



SOUTHEND UNITED SUPPORTERS CLUB TRUST LIAISON MEETING JUNE 16th 2004

1 Present

Geoffrey King (GK), Derek Wilshire (DW), Helen Giles (HG), Paul Yeomanson (PY), Paul FitzGerald (PF) and Terry Jeffreys (TJ) were present. (Secretary's note - PF arrived after the start.)

2 Apologies

No apologies were received.

3 Matters Arising

PY said that a meeting had been arranged for the reconciliation of the Cardiff travel monies which would take place after this meeting

GK said that he had been informed that enamel badges were not ordered to commemorate the LDV Final.

GK said the bid for the new classroom had gone in and the club would know by the 25th June if the bid had been successful. If the bid were successful, the Trust Hall of Fame and other items would have to be removed from the annexe. TJ said that a meeting should then be held to discuss the positioning of the Trust Hall of Fame and other memorabilia in the Main bar and the foyer.

GK said that the Prince's Trust had said that the decoration of the Main bar of the Shrimpers would be too big a task for them.

GK said with regard to the disagreement over ticket prices, he had only disagreed with PF on one part of his Evening Echo statement and that was "that there had been a 10% increase in ticket prices" when in fact, prices had not gone up for a few seasons.

4 Kit Design

PY said that there had been a rumour that the new kit was to be of a horizontal stripe design and subsequently there had been a lot of discussion amongst the fans and the majority seemed to be against this. He asked that the club take heed of the wishes of the fans.

GK said that he was aware of this rumour and said that the fans were not alone in their concerns over a striped shirt. He said that he been aware of the fans' fears and had seen some of the comments on message boards. He said that he was particularly amused by one message that had likened a blue and white striped shirt to a "Tesco carrier bag." He said that he would hope that the new shirt design would be a sensible choice and in the traditional blue and white colours.

5 Centre of Excellence

PY said that the Shrimpers Trust had agreed to sponsor the shirts for the Centre of Excellence (CofE). GK said that he was not aware of this and that he understood that Ron Martin (RM) was discussing a sponsorship deal with another potential sponsor.

PY said that Brian Wheeler (BW) has contacted him from home just before BW set off on his holiday. He offered the Trust a sponsorship package for £5K and asked for a quick response and agreed that the fine detail could be agreed when BW returned from Portugal. PY said that he had quickly gained agreement from the Trust Committee and a few hours later contacted Marisa Freeman to tell her of our acceptance of the sponsorship package.

GK said that the information had not got to him or HG and apologised for the dilemma, which the club found itself in. He said that the other sponsorship deal that RM was handling was substantial and asked if the Trust could put their acceptance on hold until the other sponsor deal was resolved. PY agreed to this and asked that should our offer be accepted, the club would do a publicity spread on our involvement with the CofE.

TJ said that his understanding of the Southend United CofE set up differed to that of other clubs set ups that he had information on. He said that he understood that a CofE had to have a separate trust fund set up which was run by a group of independent trustees. This was to meet the funding requirements. He said that he understood that Oxford United received the maximum contribution as did Southend but Oxford had to commit to a sum more than twice that of the Southend contribution.

GK said that the set up of the club's CofE was that the CofE manager would report directly to Steve Tilson. The scheme was audited by Deloitte & Touche and assessed on coaching levels and its administration. He said that there weren't any trustees and DW and Michael Markscheffel were only part of a fund raising team.

TJ said that when the Shrimpers Trust were originally approached with regard to the CofE, our view was that the Trust would like to become more involved with the CofE. Not to get involved with the operation of the CofE but to raise extra funds to help make improvements to facilities etc., and there was the hope that the Trust could be one of the trustees of the scheme. However there wasn't anything to get involved with.

6 Physiotherapy Department

TJ said that the Trust would be handing over a cheque for the balance of the physiotherapy sponsorship after the meeting. He said that he had spoken to John Stannard at the Trust's Player of the Year Night and asked him for a wish list of items that he needed as the Trust wished to continue their sponsorship of more equipment for the coming season. However he hadn't received a list so far.

TJ asked if there would be a problem if the Trust purchased the equipment and retained ownership but leased it to the club for a peppercorn rent. GK asked why we should want that and it was put to him that when the previous physiotherapist had left he took items with him. TJ said that he hoped that there was an inventory of club equipment in place. GK said that he saw no reason why the Trust should not purchase the equipment but if the club did it they could claim back the VAT. It was agreed that the club should buy the equipment and the Trust gives the monies to the club.

7 Disabled Supporters

HG said that she had asked Dave Scriven to put the disabled supporters facilities in a more prominent position on the club's website. She asked how the Trust's initiative on disabled supporters was going. TJ said that they could identify members with a disability from their database but were not aware of the total attendance of disabled supporters at Roots Hall. HG said that the club did not have a disabled supporters register.

TJ said that he was aware that the club was fully supportive of disabled supporters to the extent that registered disabled supporters were given free entry and their helpers given half price admission. It was agreed that potential supporters who were disabled should be encouraged to come to matches and those disabled supporters should be identified. It was agreed that TJ and HG should liaise to establish common ground regarding disabled supporters at Roots Hall.

TJ said that he felt that the Trust would not become involved in the setting up of a Disabled Supporters Association at Southend United but would look to ensure that the needs of disabled supporters were met. He said that Alan Perry had volunteered to be the Trust's disabled supporters' representative.

TJ said that he was impressed with the organisation of the Yeovil Trust DSA when arranging the visit of their disabled fans to Roots Hall. He would like to think that the Trust could organise something similar for the disabled supporters of Southend United to an away game sometime in the next season.

8 Centenary Celebrations

TJ asked how preparations were going. GK said that the club were planning an event during each month of the Centenary season and were looking for ideas from the Trust. TJ said that Exeter City had recently celebrated their centenary and had played a match against the Brazil national side as the Grecians were the first foreign team to visit Brazil. TJ said that Southend first known match against foreign opposition was away to FC Berlin in 1910 and the first home match was probably in 1938 against Olympic Marseilles. GK asked whom our first match in the Southern League was against and this information was not to hand. (Secretary's note – our first match was on 1st September 1906 against Swindon Reserves at home and we lost 1-0!)

9 Any Other Business

GK said the club was keen to find out the reaction of the fans to the recent Football League proposals on goal line technology and sin bins. He asked the Trust to contact their members and other fans to ask them to contact the club with their views.

10 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting would be July 7th 2004 and be held at Roots Hall commencing at 1600.