



SOUTHEND UNITED SUPPORTERS CLUB TRUST LIAISON MEETING MAY 12th 2004

1 Present

Geoffrey King (GK), Paul Robinson (PR), Helen Giles (HG), Kevin Feasey and Terry Jeffreys (TJ) were present.

2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Derek Wilshire (DW), Paul FitzGerald (PF) & Paul Yeomanson (PY)

3 Matters Arising

TJ said that PY had now taken over the role of Club Liaison Officer from David Scriven.

4 Cardiff

TJ said that the outstanding issue was the reconciliation of the travel monies for Cardiff. GK said that he was also keen to clear this up but said that the problem was that Angela from Accounts was reluctant to work an evening to do this. He said that he would resolve the problem.

TJ said that he understood that the club had ordered 1000 enamel badges for sale at £3.50 each in the run-up to the LDV Final but they had never appeared. The moment had now probably gone to make a healthy profit on the badges but he wondered what had happened. GK said that he was unaware that badges had been ordered but would find out about this.

5 Q&A

KF said that he understood that Ron Martin had proposed to hold an open Question & Answer (Q&A) session after the Club AGM. He said that there could be a problem with the official business going on longer than anticipated and fans becoming restless outside the AGM. GK said that the official business of the AGM should not go on for long and the Q&A could be scheduled after the close of the AGM.

KF said that the AGM was the only opportunity for shareholders to put their point of view on the running of the club and the normal practice was for them to have a Q&A session after official business. He said that it was the view of the Trust that there should be an open Q&A session on a separate night.

6 Shrimpers Bar

TJ asked if the club felt that the Trust's involvement in the Shrimpers bar had been a success. GK said that he had always thought that it would be a success once the signing-in problems had been resolved. TJ asked if the Trust would be able to carry

on their involvement in the Shrimpers next season. GK welcomed this.

However he did say that there would be a problem with the annexe. He said that the Education department had stated that the annexe would be better suited as a dedicated classroom so it would not be available on match days. TJ said that in that case the Trust would lose its “Hall of Fame” so this would have to be re-located into the main bar area. He said that he would like to meet the club later on in the close season to discuss the amount of wall space that the trust could use for their display items.

GK said that the club’s bid for the classroom would go in during the next week and funds had been allocated to the scheme. As long as the club’s bid was reasonable, he didn’t anticipate a problem.

GK said that the club planned a Southend United TV network in the club’s bars with a series of plasma screens. During the pre-match session, the last away match would be shown plus interviews with the manager and club captain about the day’s match.

GK said that the Prince’s Trust were looking to do community projects in the area and want to include Southend United in this. He thought that decorating the Shrimpers Bar could be a suitable project and would be following this up.

List of Former Players

GK raised the subject of the list of the addresses of former players and HG said that she held a list of addresses but these were the last known addresses. She said that she was quite willing to provide the addresses of specific players who the Trust wished to contact and TJ thanked her for this.

Invitation to Directors to be Guests of the Trust

GK said that two of the directors were now disappointed that they had not been made guests of the Trust on a match day. TJ apologised for this and said that the Trust would like to carry this over until early in the new season.

7 Centre of Excellence

GK said that the purpose of the meeting between the Trust and the Club on the Centre of Excellence (CofE) was to see if the Trust had any innovative ideas that would help raise the shortfall in money. He said that he wasn’t looking for the Trust to contribute money. He said that Michael Markscheffel had brought up the idea of putting the ticket price up by 50p to cover the shortfall. It had been decided to put up the ticket price by £1.50 to cover the loss in VAT.

KF said that there had been a communication breakdown between both parties on this but HG did point out and it was agreed that there had been a number of missed calls between PF and herself.

KF said that the Trust had wanted to help out with the raising of funds for the CofE scheme but would have wanted an involvement with the Steering Committee. GK said that the Trust could not get involved with the running of the CofE. He said that Deloitte & Touche audited the scheme and it was also assessed on coaching levels and administration.

KF said that the Trust had wanted to sponsor the playing kit of the CofE but did not want to take advantage of match day advertising and executive boxes as it was felt that these could be bought by other customers. The Trust wanted to purchase the playing kit and have its name on the shirts. There seemed to be some confusion over what we wanted to sponsor but that was our requirement and would welcome a price for that sponsorship package. GK said that the club were talking to another potential sponsor for the CofE but would come back to the Trust on this.

8 Ticket Prices

KF said that the main feeling at the Trust Committee last Monday was that if the club had cleared the letter that went out to season ticket holders with the Trust then there would not have been the fall-out over the wording and the subsequent comments in the press. GK said that he wasn't in disagreement with what PF had said. KF said that there needed to be much better communications between the club and the Trust.

KF said that he hated this animosity between the club and Trust. TJ said that we should all be pulling in the same direction for the good of the club. GK said that it did not help when comments are put on the chat-lines. TJ said that the Trust had stressed before that it does not have a message board on purpose and had no jurisdiction over comments placed on the Internet by fans whether members or non members of the Trust or not. He said that if the Trust had a statement to make, it would publish it on its web-site after clearance by the Committee. He said that the Trust had arranged for the Southend message boards to put disclaimers about postings.

GK said it was difficult when known Trust Committee members put unhelpful messages on the chat-lines and asked if Trust Committee members could keep off them. KF said that there are only a handful of Committee members who post messages. TJ said that he monitored the message boards to keep abreast of Southend United issues and often posted on the message boards on team matters and other items of interest but those were his personal views and nothing to do with the Trust. He asked if it would be helpful if Trust Committee members put disclaimers on their posts and GK said that it would.

9 Stewarding in East Stand

TJ said he had picked up information on a message board about a stewarding issue at the Torquay match but this was second hand information. Evidently there had been a delay in providing medical attention to a fan with problems. HG said that the incident had been blown out of proportion. The club doctor was alerted very quickly to the situation and had dealt with it and arranged for further medical attention. She said that stewards are trained to act promptly with medical issues.

10 Disabled Supporters Facilities

TJ said that he had been contacted by the Yeovil DSA representative who requested a visit to the Shrimpers Bar prior to the game. Since then he had begun to get involved in DSA issues. He said that the Yeovil Disabled fans were very pleased with the assistance that they had received from Dave Jobson and his stewards and had thanked Dave on the phone and had put very favourable comments on their web-site and in the Yeovil programme for their next home match. TJ said that the Yeovil DSA representative had carried out an audit on behalf on NADS and there were a few problems. (TJ gave copies of the feedback to HG.)

TJ said that the main purpose for bringing up this subject was that he had found that the club provides excellent facilities for disabled fans but only via the NADS and the AWADS web-sites. He said that he did once find a fleeting reference to disabled supporters facilities on the club site but it was so well hidden that he couldn't find it again. He felt that the club could do so much more to promote their excellent facilities.

HG said that the club was a member of NADS and both Dave Jobson and herself had attended a conference on the Disabled Discrimination Act, which becomes law in October. TJ asked if the club held a register of disabled supporters so they could be aware of their requirements. HG said that the club knew that disabled supporters attended games but didn't have a register. TJ said that the Trust did not want to start a DSA at this time but felt that they should give disabled supporters a voice so they had appointed one of its Committee members, Alan Perry (who had experience of disabled supporter's issues) as disabled supporters representative. The Trust had information on its database regarding disabled members but felt that if potential disabled supporters thought that they would be welcomed and accommodated at the club, there was scope for a modest increased attendance.

11 Any Other Business

KF said that the Trust were having problems renewing their Public Liability Insurance and asked if it was possible for the club to include our activities under their cover as it is directly related. PR asked what our cover was for and this was explained. He said that there could be deemed a risk because of possible irresponsible behaviour but the club would make enquiries.

KF said that there was a need for digital filming at away matches because of Southend United TV. He had been approached to do the filming. GK asked what was required and KF said that there were various types of digital technology available and he used Mini-DVD, which would be suitable for use. VHS was of such poor quality that TV companies would not use it.

GK said that as the season had finished he hoped that the Trust would be able to secure all their QAG sponsorship. He said that he would welcome the balance of the John Stannard monies when they were available. HG said that Ray Osborne had sponsored the QAG scheme but had not been mentioned in the programme.

GK said that the club's Centenary would fall in 2006 and it was never too early to think about things. The club would be having a centenary dinner. He said that he wanted to get together with the Trust to organise the celebrations. TJ said that the Trust welcomed this invitation.

12 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting would be June 16th 2004 and be held at Roots Hall commencing at 1600.