



SOUTHEND UNITED SUPPORTERS SOCIETY LIMITED LIAISON MEETING



Monday, 24th April 2017

1. Present and Apologies:

Those in attendance were Geoffrey King (GK); Danny Macklin (DM); Paul FitzGerald (PF); Paul Yeomanson (PY) and Kay Fogg (KF). Apologies received from Patrick Van der Waag (PvW), who was delayed at the start of the meeting, and from Shane Chapman (SC).

2. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd March 2017

Follow up on actions:

- **Local Promotions** – the action on the Trust is still outstanding for further discussion.
ACTION – PF to discuss further at Trust Board level
- **Bar and hospitality area wifi** – this action remains outstanding with specific relation to potential play off coach organisation and the need for wifi access in the Shrimpers Bar. Various suggestions were outlined in the short term to deal with this specific need, but long term consideration to be given into looking into improving 4G coverage.
ACTION – DM to discuss with Craig Cheesman regarding temporary log in for the short term in the Shrimpers Bar
- **Shrimpers Bar improvements** – Names still to be forwarded for public thanks for the companies who helped with the improvements.
ACTION – PY to forward names to Rhys
- **Stadium Facilities** – these continue to cause concern. KF had circulated photos ahead of the meeting of the toilets in South Upper. PvW also produced some other photos. All these prompted concern. DM advised that the tap concerned would be being replaced ahead of the game against Bury, with other matters attended to over the summer.
The change of the men's cubicle in the middle of the West stand, to become a 2nd ladies' would be happening over the Summer, with appropriate signage.
The mobile drinks vending units had not been found so new options would be sought.
The Order and Collect scheme for beer would be worked on over the Summer for next season. It is hoped that the Beer Festival would be going ahead, the Club will be remaining with Heineken. It was noted that pre-pour drinks in the West need some improvement.
ACTION – DM to report back as to progress on all matters

3. Club Finances

GK reported that all wages and tax bills continued to be up to date in payment. With the biennial AGM scheduled for Thursday, PF raised a question about a sum in the accounts described as "SEL invoiced the company £835,074 in relation to the building of a new stadium". He questioned if this should be a charge on the club and not Roots Hall Ltd. PvW responded that this was to apportion part of the development costs and partially to do with the soccer dome. A discussion followed about the ownership of the stadium and how appropriate this is in relation to the near £14M already owed to SEL is.

4. New Stadium

PF noted the significance of the hoardings which have appeared at Fossetts Farm recently. These relate to the commencement of work on the area within the Rochford District Council boundaries, specifically, the training grounds, which were always scheduled to be the first area to be worked on.

5. Junior Blues

KF noted her disappointment in not being able to hold the planned Adventure Island day over the Easter holidays. This is now scheduled to take place during the Summer holidays, however, it was agreed that we would still try to plan something during the Whitsun half term targeted towards those children who had had the disappointing Christmas party. It was agreed that we would try and arrange stadium tours for these children.

ACTION – KF to liaise with DM and Rhys

KF asked if the missing flag had been found. DM advised that it hadn't, however, the Club would be ordering 10 or 12 more either for the play offs or during close season.

A meeting is to be arranged at the end of the season to discuss renewals and plans for next season.

ACTION – KF/DM to organise

6. Stadium Facilities

Further to the items already mentioned under "Matters Arising", there was some discussion about the recent situation with seats having been broken in W block. Some of the perpetrators have been identified and ejected. The Club continues to try to work in co-operation with supporters in this area but would welcome some "self-policing".

PvW advised some work would be undertaken over the Summer with regard to cementing in some areas of the West stand in particular, which would help to improve this area as many of the seats are currently loose, due in a large part to supporters standing behind seats and persistently pushing the backs forwards, particularly in W block, as previously mentioned.

KF raised the issue of supporters standing at the back of the West stand, sometimes two or three deep, making passage difficult to and from the toilets, particularly where queues were forming for the refreshment bars. GK agreed that this situation is not acceptable and discussion would be had with the Stadium Manager in relation to the stewards in this area, and moving people on.

KF also requested that stewards are aware that vaping is not allowed and that this be policed.

ACTION – DM/PvW to discuss with DJ

PvW advised that the Club is now employing new cleaning contractors and improvements have already been noticed.

He also added that the Club was aware of a problem with toilets in the West stand not flushing recently due to a lack of water in the cistern, and that they will be investigating putting an additional tank in over the Summer. It was noted though, that the diameter of the pipe work in the West stand area was quite restrictive particularly between the reservoir tanks already in place and the cisterns. The height of the tank relative to the cistern was also mentioned as a potential reason for the lack of water pressure to the cisterns.

7. Car Park

PvW reported that there was no further news on further improvements to the car park area. The costs continue to be prohibitive relative to the benefit to be obtained/area re-surfaced.

8. Blues Lottery

Clare Chapman is to replace Rob Craven on behalf of the Trust on this committee, and a meeting is to be arranged.

PY asked if winning names could be announced rather than just numbers.

ACTION – DM/PvW to liaise

9. Any Other Business:

- PF advised that he intends to begin work on a new book about Southend United and Roots Hall and sought permission to use Club pictures. GK and DM were both happy to provide this permission.
- GK advised that the Club would begin to make preliminary plans for auctioning various items connected with Roots Hall. It was noted that PY and PF would both like to register consideration for a couple of items, and that the Trust would like to register consideration for the plaque above the Shrimpers Bar.
- PY discussed some minor matters arising from the free coach travel to Shrewsbury, which would need addressing in the event of play off coaches to be dispatched. It was agreed that the Trust would pay SBC the invoice for the coaches and then re-invoice the Club.
- PY asked if the Club would be fined for the flare thrown at Shrewsbury. DM advised that the Club has not been notified that they would be liable. All agreed that this is another area where self-policing would be welcome.
- PY advised that everything is in hand for the Trust Player of the Year evening on 25th April. DM confirmed that he had double checked with Phil Brown of his own and player availability. Ricky Duncan would not be in attendance but would be giving Dave Huzzey some items for the Trust to auction, and some money collected from the Academy staff for the Amble to the Addicks walk.
- SC had asked for a couple of items relating to ticketing to be raised in his absence. The first of these was the lack of seated tickets at the Wimbledon game. Many of our elderly away supporters who would normally sit were unable to get tickets, but then, on the day, there

were only half the seats taken. This was apparently due to complimentary tickets in the seats not being taken up.

DM responded that a number of tickets had been held back and were available if people had asked, and that the complimentary tickets were not taken up very late on. It was agreed that the situation hadn't been ideal.

SC also asked why the Charlton tickets had been sold "front to back" so that the people buying later got the better seats.

DM replied that this had been Charlton's own policy.

10. Date of next meeting – Thursday, 25th May at 4 p.m.