



SOUTHEND UNITED SUPPORTERS CLUB TRUST LIAISON MEETING FEBRUARY 16th 2005

1 Present

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

2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Paul Fitzgerald.

3 Matters Arising from the Meeting held on 15th December 24th 2004

TJ said that there had been a misunderstanding about the Mark Gower interview. In fact the questions to be put to him have been vetted by the club and an interview is now to be set up with Mark shortly.

GK said that there had been further talks with the Football League Licensing authority about standing in the North Bank, and to be honest, the talks are going round in circles but the bottom line is that they want everyone to sit down.

GK said that there had been discussion within the club regarding the Blues Superstore. He said that Colin Wooldridge is no longer with us and the club were reviewing the most appropriate way of running the shop. He said he could not tell us what that would be but there would be changes.

HN asked if John Stannard (JS) had contacted the Trust regarding the cardio-vascular equipment. TJ said that he had, saying that JS thought that the prices were too expensive and was still shopping around. I had told him that one of our members who was a buyer for a multi-national company had asked if he could try to negotiate a better deal for the equipment. JS was in favour of this but TJ was still awaiting the make and model number of the equipment. HN to chase up JS.

4 Shrimpers Bar

PY said that he wished to raise three things about the Shrimpers Bar:-

He said that they recently booked the Shrimpers Bar to run a function after a home match and the state of the floor was appalling. He said that he understood that the cleaner only cleared up before a match but if the club hired out the place for a private function, they would have to ensure that it was clean and tidy. He said that normally 7/8 people stay behind after a match to prepare it for a Trust event and as there are no cleaning items available, all the rubbish is picked up from the floor by hand and that is not on. He asked that a vacuum cleaner be made available so the Trust can clean the place properly. GK said that he would make sure that a vacuum cleaner was made available for Shrimpers Bar.

PY said that he had noted that a bank of lighting was not working in the bar adjacent to the annexe and wondered if the renovation work had caused this problem. GK said that he would ask David Jobson to investigate.

PY asked why chips were not allowed to be taken into the Shrimpers Bar. GK said that he will not allow food that is purchased elsewhere to be consumed on the premises as it was competition for the club. He said that he would not provide chips and felt that the club could not compete with the Fish Bar. He added that the turnover on food on match days was up at £15000 and he was very happy with that. TJ said that he was very pleased that the turnover had increased but the Trust felt that it could be much more.

GK said that the club offers as good a range of food that you will find anywhere. TJ said that lots of clubs provide a better selection and the club do not provide a vegetarian option so he would have to eat elsewhere. GK said that the club were victims of their own success and queues were building up at the outlets. TJ said that pressure could be relieved in the South and West Stands if the club would open up the South West corner tea bar. GK said that there was a "health" problem there so it was suggested that the club just sell hot/cold drinks and chocolate/crisps in there and relieve the queues at the nearby tea bars which build up when people are ordering multi-orders of hot food.

GK said that he was disappointed when he visited the Shrimpers Bar at 6.20pm on the night of the Scunthorpe game to find that there were no Trust members carrying out the signing-in duties. PY said that the majority of the Trust Committee work and it is difficult to get there on time for an evening match due to traffic but this case in question, it was an isolated incident. GK said that he could get there and PY said that he worked next door. GK said that signing-in was a condition and the Trust must have at least one member who could carry out the early signing-in.

PY asked if a member of the security staff could sign people in until a Trust member could get there. GK said that was not part of their duties and it had to be a Trust member. PY asked if a member of the security staff who was also a Trust member could carry out the duties early on until cover arrived. GK said that he would speak to David Jobson about this.

5 Fossetts Farm

PY asked if there was any news on Fossetts Farm. GK said that negotiations with Delancey were continuing. He said that Delancey had made it clear that they were not particularly interested in moving the club forward and that they had had no part in the club for the past two years. Martin Dawn, on the other hand, was committed to moving the club forward and had invested in the club.

6 Centre of Excellence

PY asked how much money had been raised for the Centre of Excellence from the increase in ticket prices. He said that our view was that the shortfall in money had now been covered. GK said that he did not know but would find out. TJ said that at the last meeting DW had asked if the previous offer that the Trust had made regarding CofE sponsorship was still on the table. He said that there were originally conditions with our proposed sponsorship. He said that DW would raise this at the next Board meeting and asked how discussions went. DW said that the matter had not been discussed as time was taken up on another matter.

GK asked what the conditions were and TJ said that it had been the Trust's original intention to seek an involvement within the CofE by having a Trust representative sitting on the sub-committee to help in fundraising etc in return for the sponsorship. GK said that he would speak to the CofE sub-committee, Michael Markscheffel, Ray Osborne and DW about our proposal.

7 Pre Match/Half Time Music

PY reported that Nigel Rickard was very happy that the levels had been reduced. GK said that earlier in the season there had been complaints about the noise levels and he had asked the technicians to keep the noise under control. He had now asked David Jobson to contact the council regarding a decibel meter to check the level of noise from the speaker system on match days. He was sure that the levels were within permitted limits but still needed to meet the wishes of the fans.

8 LDV Cardiff

PY asked what had happened to the outstanding monies for the last LDV Final travel. GK said that he thought that the Trust had been paid and would chase it up.

PY said that he did not wish to jinx events but should "C" happen again then travel would need to be considered. GK said in that event the club would wish to organise the trains and leave coaches to the Trust. He added that the club would provide an office and possibly a telephone within the club premises for coach bookings.

PY asked if the club could manage the trains as Trust members had been heavily involved in the train organisation last time. GK said that he had been assured that the Commercial department could manage but if there were problems, they would contact the Trust

9 Disabled Supporters

PY said that the Trust had received a number of complaints about the access and viewing of the Scunthorpe match from home and away supporters and provided e-mails as evidence. GK said that the club was very conscious of their requirements under the Act and had been audited by NADs and given a clean bill of health. He said that he would contact the complainants as he found some of the phrases insulting.

PY said that a ramp was needed in front of the Shrimpers Bar to allow wheelchair access but GK said that one had been provided. TJ said that there was not a ramp and wheelchair users had to be lifted in. GK said that he would investigate.

10 Shrimpers Trust Army Fund

GK said that this had not been discussed at the last board meeting.

11 Steve Wignall

PY said that he had been told at the last meeting that Steve Wignall had been paid off and subsequent information suggested that this was not true. HN said that he had been paid in full before the last meeting.

12 Mascots

PY said that the shirts of the Elvis the Eel etc., did not have "Shrimpers Trust" on them as agreed. He said that the Trust had sponsored the mascots and our name on the shirts had been part of the sponsorship. GK said that he would put this right.

13 Any Other Business

PY said that one of our members was in the South Lower for the Scunthorpe match and some fans were persistently standing and spoiling the view for others. He said that although there were many complaints within earshot of the stewards, they did not act to reduce the tension. GK said that he would place a monitor there for the next match. He

added that following complaints about bad language in the South Upper, there had been a plain clothes steward on duty but had not heard any problems.

PY said that one of our members had written into the Trust about his visit to the new Tourist office at the pier entrance. He said that there no information about Southend United or future matches and when he had complained to the Office staff, he was told that if information was provided, they would stock it. GK said that he would act on this. He said that he had spoken to the new Chief Executive of the Council about publicising the club and had appointments with Castle Point, Rayleigh and Basildon Councils to try to post publicity posters in these areas. He added that someone from the club puts up over 600 posters around the town before a match.

PY asked if there would be any more subsidised trips before the end of the season. GK said that it depended where the club were in the league and the importance of the match.

PY asked where all the decent chairs had gone to from the Shrimpers Bar. He said that there are now school type chairs in there and the nice upholstered chairs have disappeared. GK said that he would ask Brian Dear about this.

TJ asked if the club could use someone who could spell to maintain the score board as he had spotted the word "chalange" in use recently.

GK said that he had seen boasts on message boards that the clubs "kid for a quid" offer had been abused and that they were monitoring the situation for the future.

GK asked if the new exit arrangements for the main car park after the match had been an improvement. PY said that there was a better flow of traffic now one lane was for the use of fans leaving the car park, However there was no longer a right turn and the coning did not extend far enough down Victoria Avenue. GK said that he would monitor the situation after the next match.

14 Date of Next Meeting

HN said that she would provide a list of future dates of the liaison meetings.