those who you are supposed to represent.

We believe that supporters should be part of these discussions as they have much to contribute and can play a major role in moving things forward, but that view is unfortunately not shared by either party. We challenge you to reconsider that position and to avail yourselves of the kind of stakeholder passion, experience and insight that most organisations would give their all for. It could just help get things over the line and certainly could not make things any worse.

We look forward to an open response from both parties.

Yours faithfully,

CF10 Arms Park Rugby Trust Board