



# MINUTES OF THE SOUTHEND UNITED SUPPORTERS SOCIETY LIMITED LIAISON MEETING



held at 15:00 on Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> February  
in the Blues Legends Lounge at Roots Hall Stadium

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## 1. Present and Apologies:

All scheduled attendees were present – Tom Lawrence (TL) and Rylee Doe (RD) from the Club, and James Schooley (JS), Paul Yeomanson (PY) and Kay Fogg (KF) from the Trust.

## 2. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2025:

- Match Day Parking – RD reported back that despite having positive conversations earlier in the season and both parties agreeing to reconvene in the second half of the current season, progress had been slower than expected. KF suggested contacting supporter, Jim Harrington, who may have some influence.

### **ACTION – with RD to progress**

- £40k loan – JS updated that an agreement felt close, but that a few methods of repayment had entered the conversation recently which he's unsure about. JS to go back to Justin Rees.

### **ACTION – with JS to take back to Trust members**

- Shrimpers Bar – PY advised that, while the aesthetic improvements made to the Shrimpers Bar had proved to be positive, there are still some issues to address, including the fact that the heaters are still not working and two are hanging off the walls. The Trust will look at some mobile storage/display solutions so that they may better operate their matchday stand, and the old cupboards which used to sit in the corner by the Trust stall will be re-sited in the back opposite our storage cupboards to provide some extra storage space. KF advised that the ladies' toilet floor had been sodden at Tuesday night's game with no wet floor signage and a few people had slipped. She also suggested that the Trust look into obtaining quotes for tablecloths for the bar with Club/Trust logos on, which can be used for Trust events.

### **ACTION – with Trust to re-site cupboards and make secure, and to obtain quotes for emblazoned tablecloths**

- Disabled ticket entitlement – RD advised that the Club been undertaking a review of its disability / carer ticket entitlements and found that we were ahead of most other clubs in our league with provision, and in line with EFL ones. It was noted that PL clubs can afford to be more generous, and that our provision complies with current guidance. This would still be reviewed further over the following months, ahead of the 2026/27 season with input from the FAB, and KF encouraged the Club to be more transparent with those for whom this is relevant.

### **ACTION – Club to continue their investigations**

- Car Park issues – RD was pleased to advise that Southend Council have agreed to put “Keep Clear” signage on the road outside the main entrance, which will hopefully improve the exit at the end of matches. He also advised that there will be an improved partnership with “Your Parking Space”, with ANPR cameras to be installed for next season. PY reported that one of the main gates had been closed for some reason at the end of Tuesday night’s game, making it extra difficult for cars to get out.
- Season Ticket Payment Plans – CH had provided the information from Blackpool and TL said this was to go to the Board on 12<sup>th</sup> March, with the Club hopeful to reintroduce instalment plans for Season tickets next season.

### 3. General updates

#### ***Roots Hall redevelopment***

- At what stage is the process currently at?  
A: plans and options have been drawn-up for redevelopment of East Stand and refurbishment/enhancements to West Stand (particularly toilets, food and beverage facilities), and are due to go before the SUFC board shortly. North Bank enhancements also being looked at and some concepts drawn-up, but these are **very** early stage.
- Are there further consultations planned?  
A: architects have completed their initial works on East and West Stand plans, and costings have been/are being considered. Everything is ready for the board to consider, which should happen shortly, but further consultation with stakeholders is expected. Work to West seen as important/of immediate concern, even more so to provide better and higher-volume matchday amenities when East Stand is demolished, but Club knows they can’t compromise and/or delay too much on the East Stand, which continues to decay.
- What is the practical timeline for breaking ground?  
In relation to the East - timescale fluid, in part due to no definite date on arrival of money from Martins, or on transfer of Roots Hall freehold to POSU ownership. Clear line of sight required on funding, and ROI calculations will need to be worked through. West Stand is something Club would like to start sooner rather than later, and a planning application has been submitted.
- What are the funding requirements to move the project forward?  
The Board is reviewing different options in respect of the East Stand, which have different price points. £20m upwards is the expectation. No hard figure on the West Stand work to divulge yet.
- Is there any related development planned (e.g. it was suggested some time ago that there may be some additional development on the car park)? What is the status of this? Is the East Stand reliant on any related development going ahead to be viable?  
A: Nothing concrete at the moment. Possibilities are being discussed which might be able to help out with the financial side of the stadium redevelopment. Club unable to say much more on this due to sensitivities.
- Is this project affected by the development at FF?

The agreement that has enabled development at FF provides for money to flow to the club to help with development projects – but from a planning application point of view there is no linkage.

- Are Southend City Council involved in this process? Have they consulted with the architects? Have they seen the business cases?  
A: They haven't been directly involved, but discussions continue about how they can help the development. Club has a good relationship with the council and its leadership, which are both making the right noises and are across the plans.

#### ***Fossetts Farm development:***

- What stage is the development currently at?  
A: TL thought planning permission had been submitted and was working its way through. Trust stated that full permission has not yet been granted. **Trust put to the Club that the council was likely awaiting more details from Jack Martin – Club agreed that this seems likely.**
- At what stage of the process does the first tranche of money transfer from Martins to SUFC?  
A: Money will flow in 2-3 tranches as the various stages of the development complete in the future.
- At what stage do the current charges on Roots Hall get lifted?  
A: Likely after full planning permission granted.
- At what stage does the freehold transfer?  
A: Once the charges have been removed from it.
- Which entity will be the recipient of the freehold?  
A: POSU.

#### ***The Spread Eagle:***

- What is the current state of play on the Spread Eagle plans?  
A: POSU had completed on the sale of the Spread Eagle, with a 5 year lease, and with the brewery undertaking a refurbishment. It is hoped that it will open later in the Spring.
- How does this fit in with East Stand plans and timescales?  
A: There is potential for a FanZone in the garden area and, also, for some hospitality on the first floor to replace the East Stand facilities once it has been demolished. All of this will be a way to keep the revenue streams up, as a sizeable amount of income will be lost whilst there is no East Stand.

The Club is compliant with the SCMP (Salary Cost Management Protocols) that the NL recently introduced. This brings the NL in line with the EFL, and should go a long way towards addressing the EFL's concerns in the wake of the 3Up/3Down campaign about the robustness of the NL's financial checks. It was noted that if all NL clubs become compliant, it should theoretically level the playing field/curtail some of the spending levels at the top of the division. However, if (for example) Dale Vince decided that all of the additional money he injects into Forest Green Rovers would be donations/equity/ specific types of loan from now on rather than loans, then FGR would be able to continue spending as they are currently and still be compliant.

The reported story in the Echo on redundancies was discussed, but, as discussions with the individuals concerned are ongoing, comments could not be recorded for public scrutiny. JS commented that many supporters know various employees at the Club, and the least the fanbase will expect is that those employees affected are treated with dignity and respect.

#### **4. Memorandum of Understanding:**

JS advised that there seemed to have been some confusion here and that this actually refers back to an idea from former Board member, Liam Ager, about a commitment from the Club to the Trust, to include things that they would provide, and that the action should be with the Trust to come back with a proposal.

The old Memorandum of Understanding had been circulated prior to the meeting by TL, as promised, and he had the Golden Share idea, of which he was supportive, to take to the upcoming Board Meeting. KF suggested that there were also many other ideas that could be considered to raise funds from funds, judging from the recent sale of the floodlight casing, and bricks, pitch squares and paving stones were all things that could be considered.

**ACTIONS – Trust to revert with proposal; TL to report back from Board**

#### **5. Junior Blues:**

RD advised that we should be hopefully able to confirm the Easter scheduled “Meet the Players Day” after this weekend, as long as we can get a result in the FA Trophy otherwise, it would affect another match to re-schedule.

KF said that she intended to have a Committee Meeting soon, but was favouring the idea of going back to Junior Blues scarves as the sign-up gift. She had already had one quote for these, and RD was able to obtain another, from an alternative supplier, which would be taken to the Committee.

With the number of games that had had to be re-scheduled, there were a large number of disappointed Junior Blues who had missed out on doing flags, so it was agreed to increase the numbers to eight per home match for the remainder of the season.

#### **6. Toilets and accessibility:**

After receiving a very heartfelt request from a supporter, it was noted that some minor stadium repairs had been a little neglected recently and TL said that he would get the contractors to do a full sweep of the toilets to ensure that all had working locks. He would also request that male sanitary disposal bins could be placed in certain cubicles. KF suggested putting some plastic grab rails in some cubicles, perhaps one in each block, to make them more accessible for elderly or disabled people, and that these toilets should be clearly marked outside to make it more user friendly to all supporters.

**ACTION – Club to undertake checks on toilets and make these minor improvements**

## 7. Any Other Business:

- A complaint had been received from a supporter about their treatment at Reception, which had been requested to be brought to the Club's attention. TL confirmed that they were already aware and were dealing.
- Club Shop – Macron were contracted until the end of the season, but expressed a desire to exit early from the contract. The contract was therefore brought to an end early. Any order fulfilment or collection issues would unfortunately have to be directed to Macron. The Club has signed agreements with new technical and retail operations partners, and some minor works are currently being undertaken on the Club Shop ahead of its re-opening, on 10<sup>th</sup> March, with a larger refurbishment scheduled for later in the year. It will be stocked with a range of leisurewear and other items initially. Next season's kits will be fully bespoke and we will be continuing with the dark blue and yellow themes going forwards. JS suggested that, as the kits would be fully bespoke, it presents a good supporter engagement opportunity whereby supporters could vote for a favourite design option, or even submit their own designs for the 3<sup>rd</sup> kit. RD agreed and will explore, but it wasn't possible for this season as kits were locked-in in September 2025.
- Passageway at the rear of the West Stand – a request for stewards to be more proactive in keeping this area clear of supporters standing at the back for the duration of the match, making it particularly difficult for people to get to and from the toilets, especially when also up against those queuing for the kiosks. RD confirmed that this would be raised at Monday's pre-match briefing again, but that it has always been an issue which never seems to go away no matter how often people are asked. Hopefully, the planned changes for the West Stand would make this easier in the future.
- Suggestion of a "Meet COSU, FAB and Trust" gathering. JS said this had been brought up in the last FAB meeting, and that it was felt this would be a good idea, and there was a suggestion this could take place in the Spread.

### **ACTION – With TL/JS to progress**

- Andy Leeder said that costs for the biography sheet printing for the Executive Box naming are still outstanding – RD advised this had just come in that day, and the figures would be communicated to Andy.
- Fans have asked again if the Club will re-consider re-selling season tickets when they are unable to attend, with a particular reference to the number of evening games – RD said that this idea had been approved by the FAB, and it was now to go to the Board. It was felt that it would be a win/win for everyone involved.

### **ACTION – TL to report back from Board**

- Director of Football – JS asked what the progress was with this appointment. TL responded that the process has whittled it down to a final three candidates. JS asked what sort of candidate they were looking for. TL answered that the advert welcomed anybody with a background in football recruitment and/or in club "identities" and pathways from Academy to First Team, but wasn't sure which would be deemed more important.
- Car Park pedestrians – KF said that she had noticed that it had got particularly bad exiting the ground, with pedestrians walking across the

lane of traffic in a dangerous fashion. She was worried that there might be an accident as people are often completely oblivious. This was noted.

- Truro match – A Trust member had made contact to ask if a gesture of some kind could be made to the Truro supporters for their re-arranged match at Roots Hall, given the distance to be travelled for a mid-week fixture. It was agreed that the Club and the Trust would look into providing a hot drink and pie for them with details to be confirmed.

**Next Meeting will be in April, date tba**