

Birmingham City Football Club

Supporters Group Meeting - 11th November 2015

Location: Boardroom, St Andrews Stadium

Chair: David Boston – BCFC SLO (DB)

Attendees: David Smith - Blues Official Forum (DS), Bik Singh - Blues4All (BS), Mick Singh - Blues4All (MS), Lynda Courts - Redditch Blues (LC), John Griffin - North West Blues (JG), Tom Heslop - Blues Collective (TH), Linda Goodman - Birmingham (LG), Chris Sinclair - Northside Blues (CS), Tony Routely - Central Blues Travel (TR), Margaret Decker - Blues Trust (MD), Richard Stanley - Blues Trust (RS).

Meeting commenced 18:20

Welcome and introductions. As per agenda, DB proposed the meeting is a good opportunity for supporter groups to provide valuable feedback and input regarding supporter engagement with BCFC and suggest how they wish to interact and organise meetings with representatives from club moving forward.

- Participants at future meetings - All agreed that x1 representative from each supporters group should attend to allow to maximum number of groups to attend whilst ensuring the meetings remain of a practical size. RS raised issue of representation from other groups and supporters not affiliated with supporter groups. DS stated importance for younger fans to be involved. DB confirmed plans to introduce a young fans forum for next season. DB also proposed introduction of x6 supporters with no group affiliation (following a public expression of interest) to join supporters meetings for a one season term to ensure fair representation.
- Frequency, timing and location of future meetings – All participants agreed to quarterly each November, February, May and August as proposed by DB. MD, JG and MS all proposed that meetings are held prior to home fixture for convenience. DB to look at possible times for meetings at (to remain at St Andrews) most likely to be held prior to home fixtures. DB to confirm availability of suitably sized room before February's meeting.
- Who should be invited to meetings? MD proposed x1 representative per group. All agreed. DS, BS & TH stated continuity of representatives is important to ensure ideas are developed and progress is maintained. LC proposed a representative for smaller groups in more distant locations. DB to continue to invite all UK based supporter group to each meeting and arrangements can be made for a representative to represent a specific region if necessary. All agreed it is appropriate for heads of department and senior managers to attend each August meeting.
- How should the agenda be set? RS – Events drive the agenda and that there are two levels of item. Longer term discussions i.e. young supporter engagement and short term issues. JG – requested agenda items are requested in advance and collated by chair. DS emphasised for positive as well as negative agenda items.

- Recording and publication of meeting minutes. All agreed that meetings will be sent in draft form prior to being finalised and disseminated to supporter group members and/or affiliate members. MD proposed a secretary or appointed minute taker should attend each meeting. DB to make arrangements ahead of next Februarys meeting.

Any other business:

CS – Idea to award a ‘Staff member of the year’ to be presented at end of season Player Awards.

Action - DB to propose to management team at next Operational Meeting.

TH – Ball boys at recent matches very slow to react during matches. LG questioned why local schools or community groups cannot provide ball boys. **Action: DB to feedback to Community Trust and find out further information.**

LG/LC – Raised issues with changes to Ticket Incentive scheme and requirement for applicants to purchase a minimum of x4 tickets. LC/LG pointed out this precludes small families from benefiting from the scheme. **Action: DB to clarify with Ticket Office and Wayne Cowan why the terms and conditions have been changed and feedback.**

All Participants – Parking. DB clarified current situation with respect to Birmingham City Councils proposal to impose parking permits for match days in the streets immediately surrounding St Andrews. **Action: DB has provided details for supporters to provide feedback to Birmingham City Council and arranging for details to be put on bfc.com.**

JG - Safety of pedestrians crossing Bordesley Circus on matchdays. DB clarified plans for ongoing works and implementation of pedestrian crossings to alleviate the issues. **Action: DB to refer this matter to Colin Barlow (Police Liaison Officer) and establish why this area is not policed and controlled prior to matches.**

LG – Supporter safety after home fixtures. LG and LC both raised the issue of the pedestrians walking in amongst vehicles leaving the Kop car park and cars driving up Cattell Road. **Action: DB to refer to Operations Director Steve Pain and Safety Officer Dave Houlton for further information and clarification on current arrangements.**

LC – Supporters raised the issue of e-cigarettes/vapes being used during match days in the stadium and becoming a nuisance to non smokers. Will they be banned? DB confirmed Safety Officer Dave Houlton is looking into the matter and considering Clubs current policy as it doesn’t directly address vaping within the stadium. **DB to provide an update at next meeting.**

All participants- Delayed sale of 2015/16 replica kits. DB clarified the cause of the kit delays from supplier JD sports due to manufacturing delays (as seen at AFC Bournemouth) and confirmed the club placed our order in good time during January 2015. At this stage it was envisaged that the kits would be available for purchase prior to the school summer holidays. Club currently working to mitigate against further delays next season.

LC – Lack of hand drying facilities in toilets around the ground. Action: **DB to raise with Operations Director Steve Pain and see if facilities can be upgraded and improved.**

LC – Lack of seating available in concourses of Club Class area which is an issue for elderly or infirm supporters. **DB to speak with Steve Pain and clarify what can be done in this area subject to safety regulations.**

Date of next meeting: February 2016 (Location and date TBC)

Meeting Closure – 20:10