



SOUTHEND UNITED SUPPORTERS CLUB TRUST LIAISON MEETING MARCH 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 16th February 2005

PY said that the shirts of the Elvis the Eel etc., still did not have "Shrimpers Trust" on them as agreed. GK said that he had spoken to Brian Wheeler about this but unfortunately nothing had been done. He had now spoken to Marisa about it and he was certain that it would be sorted out soonest.

GK said that he had spoken to Brian Dear about the chairs in the Shrimpers Bar. He said that the upholstered chairs had been taken from the executive boxes and the lounges. Now that all the boxes were normally sold out and the match day packages sold out, they had been returned. He added that a vacuum cleaner had been supplied and PY confirmed this.

GK said that the bank of lighting in the Shrimpers Bar had been repaired.

GK said that the official ramp providing disabled access into the Shrimpers Bar was via the set of doors past the bar entrance towards the South Stand turnstiles. He said that the doors could be opened by using the crash bars.

HN asked if John Stannard (JS) had contacted the Trust regarding the cardio-vascular equipment. TJ said that he and PY had visited the gymnasium at Boots & Laces at the request of JS to look at all the equipment provided by the Trust. A report had been produced and placed on the Trust website. TJ said that he knew that JS had arranged to meet a representative from a sports goods company and hopefully would be able to purchase some cardio-vascular equipment soon.

GK said that he had placed a plain clothes steward in the South Lower and there were no problems regarding persistent standing.

4 Fossets Farm

PY asked if there had been any progress with Fossets Farm. GK said that Delancey were considering their options after Ron's offer. He said that South Eastern Leisure would be meeting the new Chief Executive of the Council on March 24th to discuss the way forward. He added that he did not know of a councillor who was not in favour of the move to Fossets Farm.

5 Pre Match/Half Time Music

PY said that the pre match music was so loud in the West Stand before the LDV semi-final, that it was distorting. TJ said that he was in the South Upper for that game and the music was very loud. He said that a number of people that he knew asked him to complain to the club on their behalf. He added that the speakers were pointing straight down and perhaps ten feet above the fans heads and the problem may be lessened by altering the direction of the speakers.

GK said that the problem was noted. He said that the Bristol Rovers game was a special night and the technicians may have had the sound too loud. He added that the sound system was tested with the stadium empty which was a factor to be considered.

6 LDV Cardiff

GK said that the club had isolated the credit card transactions from last year that were causing a problem and there was no evidence of the money going through the club. He said that the cards were refused by the credit card companies and the money could not be claimed. He offered a list of the bad payers in case the Trust could identify them as members.

GK said the club had arranged up to five trains for Cardiff but there was a problem with the track as engineering work was scheduled at Swindon. He said that almost two trains had been booked. He said that the prices were slightly more expensive as the trains were being routed via Gloucester to miss the engineering work.

GK said that the only merchandising that the club were selling would be clothing, pennants and flags. He said that clothing would be non branded rugby, tee and training shirts with a range of logos in dark blue, pale blue and red but they would not be at the lower end of the pricing structure. He said that the club had ordered 2400 replica shirts. He added that there would be a further tee shirt if the team won the cup. PY asked if the club could produce a white sweat shirt and GK said that he had no problem with this.

GK said that there would be the possibility that the actual LDV Vans Trophy would be available for photo opportunities in the Shrimpers bar on a couple of dates. Fans would pay an amount to have their photo taken with the trophy but it was not to be touched!

7 East Greens Safety Issue

PY said that a member had highlighted a problem at the bottom of the stairs when leaving the East Green seats. He said that a few minutes before the end of a game, many people congregated there watching the television, causing congestion and it was felt that this was a safety hazard. He added that if the television was switched off once the tea bar closed, people would go into the bar area to see the television which might result in more sales.

GK said that he would look into this and raised another problem that the Trust should be aware of. He said that about ten minutes before the game and especially in the West Stand, many people left their seats and then stood in the gang ways causing congestion and interfering with the views of seated fans. He said that if people wanted to leave early then they should or not leave their seats. He asked if the Trust could raise this issue in their newsletter.

8 Club Shop

PY said that many members had complained about the lack of variety and sizes of stock in the club shop. GK said that the stock issues would be addressed in the close season when the new plans for the shop were finalised.

9 Round the World Pennant

PY said that it had been understood that the progress of the Round the World pennant would be covered in the match day programme. Progress was being monitored on the Trust site, in the Evening Echo and on message boards including Shrimperzone but nothing in the programme. He asked if the club could highlight the progress on the trip around the world.

10 Seatbooker Ticketing System

TJ said that he had been e-mailed by a non member named Adam Edge who was bring a perceived problem with the Seatbooker ticketing system to our attention. He said that he had booked a seat via Seatbooker in the West Stand for the Lincoln game specifically to sit with friends and after he had driven the 300 miles down from Wrexham, he found that the seat that he had been given "belonged" to a season ticket holder. He said that he had approached a steward to told him to sit somewhere else.

Whilst there was available seating, he felt that if the match have been a high profile match and well attended, he would have had a major problem with nowhere potentially to sit.

GK said that he was concerned about this as it should be impossible to sell pre-reserved seats on Seatbooker. TJ said that he would provide a copy of Mr Edge's e-mail for GK to action the issue.

11 Any Other Business

PY said that a matter had been raised with him regarding season ticket car passes. He said that a member with a disabled father had a season ticket pass but could not get into the main car park as it was full. GK said that as the club was busier there were more staff, player and corporate parking places required. They were aware that 240 car parking spaces were allocated before any paying customers came in.

GK said that there were instances lately where people had used excuses to get into the car park without paying when they were in fact "swinging the lead." He added that the club were aware that they had a problem and would resolve it.

GK said that if car park season ticket holders had a "disabled" badge then they would be allocated a permanent parking space for the season.

PY said that as the club did not know when the season would end this year because of the possibility of play off matches, would it be possible for the club to allocate two possible evenings for the Trust Player of the Year night. He said that the Trust would like to book the Shrimpers Bar for the evening and due to the reduced capacity, the event would probably be over subscribed. The plan would be to sell tickets for the event. HN said that she would speak to Steve Tilson about possible dates.

TJ asked why the stewards had to stand around the pitch perimeter near to the end of a game. GK said that was due to the attack on the linesman in front of East Blacks. He said that they had to stand and the club was lucky not to get charged over the incident. He added that the "fan" had been banned from Roots Hall for ten years.

TJ said that he sat in the RBS Family Stand and he and a number of fans in that area were irritated by the two "processions" of tea bar and bar personnel that strolled down the gangway next to him during the second half of a match. He said that they showed no regard for the state of play, walked slowly and generally got in the way of the match view. He said that he had spoken to them about moving more quickly but had been told that "they would walk more slowly if they wanted." He said that the problem could be easily resolved if they walked down the gangway between the family Stand and the Ground Security observation area where they would not inconvenience anyone. GK said that he would sort the problem.

12 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held on April 20 2005 at 1600.