



SOUTHEND UNITED SUPPORTERS SOCIETY LIMITED LIAISON MEETING



Thursday, 29th July 2021
Captains' Suite, Roots Hall Stadium 16:00

1. Present and Apologies:

Those in attendance were Tom Lawrence (TL), Shane Chapman (SC), Kay Fogg (KF) and Clare Chapman (CC).

Apologies for absence received from Paul FitzGerald (PF) and Paul Yeomanson (PY). Meeting chaired by SC.

2. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 14th March 2019

It was agreed that there was nothing arising that wasn't covered elsewhere.

3. Junior Blues

KF reported that she had met with Rhys Ellingham (Commercial Manager) and Jordan Groom (Ticket Office Manager), very recently and that there is to be a complete re-launch of the Junior Blues scheme to coincide with Meet the Blues Day. This will also involve a complete overhaul of the existing database.

There will be a two tier membership, with plans for all junior season card holders to be enrolled onto the scheme, with the same rights as those who were on the old Shrimpers Trust scheme. These will receive newsletters, a birthday card or message, a Christmas message and be eligible to take part in being "flag bearers" before home games.

Those on the paid scheme will be entitled to the above, but also receive a free gift, be able to attend events, take advantage of all the offers from our Junior Blues partners, and may be invited to take part in presenting the Trust's Player of the Month award.

Priority for all events will always go to those on the paid scheme, although those on the "free" scheme will be invited to attend events once the priority window has closed.

There was a suggestion that we might look into offering a Junior Blues t-shirt, possibly as a gift, but possibly at a discounted price, to members. TL explained that Makron have rights to our commercial sales and he would talk to them to see what could be done. There might be a possibility of offering a 3rd tier of membership which would include the t-shirt as a gift, at £15 to join, with the Club and the Trust perhaps sharing the offsetting any costs.

TL advised that the Club is going to be investing in making the Family Stand more pleasurable for families to visit, including re-vamping the bar at the back into a child friendly "Play Zone", which April Smith from SUCET, has students coming in to decorate.

In line with an overhaul of our suppliers for the kiosks and food outlets, the Club will also be introducing some more child appropriate refreshments, including free fruit in the Family Stand.

ACTION – TL to talk to Makron to discuss possibility of producing a Junior Blues t-shirt

4. Away Tickets & Travel

Following discussions in previous meetings, TL advised that the Club is looking into a points based system where we have control over the sale of tickets to away games. He pointed out that, unfortunately, a number of Clubs in the National League do not issue tickets to the travelling Club. This scheme will be managed by the Ticket Office staff.

PY had asked if the lock had been changed on the main gate, and where should those travelling by coach park when we re-commence with away travel? TL confirmed that, as far as he knew, the lock had not been changed and that he would check on both these items before Kings Lynn away.

ACTION – TL to confirm and report back

PY had also requested, on behalf of the Trust, that the Ticket Office only carry flyers for the Trust, as the official away supporters travel for SUFC. TL agreed that this would seem fair and agreed to arrange for this going forward.

ACTION – TL to resolve

5. Player Sponsorship

TL confirmed that player sponsorship for this season will be £325 +VAT.

Shirts for last year have begun to be distributed. KF said that she thought that shirts from the previous season have still to go out.

TL discussed plans to have one, or maybe two, special evenings at Roots Hall, with an exhibition match which sponsors from the previous season would be invited to.

ACTION – TL to talk to Rhys about sponsors shirts from 19/20 season

6. I-player refunds / Ticket Office calls

TL advised that the Club have gone through all the responses received from the survey that was sent out, with the vast majority of people having been satisfied, and that he believed that all who said they were unhappy, had been contacted. The majority of these were elderly people, some with no internet access and had been happy with what the Club had offered. There are a very small number still to be dealt with.

7. Meet the Blues Day

This will be going ahead this year on 15th August at Boots & Laces.

TL ran through the planned programme for the day, with it opening at 10.30, with things going on throughout the day on the pitch.

It is anticipated that signing autographs will have to be adapted this year to protect the players, with possibly four smaller marquees set up with groups of players in.

PY had asked if the Trust can have access to the Shrimpers Bar from 8.30 am on Sunday 8th August to enable plans to be made ahead of MTBD, until midday.

ACTION – TL to arrange this with Stuart (keyholder)

8. Financials

TL advised that the accounts for 2019 have been finalised, and the strategic statement written to accompany them. They should be on their way to Companies House.

The accounts for 2020 are ongoing.

9. Any Other Business:

- **Blues Lottery** – KF had been approached by someone who had continued to pay their monthly standing order for the Blues Lottery, which doesn't seem to have been drawn since May 2020, wanting to know what was happening with it? TL responded that there had been some discussion with Ricky Duncan, and that the Club is planning to re-vamp and re-launch it. The Club is grateful to those who have continued to support this.
- **Henry (Harry) Winterbone** – KF said it had come to her attention that this gentleman, who had worked at the Club for 40 or so years, with the latter half being voluntary, has recently been relieved of his duties and told to leave, and that members of his family have been vocal on social media, in their unhappiness at the way this gentleman had been treated. She said she would like to be able to issue a response to a post on ShrimperZone about this, and

would appreciate TL's input. TL explained that he had seen a social media post and an email, which both contained inaccurate information. However, TL said it is correct to say that Harry is no longer assisting the Grounds Staff at the Club. TL said that he thought it would be inappropriate to comment any further in relation to Harry, however he did talk in general terms about Health & Safety, Insurance and Risk Assessments being part and parcel of running the business, he said that the Club has responsibilities and obligations which often inform some of the decisions we have to make.

ACTION – KF/TL to liaise to draft a response

▪ **Volunteers' Weekend**

TL advised that there are scheduled to be approx. 25 volunteers going into Boots & Laces this weekend to paint, and that he would not be going to the Dartford game as a result, as he would be overseeing this. As he had previously discussed with us at the last meeting, the subject of the flooring and gym equipment was again brought up.

Quotes for the flooring to be replaced are coming in at approx. £7,000, and the gym equipment (four pieces of equipment, a treadmill, a cross trainer, a spinning bike and a skills bike) at approx. £12,000. TL thought there was a good chance that the Club can lease the equipment but he would like the Trust to consider helping with the costs of replacing the flooring.

SC pointed out that there is already £3,300 approx. raised by supporters, which has already been promised and that the Trust can discuss this at their planned Board Meeting on Monday, as the Club need a quick decision.

ACTION – SC to circulate to Trust Board members for discussion on 2nd August

▪ **Season Card Holders**

In answer to a question, TL advised that there were currently 2,577 season cards sold as at the date of the meeting.

▪ **Hospitality and Catering**

TL advised that the Club will be changing its food suppliers and looking to provide some different options in its kiosks throughout the ground. It is also hoped that hot food will be able to be ordered in both the Far Post and the Shrimpers Bar pre-match, and that this will be the same food as on offer in some of the hospitality areas.

10. Date of next Meeting – Scheduled to be 9th or 16th September