



SOUTHEND UNITED SUPPORTERS SOCIETY LIMITED LIAISON MEETING



Thursday, 12th December 2019
Roots Hall Stadium 16:00

1. Present and Apologies:

Those in attendance were Rhys Ellingham (RE); Patrick Van der Waag (PVW), Paul FitzGerald (PF) and Shane Chapman (SC). Apologies received from Paul Yeomanson (PY) and Kay Fogg (KF) - (Attending Junior Blues Christmas party).

Meeting chaired by PF.

2. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held in May 2019

It was decided that due to the untimely departure of Geoffrey King and the subsequent length of time in arranging a Liaison meeting, that all previous matters were either no longer relevant or would be covered during the course of this meeting.

3. Club Finances

Update provided by PVW. All staff and players salaries are up to date. The HMRC hearing recently postponed to January will be dismissed as HMRC have been paid as per the Chairman's radio interview.

A discussion was held as to the regular occurrence of the club being chased by HMRC. This was explained by the timing of monies moving from the chairman to the football club. Delays were caused due to complex property transactions that had taken longer than expected.

4. New Stadium

Ron Martin's radio interview was discussed and whilst there is no firm date for the planning application to be reviewed formally, PVW confirmed that productive discussions with the council continue.

The continuing lack of a CEO was discussed. PVW stated that the position/attributes required would be different for a Roots Hall CEO vs a new stadium CEO, however progress was being made.

5. Junior Blues

KF's absence was due to the Junior Blues Christmas party being held at the same time as the Liaison meeting.

PF reported (from KF), now we have had the opportunity to look at the database in a clearer format, it is evident that numbers have reduced hugely. The former database had included far too many expired members in the numbers we were given.

Serious thought needs to be given to what can be done with the Junior Blues, with a recommendation that we need to be working to raise the profile.

KB also noted, photos sent over of flag bearers had not been uploaded to the JB Gallery, and the Club is still failing to retweet the photo put online on Twitter which includes the names of the flag bearers for that day.

RE to speak to Gavin re the sale of merchandise left over from previous year's Junior Blues' signing on gifts, which would give us some extra revenue.

ACTIONS – a) RE to investigate the missing photos b) RE to speak to Gavin regarding Junior Blues merchandise.

6. SUEPA / Hall of fame

The postponement of the Hall of fame evening (due to poor ticket sales) was discussed, with all expressing their disappointment and determination to make the revised date a success. Several reasons were discussed, including Price, current SUFC climate and time of year.

Andy Leeder had provided an update following the postponement and noted that some of the ex-players had made significant efforts to try to attend which of course was extremely embarrassing.

PF asked why not one individual from the football club had purchased a ticket and expressed his disappointment in this.

PF stated that he felt the club should be doing more to help make SUEPA a success, specifically with regard to the conflict between Commercial budgets and the request from SUEPA to provide facilities.

PF also questioned whether the club appreciated what the administrators of SUEPA were doing (particularly Andy Leeder) it was certainly not clear.

ACTIONS – a) PF to consider the funding conflict and contact Ron Martin, b) PVW to consider the effort/appreciation with regards SUEPA administrators

7. Away ticket priority

RE explained that Gavin in the ticket office is dealing with this and is in talks with the ticket suppliers. It should be in place for next season.

ACTION – RE to advise Gavin to email SC with details.

8. Matchday Programme Sellers

A discussion regarding programme sellers (in bad weather) concluded that buying a hut for the programme seller by main ticket office would not be considered.

9. Matchday Flag Bearers

Parents of the mascots are coming on the pitch which is causing problems for the flag bearers and indeed the manager. This had been discussed recently during a separate meeting and was noted again for record as the club had committed to resolving the situation

ACTION – PVW to ensure procedures are in place and followed

10. Any Other Business:

- **Shrimpers Bar** SC raised the state of the entrance to shrimpers bar (bad smell & wet wall)
Action PVW to investigate
- **Spotters** - PF noted (from KF) that for a couple of matches at the beginning of October, in the West stand there were a couple of people behaving in a suspicious

manner. They would go and sit in various empty seats in the stand and look along the rows of people, then move on to a new place after 5 minutes or so. This went on throughout the matches. At half time they were seen walking along the back of the stand looking over people's shoulders that were using mobile phones. PVW confirmed that illegal betting activity was being investigated which had become a serious EFL problem.

- **West Stand** - people standing along the back. As people will remember, this was a huge bugbear of Geoffrey's, and unfortunately, since he and Dave Jobson have left, the problem is back and worse than ever. With reduced crowds, it should not be as difficult as it is to get along the back of the West Stand during the game if you need to go to the loo. Stewards are not moving people on.

Action PVW to consider

- **Car Park** – PF questioned the safety and inconvenience when cars are allowed to be double parked. PVW explained that space has to be provided to EFL staff/representatives who arrive without warning and that had added to the recent issues. PVW confirmed that 45 cars in the Car Park pay the annual season ticket price. The minutes from the previous Liaison meeting contained details of a similar problem. The Season ticket price/value was also discussed and felt by PVW to be reasonable at about £5 per game. PF thought it significantly more than that.
- **Liaison meetings** – It was agreed that going forward that we would meet approximately monthly

11. Date of next Meeting – Mid January tbd– please advise any preferences