

Raith Forum – Candidates Statements

Statement by Allan Traynor

I believe in an open, inclusive Raith Rovers that engages with supporters and works with the community. I also believe in a sustainable club living within its means and the challenge we face is to balance these visions. When the fans, club and community have come together we have achieved great things, and are the envy of others – it's what differentiates us a club people want to be part of, and a club that people simply want to watch on the TV. This unique selling point may just be the difference between a strong community club, and a struggling business.

Critical to this is maintaining a good relationship between the fans and the club, ensuring the club is responsive to the fans whilst helping them to understand the challenges we face. We need to maintain, build on and utilise our existing support and to achieve this, the club needs someone who is not only able to communicate with, engage with and motivate the fans but also challenge the club when necessary. I believe that my skills, experience, enthusiasm and relationship with Rovers support can nurture and sustain this.

For the last 10 years I have worked closely within supporters organisations, both official and independent, and was a key part of the 'Reclaim the Rovers' campaign group. This has given me an understanding of the setup, cultural differences and challenges involved within the Raith 'community'. With a track record for organising and supporting successful community events in the name of Raith Rovers, I appreciate the difficulties involved in working with the club, and want to understand and remove the barriers to cooperative working. I also have good relationships with many of the club sponsors, whom I have worked with on fundraising campaigns, and have earned their trust and respect.

For my current job as project manager at an international finance company I need to be well organised and able to manage, co-ordinate and motivate people; and to deliver results. I also have a good understanding of what it takes to run a business/project effectively and how to make them successful. My professional knowledge coupled with my experience with Raith Rovers could be a valuable asset.

The club, and Scottish Football, is going through a difficult and important period. The momentum of Reclaim the Rovers, followed by a moderately successful spell at the club, is starting to fade. The failure of Scottish Football reform will undoubtedly see a decline in attendances, support and income. The club needs someone who can inspire, motivate and galvanise the support. I believe I can fulfil this role – I have credibility as a result of my involvement in successful community/club events; I am a recognisable face that the fans can empathise with; I know and understand the different fans groups in the club; I have the professional experience to complement the role; and I believe I will have the support of the fans and sponsors behind me if I am elected.

Statement by David Wann

I have been the Supporter-Director since autumn 2010. During this period we have experienced changes to the composition of the Board of RRFC and the Board has had to make changes to key personnel within the club. I was particularly pleased that the Board were persuaded to adopt the Concordat developed by supporter groups to help guide future policy decisions and practices. Because of reduced income from attendances and the commercial side, the Board has had to reduce significantly the spending budget to live within their means. The financial realities mean that on the playing side we now plan for a mix of full-time, part-time and youth players.

I hope that there will be other contenders for the position of Supporter-Director and even a healthy constructive debate about the way forward.

If re-elected I would continue to organise regular meetings of the Raith Forum so that fans groups can have a channel of communication with the Board and can be informed of developments. I would use the Concordat as a touchstone to help steer discussions on the Board – the Concordat encapsulates the following aims and values: a healthy, vibrant and well-respected club; acting with the longterm interests of the club at heart; operating as an inclusive entity covering the Board, players, staff, the fans and the community; competing at the highest level within the resources available; having an active role at the heart of the community; having shared and stable ownership; having a stadium fit for purpose; showing mutual respect; and operating in an open and inclusive manner.

There are several policies which the Board need to press on with. Firstly we need to increase the number of players who graduate from our youth setup to the first team squad. The changes to our youth organisation last year should help, but it is an area where the Board needs to be vigilant. I think the supporters would welcome more youngsters forcing themselves into the playing squad, and I think it is also a financial necessity. Secondly we need to build stronger links between the club and the community through improved engagement with schools in the Kirkcaldy and Glenrothes area. This should be mutually beneficial with the community seeing its youngsters being encouraged to be more active in football, and the club actively nurturing the next generation of potential supporters. Thirdly generating commercial income is difficult so we need to coordinate links between our supporter groups, our players and our commercial department to help optimise our commercial efforts. Lastly in an ideal world it would be great to have a stadium fit for the purpose of a present day football club – however, this would require levels of investment not currently available, so this must remain an aspiration.

Serving on the Board of RRFC has been a privilege and a pleasure, and I would be very willing to devote the time and energy to serve the interests of supporters for a further two years.