



SOUTHEND UNITED SUPPORTERS SOCIETY LIMITED LIAISON MEETING



Thursday, 2nd March 2017

1. Present and Apologies

Those in attendance were Geoffrey King (GK), Vice-Chairman and Non-Executive Director of SUFC; Patrick Van der Waag (PvW), Financial Director of SUFC; Danny Macklin (DM), Commercial Director of SUFC; Shane Chapman (SC), Trust Liaison Officer; Kay Fogg (KF), Junior Blues Co-ordinator and Clare Chapman, Trust Board Member. Apologies received from Paul FitzGerald (PF), Trust Chairman and Paul Yeomanson (PY), Trust Vice-Chairman.

2. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 19th January

Follow up on actions:

- **Fairfax Drive entrance/exit** – KF confirmed that this entrance is now open wherever possible, unless otherwise advised by the Police. This action can now be considered closed.
- **Shrimpers Bar exterior lighting** – all confirmed this now seems to be working satisfactorily. This action can also now be considered closed.
- **Local Promotions** – the action on the Trust is to be held over for further investigation.
ACTION – Trust to discuss at next Board Meeting on 6th March
- **Shrimpers Bar Wifi/CI-connect** – DM advised that he is in discussions with the outsourced IT consultant about wifi within the ground, and that the FL is now looking at a mobile app for fans, which is not likely to be in operation before the 2018/19 season.
- **Shrimpers Bar improvements** – PY to re-send the details of those suppliers who helped with the refurbishments to Rhys.
ACTION – DM to check with RE to see if this has been done. Trust to check with PY.
- **Reciprocal Car Parking** – PY and SC reported that this seems to be working well. Action to now be closed but on-going monitoring by the Away Travel organiser.
- **Junior Blues Consent Form** – KF confirmed that this was now in place.
- **Southend United in the High Street** – DM will liaise more with the Trust on this once next season's fixtures have been published.
- **Corporate Sponsorship for the Trust's "Amble to the Addicks" Sponsored Walk** – KF confirmed that this matter had been resolved satisfactorily.
- **Shrimpers Bar/SUCET** – This continues to be monitored. PvW had inspected and provided photos ahead of the last home match to show the condition of the bar to be acceptable. GK advised that he had spoken with Dale Spiby after the last Trust Meeting since when matters had seemingly improved. The coming weekend's match would hopefully be incident free.

3. Club Finances

PvW advised that all taxes and wages are paid up to date. RM continues to support the Club financially. The biennial AGM is expected to take place in April this year.

4. New Stadium

GK commented that this "progresses" and that some positive movement should be seen "shortly".

5. Junior Blues

KF and DM confirmed that the Junior Blues continues to thrive and that everything is working well, with plans for an event at Adventure Island during the Easter holidays and for an End of Season event to be confirmed.

6. Stadium Facilities

The issues surrounding the toilets are now being addressed, with "easy fix" items being fixed first, such as a new ceiling in the West ladies, re-painting, improving lighting and replacing toilet seats. The East (south side) toilets were refurbished in the last month being a larger project. These are all things to help make the facilities more pleasant for supporters to use. GK advised that, when this was part of his remit within the Club, he used to inspect all the facilities ahead of games to ensure they were of

an acceptable standard. PvW said that he had inspected the quality of the cleaning with three different people since the last Shrimpers Trust meeting when it was raised as an issue. While the standard of the cleaning has improved; it is still not at an acceptable level. The contractors who currently clean the facilities have been spoken to on several occasions and while the standard of cleanliness has improved as a result; the club will be changing the cleaning company as their standard is still not at an acceptable level.

ACTION – Stewart to be given guidance

KF asked about the cubicles near the West Stand bar, which are currently single cubicles, one for disabled supporters, one for ladies and one for men. She had requested some time back that the gents' one become a 2nd cubicle for ladies as there are two large blocks of toilets in the West for men, and only one for ladies. Dave Jobson had agreed to do this. The larger number of female supporters now attending would indicate that this would be a sensible arrangement, with signage being changed accordingly.

ACTION – PvW/DM to talk to Stadium Manager re changing the cubicle

Some of the refreshment kiosks continue to have difficulty coping with demand on busier matches. Whilst it is recognised that they do not want to have excessive waste, it was agreed that they need to better anticipate the demand from larger crowds. It was also agreed that pricing ought to be more visible as children, in particular, don't know how much things cost so it was felt that maybe price lists should be available on walls before people get to the kiosks. SC commented that he didn't feel time management was handled particularly well in some of the kiosks. PVW said that he would look into how the kiosks were operated and suggest changes where appropriate.

DM advised that mobile vendors outside of the ground were not a viable option. GK asked if the old units for dispensing hot drinks were still at the ground as these might help allay some of the problems. Similarly, mobile vendors with snacks should be considered.

ACTION – DM to investigate the whereabouts of the mobile drinks units

DM confirmed that the Club are looking into different options regarding beers on offer at the ground. SC asked if anything could be done about the price as the Spread Eagle is offering cheap beer which, obviously encourages people to drink there rather than in our bars. DM replied that the Club has looked at charging less but it doesn't seem to encourage people to use the Club's bars. People will still buy what they usually buy, regardless of the price.

There is a possibility of a mini Beer Festival in the near future. DM advised that printed plastic re-usable cups are to be introduced into the Far Post and the Shrimpers Bar, for the last two games of the season, which people can re-use or take home, with a small deposit paid. GK mentioned the flagons that are available in the bars, which can be filled with 4 pints to take home. It was agreed that this could be promoted more to encourage less wastage of ale, particularly the real ales. It was also agreed that consideration should be given of Trust events when ordering real ale in. The demand for real ale is always high when the Trust runs a Quiz Night or Race Night, for example.

ACTION – DM/PvW to look into ways of promoting an “order and collect” service for flagons of ale

7. Car Park

PvW advised that some quotes have been obtained for re-surfacing the top part of the car park, which is recognised as being the worst area. The Club are still considering options and investigating costs further.

8. Blues Lottery

CC advised that she is happy to join Bryan Woodford as the Trust representatives going forward. GK asked if Mick Maddocks was still involved, which PvW said he was.

ACTION – GK to discuss further with DM and PvW

ACTION – DM to seek further representative from the Commercial department to sit on committee. New committee to meet as soon as possible

9. Any Other Business

- KF asked if all the matters raised on a recent thread on ShrimperZone, concerning broken seats etc had been addressed? DM advised that the majority of them had, the only matter still outstanding was the TVs in the West stand, and he confirmed that they are looking into this and also for the concourse in the East stand.

- SC raised the issue of Adam Barrett, saying he, and many supporters, were disappointed in the way in which he had been treated. He asked if he would be getting a testimonial and what the Club would be doing for him. PvW advised that Adam doesn't qualify for a testimonial as he doesn't have 10 years' continuous service, not even actually having 10 years' service. KF suggested perhaps having a Maher XI v a Barrett XI at Meet the Blues Day this year, which would allow supporters to show their appreciation. DM agreed to accept ideas for consideration regarding Adam but consultation with Manager was an important issue.
- A provisional date for Meet the Blues Day had been set as 30th July, but DM emphasised this is subject to change.
- The Commercial team are looking at a special offer ticket for the last four games of the season, which, it was felt would be a good idea.

14. Date of Next Meeting

Next meeting – 13th April 2017 at 4 p.m.