



# SOUTHEND UNITED SUPPORTERS SOCIETY LIMITED LIAISON MEETING



Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022  
Blues Lounge, Roots Hall Stadium 16:30

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## **Present and Apologies:**

Those in attendance were, from SUFC – Tom Lawrence (TL), Rhys Ellingham (RE), April Smith (AS), and from the Shrimpers Trust – Paul FitzGerald (PF), Paul Yeomanson (PY), Shane Chapman (SC), Simon Dodd (SD) and Rylee Doe (RD)

Apologies for absence received from Matt Mundy (MM) and Kay Fogg (KF).

## **Matters Arising from Meeting held on 19th October 2021**

Although there were some matters arising, most were covered by the agenda items – those not are listed below.

Social Inclusion Events – Jordan Groom to provide surplus badges to the Trust/April for distribution.

**Action - RE to chase**

Night Bus service – This matter, perhaps now more relevant due to the number of evening games this season.

**Action - TL to discuss with Ron Woodley and revert**

Bike Rack – AS having meeting on 28th Jan regarding a grant for one to be installed.

**Action AS to revert when appropriate**

## **Trust Donations**

The recent significant donation by the Trust has enabled SUFC to refurbish the gym. Both parties agree to report on this in the next week or so to enable members to see where their money is being put to good use.

**Action - RE to instigate**

PF talked generally about the Trust membership and donations. A discussion followed about how best to promote the work the Trust does and to ensure the level of donations can, not only continue, but hopefully grow.

**Action All to consider**

**PY will email Rhys a PDF of Trust leaflet to help with membership.**

## **Junior Blues**

The “cleansing” of the Junior Blues database was deemed the highest priority item to ensure that members are not being disadvantaged. Lucy Spaans has been brought in to do this. RE to confirm status

The Trust is aware of several individuals who have experienced issues including SD's son (and Max Wren).

**Action - RE to investigate**

A discussion concluded, and RE confirmed, that a "Kids for a Quid" game is allowable under Nation League rules and this is to be considered.

An Easter "meet the players" day was discussed and the proposed date is 12<sup>th</sup> April.

**Action - AS to liaise with KF**

KF's suggestion that the 30 or so Junior Blues that signed up this year, be given free membership for the next due to the problems with membership was agreed. Additionally, it was noted that the scarves given as a joining gift had been very well received and it was suggested and agreed to continue.

KF had asked the club to raise an invoice so that the Trust can pay its portion of the scarves to be distributed (note this was **not discussed because I missed it** but thought it should be noted)

**Shrimpers Bar**

The state of the Shrimpers Bar, generally, as well as specifically before evening games was discussed, with several ideas suggested to ensure facilities are "acceptable".

TL mentioned the not insignificant costs of maintaining and this was understood, nevertheless it was re-iterated that money spending customers should be able to expect better than had been provided.

**Action - TL to address**

Specific issues related to plumbing resulted in an offer (accepted) that SC will look into the issues in the week commencing 31<sup>st</sup> Jan at a mutually convenient time.

**Action - SC / RE to arrange**

**Social Inclusion**

AS's appearance at the recent Trust Board meeting had been very well received and the topics covered had surprised all present. An agreement to work closer together to utilise the Trust's Social Inclusion budget was felt the best way forward.

The recent contact with "Children in Care" prompted discussion and suggestions on further initiatives as did the recent signing of a certain "International" –

**Action - PF to include AS in communication with Karl Lansley and all such Trust Initiatives in this area**

Amnesty International will be hoping to host a game in April with 'Football Welcomes' against Halifax on 23rd.

**Action - AS to consider and contact PF if Trust involvement is required**

**SUEPA**

Not much to report on SUEPA in terms our actions – the exception being that Andy Leeder needs some input for the Grimsby game. RE stated he was to talk to him on the 28th. RE also reported that

Spencer Prior was planning to be at the Grimsby game and he would liaise with Andy to see if anything should be arranged.

**Action - RE to contact Andy Leeder 28<sup>th</sup> Jan**

### **Supporter Group meetings**

A discussion was held about the various communication channels that the Club has with its fans. The recent forum being a welcome addition but not a replacement for either the Trust Liaison nor the Supporter group meetings. All felt that the supporter group meetings should continue but perhaps in a hybrid form to allow both physical and on-line attendance. Streaming also to be considered.

**Action - PF to contact the representatives of the Supporters Group to progress**

The action log created by the Trust to record action items at the Meeting was felt to be a useful document. Specifically mentioned was the expectation that a financial plan for revenues at the new stadium be shared with supporters.

**Action – PF review/update the Log and circulate.**

### **FSA Memorandum of Understanding**

SD explained the purpose of the FSAs M.O.U. strategy. i.e. to formalise communication between Football Club and Supporters Trusts. Historically Football clubs and Trusts have not enjoyed any sort of formal communication, however that has not been the case at Southend for many years. As the situation at Southend was different it was felt that it might be more appropriate that the MOU or similar be agreed between supporter's groups and the football club rather than a more bilateral approach.

**Action - SD to provide TL with a draft for consideration**

### **Any other business**

The away loyalty scheme was discussed and in particular whether or not the points are being added. The feeling was that if the scheme was required for a specific game, it would be a nightmare to address if no action was taken now.

**Action - RE to check and revert.**

Lee Venus had asked what happened to the planned golf day which he had booked tickets for. There was some confusion over this as the club are planning a day (not yet announced) but had not cancelled one.

**Action - RE/PY to investigate further.**

Several supporters including one based in France had requested that Supporter meetings are recorded. A discussion was held on this and in fact this point was referred to in the recent forum hosted by Stan Collymore. It was clear some fans really appreciate these, other less so.

**Action - TL to consider.**

SD reported that he felt the recent You Tube videos were very good and he'd seen plenty of positive feedback.

Physio update - Paul Smith is in temporary charge with a Head of Medical being advertised. There are currently 3 physios at the club with the necessary qualifications.

SD requested that if the club are considering multi-food carts in the car park before the game that a coffee cart be considered too. The club confirmed they were looking into this.

The Player of the month awards were curtailed several months back for obvious reasons, all present agreed that these would be resurrected for January with the Trust once again making a donation to the charity of the winning players choice.

A discussion was held about whether some of the club's news stories should be made multi-lingual. Costs/timing were an issue, but the club would consider.

It was confirmed that the "4th" Kit has been ordered and Rhys will be contacting Macron next week to find out when they will arrive in order to be sent to supporters.

**Action – RE to contact Macro re timing**

TL stated that the timing was probably right to consider creating a working group for the detailed planning of the new stadium.

**Action TL to contact the developer and arrange early discussions.**

The Trust's sponsored players were discussed and it was agreed that outgoing players sponsorship would move to incoming where appropriate. In addition, the Trust agreed to sponsor one additional player.

**Date of next Meeting – TBA but expected to be around 6 weeks from now**