

SIMON JONES – PERSONAL STATEMENT 2021

I am standing to become a Board member of the CF10 Trust as I strongly believe that the voice of supporters should be heard at all levels of professional sport. I moved to Cardiff in 2003 and started to come down to the Arms Park regularly, soon becoming a season ticket holder (much to the dismay of my family who are all Scarlets fans!). My support for Cardiff has led to me meeting a wide range of people and travelling to Newcastle, Leicester, Toulouse, Dublin, Limerick and even Newport, Swansea and Llanelli to follow the team. I feel that at times the voice of those of us who turn up every week to cheer from the stands and terraces are not as effectively heard within Welsh rugby as a whole and want Cardiff to take a position whereby it is leading in how it engages supporters not only in the match day experience, but within the governance structure of the club. I see no reason why this is not possible and would want to see clear structures put in place to represent the voice of supporters, but also to be regularly seeking feedback and views in order to develop the overall strategy for professional rugby in Cardiff.

I have over twenty years' experience working in communications, politics, policy and public affairs. This has included seven years as Head of Communications at Sport Wales, where I was able to develop an understanding of sport governance as well as the principles of sport development. My period with Sport Wales coincided with some major sporting events including the 2012 and 2016 Olympics and the 2014 Commonwealth Games, which enabled me to experience how these events work and started a period of unprecedented success for Welsh sport which I was responsible for communicating and harnessing in order to increase participation across the nation. I currently work in mental health, advocating on behalf of people who experience mental health problems in order to influence the Welsh Government and other service providers to improve access and people's experience of mental health support.

I was originally involved in the working group to establish the Trust, developing a communications plan for the official launch, but had to step away due to family and work commitments. In the last twelve months I have sought to become involved again and am excited at the opportunity to become a Board Member at a time when the club are looking to relaunch their brand and recover from the challenges posed by the pandemic.