



SOUTHEND UNITED SUPPORTERS CLUB TRUST LIAISON MEETING NOVEMBER 12th 2003 MINUTES

1 Present

Geoffrey King (GK), Derek Wilshire (DW), Trevor Bashford (TB), Paul Yeomanson (PY) and Terry Jeffreys (TJ) were present.

TJ introduced Trevor Bashford and Paul Yeomanson to the meeting and they were welcomed by Messrs King and Wilshire.

2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Paul FitzGerald (PF) and Dave Scriven (DS)

3 Correspondence on Message Groups

TJ said that some animosity between the Club and the Shrimpers Trust had resulted from some e-mail on an open message board. He wanted to clear up any misunderstandings.

TJ said that GK had responded very recently to a post on a Yahoo message board which was about a month old and made statements about the future of the relationship between the Club and the Trust. GK said that he had effectively been called a liar on the message board and wanted to respond. TJ stated that there are a number of message boards on the Internet, including one hosted by the club, which were frequented by Southend United and other fans that posted messages to each other. However these are open boards and are in no way connected to the Shrimpers Trust although it has to be said that some but not all of the posters were members of the Trust.

The Shrimpers Trust has its own website but no message board. TB said that Trust policy, news and views would be posted on that website. Anything else that was posted on the Internet about Southend United was not the responsibility or necessarily the views of the Shrimpers Trust. DW said that this had been explained to him at the Shrimpers Trust AGM.

TJ made the point that if he posted something on the message board about the club on the club website, could it be construed that he was speaking on behalf of the club. GK said that TJ would not be speaking on behalf of the club. PY asked why then would GK consider that messages on the Yahoo, Shrimperzone or Rivals message boards were the responsibility of the Trust. GK said that it would be useful if a disclaimer could be placed on these boards to state that it was not the responsibility and views of the Shrimpers Trust. TJ said that he would contact the message board owners to arrange this.

4 Matters arising

Quid A Goal

TB reported that the QAG was going very well but some more goals and clean sheets would

be welcome. He said that the Committee had recently agreed to pay some money up front as requested by GK and our Treasurer would be issuing a cheque of £500 to the club very shortly. DW said that as far as he was aware all the Directors had signed up to the scheme.

Shrimpers Bar

GK said that the Police have stipulated that there is to be a signing in book but it is not a condition of the licence. Any person not being able to show a current membership card of the Shrimpers Trust or the away team supporters club/Trust has to sign in.

TJ said that as the main Trust contact regarding the Shrimpers Bar, he needed to understand what was meant by a "Members Bar" to ensure that the Trust were aware of its responsibilities. He said that he knew of a "Registered Club" and an "On-licence" and now knew that there was no legal entity called a Members Bar. The Shrimpers did not meet the criteria for a "Registered club" so it must be but it is an "On-licence." GK said that in the beginning that he had wanted the Shrimpers Bar to be a Supporters Bar.

TJ said that whilst he was researching the licence conditions for the Shrimpers Bar he had noted that it was illegal to pass betting slips on licensed premises. He was therefore concerned that the club may be breaking the law and wanted to make sure that the club was aware if there was a problem. GK said that there was no problem with Wignall's operating in the Shrimpers Bar and it was all covered within the licence. TJ said that he was pleased with this.

TJ said that some time ago, in response to a question about profits in the Shrimpers Bar, GK said that he would provide a copy of the Shrimpers Bar accounts for the Trust. GK said that he did not agree to that but agreed to provide comparable turnover figures. He did say that he was very pleased with the way things were going in the Shrimpers Bar since the Trust involvement and that profits had increased.

Hull City

TB said that he had been in correspondence with Adam Pearson about the matter and they had agreed to disagree and decided to put the matter to bed. He added that the Trust had received the coach parking fees back from Hull City.

TB said that he had heard that the police presence had now been stepped up at Hull City home matches and recently the Kidderminster coach had been escorted in and out of the city. On a separate note, the Trust had received excellent facilities at Kidderminster and he had written to them to thank them for their kind hospitality

Banning Orders

TJ asked what had happened regarding the problems that had arisen at the Colchester game. GK said that the cases had been put back to 29th November. He added that two fans arrested at the Carlisle game had received three year banning orders.

Problems with New Replica Shirts

GK said that he hadn't heard any more on this subject.

5 Fosssets Farm

TJ said that a statement in the Evening Echo on 6th November said that Southend Hospital had picked a 6 acre site at Fossets Farm as the site for a proposed £100 million expansion of services. He wondered how this would affect the plans for our new stadium.

GK said that this would not affect the stadium plans. He felt that the diagnostic clinic being at Fossets Farm would be a bonus as it would be classed as employment use. The B&Q development was classed as retail and the whole site was designated as employment use.

6 Catering

PY said that at the Northampton game he had waited for 35 minutes to get served at the West Stand food bar and GK agreed that this was too long. TJ said that recently he had noted that the Family Stand food bar was closing just after the start of the second half. On querying this, the servers said that they had been told to close when the half time queue had finished. TJ said that he thought that the agreement was for the food bars to remain open until 15 minutes from the end of the game. GK said that he would look into this.

7 Coaches

TB reported that Kidderminster had charged £10 coach parking fee in their car park. GK said that if the Trust has problems parking their coach at away grounds to let him know.

PY said that Prittlewell Chase was restricted parking for the Northampton game and cars were not allowed to park either side which caused many problems. He said that upon complaining to the Police about this, they had said that they were expecting 56 coaches for the game. PY asked why so many coaches were expected? GK said that he was not aware of this and would investigate.

7 Shrimpers Bar signs

TJ said that the sign above the Shrimpers Bar entrance stated "Home Supporters Only" and he felt that this was off-putting to away supporters even though they had been invited in. He asked if the sign could be amended to "Shrimpers Bar." GK said that he was sure that it had been changed but would look into this.

8 Designated Singing Area

TJ said that it had been suggested on Shrimperzone that the club designates an area within the ground for those fans who wish to sing and chant and play drums and other musical instruments. The club would then advertise the fact and maybe reduce prices to those playing bona fide instruments. He suggested that the club consider designating East Blacks as the singing area as it was central to the East and South upper Stands and the enhanced atmosphere would then be picked up by the rest of the home fans in the ground. GK was warm to the idea but said that he was not sure that East Blacks was the right place. He suggested that the South Lower stand might be a better place but would investigate.

9 Car Park Policy

PY said it takes a long time to exit from the car parks on matchdays. He asked if the club had an arrangement with the Police to allow cars out of the car parks onto the main roads to relieve the tension in the car parks. GK said that they had previously asked the Police for assistance in this but they were not interested.

10 Smoking in the East Stand

PY said that the Trust feels that it is unsafe to allow smoking in a wooden stand after such disasters as Bradford City. GK said the previous Safety officer at the club had been a Fireman. His opinion was that if smoking was banned then people would smoke out of sight and that would be very dangerous. Therefore smoking was allowed.

11 Complimentary Tickets at Darlington

TB said that it had been reported to him that complimentary tickets were being sold at the Darlington game. He said that he was reluctant to provide names but a few people had complained to him about it. GK said that he would investigate the matter.

12 Canvey Game

PY said that the Trust were running coaches to the Canvey game and the Police were advising that fans travelled by these coaches to the game due to the anticipated traffic problems on Canvey on the night of the game. He said that this caused a problem because all the people who ran the coaches for the Trust had not been allocated tickets for the game. He asked if 6 tickets could be put aside for the Trust so that they could run the coaches. Otherwise he would suggest that the club used their stewards to man the coaches.

GK said that they had tried to be as fair as they could in the allocation of tickets and obviously couldn't provide tickets for everyone. He said that he would consider the situation and give a decision the next day regarding the tickets. TJ said that there seemed to be a whole batch of numbers missing from the draw and it was becoming apparent that children were not included. GK said that they had kept children out of the draw because of the problems, which would arise from a child getting a ticket and their parent not getting one. He said that he had tried to be fair but the club were in an impossible situation having been allocated so few tickets.

PY asked if the club could subscribe to Sky2 for one night to show the match in the Shrimpers Bar, then charge for entry and make extra profit. GK said that they couldn't do it for one match only and had enquired about a link from Canvey to Roots Hall for a large screen showing. However Sky had determined there would not be enough demand.

13 Any Other Business

TJ said that at the previous meeting, the Trust had asked whether the club would donate prizes for the Trust Christmas Draw. GK said that he had considered this and asked himself why he should give items to the Trust when he could sell them. TB explained to GK what the Trust did for the club and that monies raised in fund raising would eventually find their way back into the club. GK said that he would reconsider his view.

TJ said that the Trust had located some furniture at Orsett Hospital (4 large round tables and 35 chairs) which would be very useful in the Shrimpers Bar. They were available at £75 but needed to be transported. If the furniture was any good they were considering purchase but would the club allow it to be placed in the bar. GK said that at that price, the club would purchase them if they were suitable and said that he would discuss this with Brian Dear.

TJ said that when the Hall of Fame in the Shrimpers Bar was complete, the Trust planned to have a Grand Opening Ceremony and would invite as many of the players in the Hall of

Fame as possible. He wondered if the club had a list of names and addresses of former players which they could consult. GK said that the club had such a list and would ask Helen Giles to forward it to TJ.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be on Wednesday 17th December at 4pm at Roots Hall.