



SOUTHEND UNITED SUPPORTERS CLUB TRUST LIAISON MEETING AUGUST 11th 2004

1 Present

Geoffrey King (GK), Helen Giles (HG), Derek Wilshire (DW), Paul Yeomanson (PY), and Terry Jeffreys (TJ) were present.

2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Paul FitzGerald (PF)

3 Matters Arising

PY asked if there had been any progress regarding the players' participation in this season's Quid A Goal scheme. He said that Brian Wheeler (BW) was going to contact Drewe Broughton (DB) to discuss this. GK contacted BW who had forgotten to speak to DB but would contact him forthwith.

GK said that there will be opportunities for sponsorship at the new stadium but we were not far enough down the road for that yet. He said that the club had no objections to lowering the price for placing plaques on the memorial wall at the club and would get the memorial wall re-advertised.

PY said that the Shrimpers Trust logo was now on the sign above the Shrimpers Bar.

HG said that the club had recently met with a member of the NADs Executive Committee who had carried out a non accredited audit of the facilities at Roots Hall with regard to the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2004. She provided a copy of the report from NADS who were extremely happy in the main with the facilities for the disabled at Roots Hall. The audit highlighted problems with directions to disabled parking bays in the main car park and disabled admission points.

4 Shrimpers Bar

PY asked if there had been any progress made on the classroom in the annexe. GK said that the DfES had requested more information from the club, which had been provided. The club was still awaiting the outcome. He said that it seemed that there were not enough people in the Council office to do the administration and this was holding up the decision on the application.

PY said that there were some display panels in the annexe, which were obstructing some of the Trust displays. GK said that he would ask Dave Jobson to have these boards removed. PY added that the barrow in the Shrimpers was taking up valuable space and asked if that could also be removed. GK said that he would try to have the barrow removed.

5 Physiotherapy Department

TJ said that he had he understood that all the physiotherapy equipment agreed by the Shrimpers Trust had been ordered but not all of it had been delivered. He said that once all the equipment had been delivered, the Trust would arrange for a cheque to cover the latest purchases but would want copies of the invoices. He added that he had been in contact with John Stannard regarding his wish list for cardio-vascular equipment which hopefully the Trust would be able to supply as a result of its QAG scheme. Unfortunately he had not yet received the list so the Trust could do some forward planning.

6 Centenary Celebrations

HG said that BW, Ross Hill and herself would represent the club on the Centenary Committee. After discussion, it was clarified that as the first game of the club was on September 1st 1906, the centenary would fall on the September 1st 2006.

TJ mentioned that the 50th anniversary of the opening of Roots Hall would fall on the 20th August 2005 and asked if the club could commemorate this event. He added that the first game at Roots Hall was against Norwich City. GK said that he would write to Norwich City to ask if a pre season friendly game could be played between the two clubs to commemorate the event.

7 Friday Night Football

PY said that some of our members had complained about the changes to the published fixture list to incorporate Friday night games as it interfered with work patterns and also caused travel difficulties.

GK said that the club could not wait until the fixtures were issued before starting to sell season tickets. He said that 3 England matches were on a Saturday which would limit attendance and some clubs had approached the club to change fixture dates such as Swansea as a Rugby international was to be held in Cardiff on the day of the original fixture. He said that if people who had bought season tickets were unable to attend matches due to these changes, they could approach the club to either change to the U-Choose ticket voucher system.

PY said that the Trust had received a letter from one of it's members saying that public transport was poor from his location and he had difficulty in attending Southend evening matches. He also added that fans travelling from distance would encounter the evening rush hour especially if they were travelling around the M25. HG said that she appreciated that fans could have public transport problems and suggested that the club look into a car-share scheme for fans to perhaps make the journey easier.

8 Orient Away

PY said that there would be a limited supply of tickets for the game at Leyton Orient due their ground rebuilding and it could be that many Trust members who regularly travel away would not be able to get tickets. He asked if the club would consider

letting the Trust have a block of tickets for that match. GK said that the club would allocate 30 tickets to the Shrimpers Trust.

9 Season Ticket Postage Costs.

PY said that some Trust members were asking why the season ticket books could not be collected in person rather than having them posted. HG said that the season ticket distribution was an administrative nightmare. She said that in the past the club used to employ additional staff for three weeks to help distribute the season tickets and it was found to be easier to send them all out by recorded delivery. PY asked why there was a £1.50 postage cost when the price of the stamp was 50p. HG said that additional staff was still used to process the season tickets and the extra money was to offset the administrative costs.

10 End of Season Year Book

PY said that the booklet that the Trust produced for the LDV Final was very successful and the Trust would like to produce an end of season magazine with the club's permission. GK said that it would not be a problem.

11 Q&A Session

PY said they would like to hold a Q&A session with Steve Tilson. He said that they were promised a meeting with the management last season but that did not happen. The Trust and promised its members a Q&A session and would like to hold one soon.

GK said that Ron Martin (RM) wants an open Q&A session and not just for Trust members. He said that RM feels that certain topics will come up and he doesn't want to talk about those topics. PY said that we don't necessarily want to grill RM as we realise that he has nothing to say right now. We want a Q&A with the manager, the club captain and our sponsored player. He said that RM puts himself in the firing line by insisting at being at every Q&A and if he is there then certain questions will always be asked from the floor. However on this occasion we are not asking for his attendance. GK said that he would speak to RM about it.

12 MTBD 2005

PY said there had been a few voices saying that the MTBD was a damp squib this year. GK said that the event was a week later this year. This was due to the fact that a certain director had arranged for the club to attend the Southend Cricket Festival and that was on the date that had been arranged for the MTBD. Although the festival had been very successful for the club, there had been a knock on effect for the MTBD. He said that the club had not lost interest but many changes had been forced upon the club at short notice.

He said that next year there was going to be a change to the format. The Club was considering an "It's a knockout" theme but not too aggressive as to cause the players injury. It was raised that the club should run a 5 a side football competition in the weeks running up to MTBD 2005 with the final to be held on the day. The club said that this would be considered.

TJ said that the training session was a good idea this year but it could be better choreographed if it was to be continued next time. He said that the club

physiotherapist should explain the benefits of the training exercises, which would help the fans, understand what was going on.

13 New Trust Shirts

PY said that the Trust was planning to produce another Trust polo shirt and asked if the club were happy with this. He said that it would be a dark blue shirt with the Trust logo. GK said that he was happy with this.

14 Trust Interview With Mark Gower

PY asked if the Trust could hold an interview with Mark Gower and publish the interview on the Trust web-site. GK said that he did not have a problem with this but would have to confirm it with the manager. He said that it might be better to have a list of questions vetted by the club first and then undertake the interview.

15 Any Other Business

GK asked when the Trust would be entertaining the two club directors at a home match. It was agreed that the invitation would be for Saturday 25th September for the Kidderminster game. DW said that he was definitely available but Frank Van Wezel was on holiday at the moment and the club would have to confirm his availability.

HG asked what the arrangements for the day. PY said that it was the intention of the Trust to let the two directors sample match day life from the fan's perspective. He said that they would meet early on in the Shrimpers Bar and then later go with two Trust committee members to different places in the ground. The Trust would purchase tickets adjacent to the two Trust members. HG said that if the Trust let the club know which tickets were required, the club would provide the tickets. PY thanked the club for the kind gesture but asked that the directors were not told where they would be sitting.

GK asked if the Trust had any feedback on Blues TV. PY was that it was cracking and everyone was looking at it in the Shrimpers Bar.

GK said that the Blues road show normally went to Chelmsford during the summer holidays but unfortunately Chelmsford the council would not give permission this year. He said that the club were considering going to Canvey and asked if the Trust thought that Canvey would be a suitable venue. PY said that there had been problems during the FA Cup replay and suggested that Tesco's in Eastern Avenue would be a more suitable venue and added that the Southend bus would also be seen from the Arterial which would mean extra exposure

16 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting would be September 15th 2004 and be held at Roots Hall commencing at 1600.