



SOUTHEND UNITED SUPPORTERS SOCIETY LIMITED LIAISON MEETING



Thursday, 17th January 2019
Roots Hall Stadium 16:00

1. Present and Apologies:

Those in attendance were Geoffrey King (GK); Rhys Ellingham (RE); Paul FitzGerald (PF); Shane Chapman (SC) and Kay Fogg (KF). Apologies received from Paul Yeomanson (PY).

Meeting chaired by GK.

2. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th November 2018

Follow up on actions not otherwise covered in Agenda items:

- **West Stand issues surrounding supporters standing** – Stadium Manager, Dave Jobson reports that there are no issues and that the area is closely monitored. GK advised that he can still see areas with congestion due to people standing and that this will continue to be monitored. KF reported that she felt things had been much improved lately.
ACTION – GK/KF to monitor
- **SUEPA** – PF still to discuss good practice with Steve Waggott. It was noted that the recent visit by Lee Barnard had been particularly well received by the supporters and former player himself.
ACTION – PF to liaise with SW and report back
- **SUCET Trustees** – GK advised that no volunteers had been notified and that this item is still open. KF said she would follow up the contact she had.
ACTION – KF to follow up on her contact. SC to contact suitable candidates on away coaches. PF to put something about this in next circulated newsletter from the Shrimpers Trust.
- **Away Travel Reciprocal Coach Parking Charges** – nothing received recently.
ACTION – Continue to monitor
- **Foodbank** – PF reported that the Shrimpers Trust's recent appeal for donated foods had been well received although it was felt that with better forward planning, it could be even better supported in the future and run more frequently. Additional collection points also to be identified.
- **ACTION – Shrimpers Trust to liaise with RE**
- **Shrimpers Bar** – it was noted that the Shrimpers' Trust urn had recently been used for serving mulled wine and left clearly unclean.
ACTION – GK to liaise with SUCET
- **Blues Lottery** – a meeting had been held of the Committee. PF mentioned that his number had recently been drawn and that some of the time restrictions in place for utilising prizes concerned him, specifically the need to use hospitality within 30 days. It was agreed that there might be a suggestion of introducing some new prizes for the new season.
ACTION – RE to discuss with MM on behalf of the Lottery Committee
- **Aviva Scheme** – PF thanked RE for the help in obtaining the grant from this scheme and advised that the Shrimpers Trust are currently in preparation to deliver the first part of the proposed "social inclusion" plans, with a visit by some students from Kingsdown School.
- **Swipestation** – RE advised that this had not been a success and it would not be further pursued.

- **Fairfax Drive exit** – KF reported again that there had been matches where this has not been opened to allow traffic out of the car park. GK and RE both acknowledged that there have been issues surrounding this recently and the situation will continue to be monitored.

ACTION – GK/KF to monitor

3. Club Finances & 4. Winding Up Order

GK advised that HMRC had been paid and it is therefore expected that the Winding Up Order be dismissed at the hearing. There is no transfer embargo in place.

PF asked if it was good practice for the Club to have allowed this to happen, and GK agreed that it wasn't, however, timing issues made it difficult for ourselves, and other Clubs to meet these deadlines at times. There are at least five other Clubs in a similar position.

GK advised that salaries have been paid to all staff.

5. New Stadium

GK advised that "things progress", and that the Chairman is happy with the way things are going. The Club is just waiting for it to be put to the Council formally.

In response to a question from the Shrimpers Trust, RE advised that there had been a good reaction to the letters recently circulated, with in excess of 5,000 positive responses. PF agreed to email the letter out to all Shrimpers Trust members.

ACTION – PF to arrange an email out to members

6. Junior Blues

PF, KF and RE had met prior to this meeting to discuss aspects of the Junior Blues which had been concerning to members of the Shrimpers Trust Board. Plans had been put in place to ensure the success of all future Junior Blues activities.

7. Shrimpers Bar TVs

PF had raised concerns approximately five weeks previous to this Meeting, about the quality of the picture on TVs in the bar, in particular relation to the amount of advertising shown across them – which would seem to be reflected across much of the hospitality areas too.

At the recent home game against Plymouth, a meeting had taken place in the Shrimpers Bar to illustrate the issues and to discuss solutions.

GK advised that a new cable is to be laid and that there is a query about the suitability of the current booster in place. It is hoped that some remedies here will improve the picture quality.

The Club's IT co-ordinator has a course of actions to follow:

- To look at the snow interference on the Sky feed
- To look into having three smaller screens with non-advert Sky feeds
- To look into improving the display performance and resolving the juddering
- To look into HD streaming options to improve the resolution in particular to enable the score and time played to be clearer
- This actions to be afforded the appropriate time to resolve them by the Trust

8. Any Other Business:

- **Social Inclusion** – PF advised the four initial targets as recipients of our hospitality under the Aviva grant – Kingsdown School; a local builder who came to the rescue of a local charity shop; local fish & chip shop owner who provided meals for the homeless on Christmas Day and 13 year old paperboy Joshua McGrath, who had saved money all year from his job and by doing chores to buy presents for nurses and patients on Southend Hospital's Neptune ward. These will all be invited along as our guests with the Shrimpers Trust bearing the cost out of the grant.

- **Checktrade Trophy games** – SC advised that there had been a lot of confusion with seating at the recent game against Portsmouth, with people who had purchased specific tickets finding other people in their seats who refused to move. Stewards had been unable to solve the issues, meaning people had been forced to move elsewhere. KF asked if these kind of games could be unallocated but it seems this is not possible. GK advised that a new Health and Safety Policy is being prepared and that this would need to be addressed within that.
- **SUFC Away Shirt 2018/19** – SC asked why the away shirt had been only worn a few times this season. Some people who had bought the shirt felt cheated as it had been worn so infrequently. RE said he would look into this.
ACTION – RE to report back
- **Plymouth game issues with leaving stands** – SC asked if there had been a reason why they had not been allowed to leave from South Upper via the West Stand as they usually do. A steward had prevented them from doing so. He added that it was a different steward to normal.
ACTION – GK to discuss with stadium manager (*Edit – this was found to have been a one off situation arising from a supporter being taken ill*)
- **West stand** – KF advised that some supporters had recently come back to their seats after half time during the Gillingham game, with half drunk pints, and that they had not been noticed or challenged at any point until supporters on the end of the row they were sitting in informed them they couldn't bring drinks back. There have also been a number of cases with people openly vaping.
ACTION – GK to discuss with stadium manager

9. Date of next Meeting – 14th March 2019 (awaiting final confirmation)