



SOUTHEND UNITED SUPPORTERS CLUB TRUST LIAISON MEETING SEPTEMBER 21st 2005

1 Present

Geoffrey King (GK), Helen Norbury (HN), Lis Orford (LO) Derek Wilshire (DW), Paul Yeomanson (PY), Bryan Woodford (BW) and Terry Jeffreys (TJ) were present.

2 Matters Arising from the Meeting held on 17th August 2005

GK said that the club were going to produce a "Feed The Goat" and a "Freddy" shirt.

He said that smoking was still occurring in the stands but the club would persist with the ban. He added that at the start of the ban, there were 50/60 people smoking behind the West Stand but last Saturday, it was down to 3 people.

3 Quid A Goal

PY asked if Alan Perry could have access to the East and West Stands on match days so he could promote the Quid a Goal scheme. GK said that he did not have a problem with this and asked Alan to liaise with Reception to obtain a pass for the stands that he wanted access to.

4 Match Day Music/Announcer

PY said that there were still complaints about the distortion of loudspeakers in the West Stand. He said that the level was so high that the loudspeakers were being overdriven and would soon fail. GK said that he would speak to Carl Bailey about getting the levels right.

PY asked why the match day announcer had been changed. GK said that the club had been unhappy with Geoff Cox for some time and had decided to end their connection with him some two weeks before the Tranmere game and had informed him of their decision by letter. Geoff arrived at the ground before the Tranmere game claiming that he had not received the letter. GK told him that his services were no longer required.

He said that Carl Bailey had recommended the new announcer, who was a Southend fan, to the club as he had seen him in action and was impressed. He added that the new chap, who was very nervous for the first match, was on trial for a couple of matches.

5 Season Tickets

GK said that two match tickets had been sent out by Special Delivery by the club to season ticket holders. He said that there was a special arrangement with Royal Mail in that all the usual checks were carried out apart from the need for a signature. This was designed to prevent the problems that had occurred before with ticket deliveries.

He said that he expected the new swipe card system to be operational for the Barnsley game. TJ asked what would happen if the swipe card was lost and GK said that there would be a £25 administration charge to replace lost cards.

PY said that he had received an e-mail from Nigel Rickard about the enforced changes to games due to Sky/England games. He said that the U-Choose system was no good for him and asked if he could have a refund for matches that he could not get to. GK said that he

would look into this. He said that once the new ticketing and gate entry systems were bedded in, there may be a possibility to produce a season ticket that could only be used for certain games.

GK said that he would like to explain the background to the ticketing problems that had occurred before the Tranmere game and the events leading up to it.

He said that the club had decided that a new up to date ticketing system was required. The club had been using Seatbooker for the on-line ticketing system. However they sold the tickets, took their cut and then passed the balance onto the club. However the time to get the money from Seatbooker was getting longer and longer so the club decided to change to Ticket.com. He added that there had not been any on-line ticket sales since the Southampton game.

On that day they had a problem with the automatic authorisation of credit cards which slowed the match day ticketing processing down. However the system coped until about 1400, when a queue began to form, and by 1430 the queue stretched right across the car park. The problem was compounded by the fact that the new security camera operative did not pan on the whole queue so the Stadium Manager was not made unaware of the problem. Also the security guard in the car park did not highlight the problem either.

At 1430, the Stadium Manager became aware of the problem and alerted GK. In the end, the club took cash payers to one turnstile to help to alleviate the problem and to get them into the game on time. Unfortunately some fans missed the start of the game and he apologised for this. He pointed out that the club took the highest amount of money ever taken before a game in memory. He added that he would be more than happy to deal with any questions from Customs & Excise and the Licensing authorities with regard to these problems.

GK stressed that fans should buy their tickets in the week before the match to reduce match day pressure and in any case it would be cheaper. He added that ticket collections on match days would be at the old North East ticket office between 0930 and 1300 and that tickets for the West and Family Stand would be available from the West Stand ticket office. He said that to add to the problems, fans had been dialling the old ticket office number and were getting stuck in a loop.

PY said that the fans had accepted that the club is becoming more popular so problems would occur from time to time.

GK said that the new Under 7 scheme was for children aged seven or under. The child had to be a member of the scheme and accompanied by a full paying adult to take advantage. He asked if this could be put in the SJS newsletter. BW asked if the membership forms for the Under 7 scheme were available from the club web-site. GK said that he was not sure but would find out.

6 Food Outlets

PY said that Paul FitzGerald has sent him an e-mail reporting that when he entered the ground before the Tranmere game, he had started queuing up at the Food Bar at the entrance to South Upper at 1445. He said that there was a long queue with 3 people serving. However one was texting on her mobile phone for the whole time that he waited with his son to get his food. He said that she did nothing at all during that period except text on her phone. GK said that that Food Bar takes a lot of money on match days. TJ said that if all the servers were busy doing what they were paid for, the club could serve more customers and make even more money. GK said that he would make enquiries.

7 Any Other Business

PY asked if the club would donate a signed shirt and a signed match ball for the Shrimpers Trust Xmas Draw. GK agreed to this and asked when the draw was. PY said that it was on Boxing Day at half time during the MK Dons game. GK asked PY to liaise with Brian Wheeler regarding match day arrangements closer to the day.

BW asked how the new club wine was going to be sold. GK said that it would be in cases of twelve and the price was yet to be determined. He said that it was of good quality and was the same as the hose wine in the Pipe of Port.

GK said that he was very pleased with the performance of the shop so far. He said that more stock was on the way and the shop would sell the "Footy-Chick" range of women's garments and a range of Under 5 garments. He said that there would also be the new Nike 90 stuff which we hadn't had before.

BW asked how the revenue on the new shop compared to that of the old shop. GK said that the club do not have to employ staff or do stock taking or replenishment. He said that there is a minimum percentage which the club gets as part of the deal. In the six weeks that the shop has been open, they have reached half of the minimum percentage.

GK said that the Safety Group which included the emergency services were reviewing procedures at the ground. He said that as match days became busier, the more likely it was that there will be an incident.

GK said that due to persistent standing in the West Stand, letters had been distributed to fans who sit there. He said that some of our fans had been removed due to persistent standing. TJ said that he had read on Tranmere message boards that some of their fans had been removed for persistent standing too. GK said that he was not aware of that and added that he was willing to meet any reasonable fan from the old "F" Block to discuss the rules of seating etc.,

GK reported that he had received a letter from South Humberside Police stating that the Southend fans that had recently visited Scunthorpe United match were the "best behaved fans that have visited Glanford Park this season." He said that he was very proud to pass that information on.

8 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held on the 19th October 2005 at 1600.