

Supporters' Committee

Meeting

Wednesday 26th July 2017

KCOM Stadium

Present: Tom Rowell (TR), Joe Clutterbrook (JC), Henry Crane (HC), Ann Holland (AH), Dan Clarke (DC), North Stand Member (NSM), Tony Munzer (TM), Joanne Warrington (JW), Chris Wilde (CW), Richard Campion (RC), Julie Alderman (JA), Kate Leeming (KL), Graham Cannon (GC), John Sherman (JS), Barbara Wilkinson (BW), Richard Uttley (RU)

Absent: James Baron (JB)

1. Matters arising from the last meeting

TR welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked if there were any issues arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

There were no issues in relation to the content of the minutes, however GC stated that he was having an issue downloading the minutes from the website.

Action: TR minutes will be reloaded to the new website

Actions taken from last meeting:

1. PA System in the East Stand

TR stated the issue has been looked into in terms of the sound quality being produced in the East Stand. Quotes have been sourced to replace the whole PA system but those quotes were significant and the issue is not considered an urgent priority.

2. Security- amount of spot checks around the stadium

TR stated that spot checks are random and so may not be seen by every supporter. Checks can be increased however this would heavily affect the time it takes for supporters to get into the ground, especially during busy periods.

3. Home fans being held back to wait for away supporters after a game

This a police and local authority procedure. It is done for the safety of all supporters and will not be changing as a result.

4. TV issues on the South and East concourse

These have all been replaced or fixed.

RC mentioned that he sees that some of the TVs are still on an auto-turn-off setting and asked if this can be fixed for the new season?

TR was aware of this issue and it will be corrected for this coming season.

Action: TR to look into the problem

5. Queues around toilets due to the location of coffee counters.

HC mentioned that this is the only place for these counters to be placed and they have to be there to move supporters away from the outlets. HC states that he has looked at other practical locations for these counters.

6. WiFi issues on matchday

Is being looked into by the IT Department.

7. Dripping roof over the West Stand, Row Z

This has been reported by AH and SMC is looking into this issue.

8. Production of the evacuation procedure

TR stated that we will be publishing the stadium's evacuation procedure through the Club's website.

9. Seat Cushions in the Club store

TR mentioned that this has been passed to the Retail Manager.

2. New Website

TR opened the floor asking for any feedback in regards to the Club website.

GC questioned if the Club are using the name of Hull City on the new website.

TR stated that Hull City appears in various places on the site.

RC queried if the Club are still using the name Hull City in its communications?

TR stated that Hull City is used, as is Tigers as our nickname and Hull City Tigers as the business name. The Club is fully aware of the decision by the FA and is not challenging that.

RU brought up that Club's Facebook page is 'Hull Tigers' and questioned why this is.

The Facebook page was changed as part of the 'name change' application and is under review along with other media channels.

BW & RC suggested that more content on the website would be well received and bring in more supporters to the club website.

TR mentioned that the Club are increasing the amount of football content however want this to be fully focussed around factual information without adding general transfer/gossip news.

RC commented that he is happy with the quality of media produced by the Club. However he would like to see more interviews with Ehab Allam, as he felt the post-season interview was informative.

TR mentioned that the Club has purposefully waited on another interview with the Vice-Chairman until the end of the transfer window to allow the whole period to be reviewed.

NSM questioned if there is a possibility of the Manager (Leonid Slutsky) coming to a public forum

TR added that the Club is doing an open training session at the stadium on 1/8/17 and hopes this will be a good start for interaction between the Manager and the supporters.

CW reinforced that a public forum would be great and feels there is a real appetite for this among the supporter base

TR replied that the Club is working towards events such as that, and feels the Kit Launch event was a statement for an increase in fan engagement and working with supporters.

RU asked if the Club could add more fun content to the website (e.g. in the style of Soccer AM)

TR answered that with new leadership on the footballing side of the Club, this will be easier to produce. However, staffing is an issue in relation to adding content onto an already busy media production team.

3. Tigers Rewards

BW asked what has occurred to the points accrued last season

TR stated all points earned through TeamCard last season expired at the end of June however the Club was clear in communicating this. DC added that all members with an outstanding balance were sent an email two weeks before the expiry date, reminding them of the policy.

RU asked if the Club will be streaming live games for supporters outside of the UK

TR answered stating this is still being reviewed and supporters will be informed of the Club's policy in the near future. TR added that Tigers TV will be free for all of the Club's video content, as the Club doesn't believe supporters should have to pay to watch the Club's videos. Additionally, we are planning on releasing the full 90-minute package of each game through Tigers TV (+24 hours after the fixture)

NSM asked if the Club will still be opening the stadium early for certain matches

TR and HC both responded stating that the take up wasn't great and don't feel there is a great demand for this.

HU enquired if there were still plans for a Fan Park around the stadium on matchdays

TR stated that this was being considered, however with the Club's relegation, this was on hold for now. HC added that he has spoken to specific clubs (e.g. Sunderland) and fan parks can be a nice addition to a matchday, although they aren't always popular in the winter months. JC also commented that a lot of fan activities will be taking place around the concourse this season, especially in the WWF Family Zone.

TR added that the Club is proud of its partnership with WWF and have plans throughout the season to incorporate them into the matchday experience.

GC asked whether a Hall of Fame had been considered by the Club?

TR stated that the Club is looking at it, however with a very busy summer it isn't at the top of the Club's priorities but will be discussed in the New Year.

4. Catering

RC asked if pre-paid food collection at the concourse was possible, possibly implementing this in relation to Tigers Rewards.

HC mentioned that the Club had trialled collection points at numerous points in time and don't feel it was effective in reducing queue times. HC has seen many Clubs use pre-order apps for the concourse however many haven't found the take up of this service worthwhile. Also one issue with collection-only areas is that this takes space away from normal transaction queues and can potentially cause more build up.

JW asked if Tigers Rewards would be implemented on the concourse so fans can earn points by spending on a match day.

TR revealed that this is currently being worked on however further work needs to be done for this to be implemented. The Club is also working towards contactless payments on the concourse, which should substantially reduce transaction time and be more convenient for supporters.

KL stated that she often has trouble getting to the concourse for products due to the size of queues on matchdays (Lower West).

HC was surprised that she has experienced this as he hasn't had any reports of major problems in this area.

Action- HC to look into this

KL wondered if pre-pouring beer and employing more staff in the concourses could be a solution for reducing the length of queues in peak times.

HC stated that the quality of beer is an issue in relation to pre-pouring as it could be left for a long duration. The concourses do have fast pour taps (pint= 6 seconds) and also provide good quality beer. In relation to the staff query, space is an issue in the concourses with the stadium not having a large amount of counter space. Due to this it can be tough during peak times (half-time). However HC states that currently the concourses are currently averaging 27 seconds per transaction.

RU asked if a possible cold drink line could again reduce queues during peak times?

HC presented that one problem with that is supporters wanting both a cold drink and another product. Also, the same problem as before with taking space away from the standard tills which again can cause congestion in those areas. HC stressed that the Club can only work with what space they have in the Stadium and can only get a limited amount of tills/people in these areas. However, they are constantly looking at ways to reduce time which supporters experience (e.g. contactless payment).

CW questioned if it was successful when the Club had staff going round the stadium selling confectionary.

HC stated that it wasn't effective and only worked with a limited amount of products. Doesn't see it as the way forward, also mentions that no clubs around the country are currently using this method either.

HC mentioned that one idea which has been successful, is that of meal deals offered at the Stadium. 25% of our transactions are in relation to this and we feel they provide great value to the supporters. An alcoholic beverage deal is being reviewed for next season which we feel will add greater value.

GC asked if it was possible to bring local beer onto the concourse.

HC replied that the Club has had conversations with a few providers. One issue is that most of this beer is in glass bottles/cans and these would have to be decanted before serving (which would affect queue times). Cask ale is now available in the Dugout Bar however isn't being thought of in the concourse. HC mentioned that current purchasing trends are lager driven.

5. Matchday

BW brought up an issue in relation to a stain above the urinals in the W5 toilets

Action: AH & HC to look into problem

BW enquires if there is any update surrounding the traffic flow procedures on matchday at the stadium

JC states there hasn't been any more movement since the last meeting

BW asked if adding mirrors and hot water in the ladies toilets could be considered for the coming season (South Stand).

Action: AH will look into issue

RC asked if the Club could police foul language better, especially in the WWF Family Zone (South Stand)

TR acknowledged the issue and the introduction of the Family Zone should make this an easier area to police such behaviour.

GC queried the installation of the gate at the entrance to the Stadium grounds

TR answered stating that the 1.8m gate mentioned is currently not operational. This gate has been erected on the advice of a safety group to help prevent terrorism. The gate will only be closed in unsocial hours when security is limited around the stadium. Contrary to suggestions the path is not a public right of way.

CW questioned why the FC Nantes fixture took place at KCOM Craven Park.

TR stated that the pitch wasn't up to playable standard for football but the rugby team are able to play on a different standard of pitch hence their home game taking place.

TR and JC both added how frustrated they were with the Ajax friendly being put 'behind closed doors' as this would have been a great trip for the supporters.

JC stated that in relation to hospitality, the Club hasn't lost many corporate members and are in better shape in this regard compared to our last Championship season.

Any other Business

Football Issues

BW & GC both stated that they were pleased with the addition of Tony Pennock to the Club's coaching staff.

TR added that the additions of Tony Pennock and Pat Mountain have been shrewd and feels that, alongside Leonid, have been a positive influence around the Club.

CW stated many supporters are worried about losing more key assets from the playing squad

TR – Understood fan frustration with player sales, but reinforced the reality of relegation is that your best players get tempted away.

RU asked how many players the Club are aiming to bring in during this transfer window

TR responded that the amount of transfers quoted by the Manager the day before the meeting (five) is realistic and will be helped with Lee Darnbrough being brought into the Club. Mentioned that Lee will have an interview to introduce him to the fan base however feels it will be best after the transfer window.

CW stated he and supporters are worried about losing key players

TR stated that the majority of remaining players don't have clauses in their contracts and also the Manager has made it very clear to the Club that no more players should be leaving.

Ticketing

RC asked if the Club could produce statistics on Members in regards to the age profile of the supporters and if it has been affected by the Membership scheme.

TR replied that these statistics are produced for staff inside the Club but would be happy to bring them to the next meeting once Membership figures are confirmed for the new season

BW questioned if concessionary pricing will be thought of again this season

TR confirmed that the Club will continue with its current policy in regards a concessionary priority window. The EFL does not have a specific rule regarding the offering of concessions.

TR presented that one rule which has changed in relation to ticketing is that no Club can charge higher admission prices for visiting supporters for accommodation that is ranked as comparable with or inferior to that used by supporters of the home team.

GC asked if there was any update in relation the Premier League inquiry into the Club's concessionary pricing policy

TR answered that the Premier League is currently at the decision stage of their investigation. However, TR reminded the Committee that it is not related to the EFL and is unlikely to have any immediate impact on the Club.

JW mentioned if it was possible to offer a family membership

TR mentioned the issue with regard to this is that a family membership wouldn't fall under a lot of family dynamics, with a typical two adults and two children 'deal' not relatable to the majority of families. We are looking at a group ticketing scheme to offer discounts on bulk purchases, local football clubs etc.

RC, CW & GC both mentioned that added policing/stewarding would be needed in relation to a family membership, due to the ticket fraud which took place under previous ticketing schemes.

GC commented that he feels the Membership is a great idea however he feels it is ruined by the lack of concessionary prices. RC follows up by suggesting that the Club would be showing humility if they reinstated concessionary prices.

RC asked how the Membership sales are going for next season

TR stated that the sales figures are in line with what the Club experienced during our last Championship season and are higher than forecasted at the start of this summer.

RC asked how Members have migrated in the stadium with the changes in the Membership pricing structure.

DC stated that due to the North and South Stands now completely falling within Zone 1, this has caused more Members to move centrally in these stands. This was the aim of the pricing structure and should help improve the atmosphere around the ground.

NSM asked if paying cash on the turnstiles will be considered by the Club

TR responded that cash on the turnstiles isn't being considered however they have made some changes in regards to paying for tickets on matchday. The matchday fee has been reduced to £3 per transaction (rather than per ticket) and there is no longer a fee during the week.

GC asked if there has been an update with safe standing

TR stated that the Club does not have a stance on this and won't consider until the law changes.

Closure of Meeting

TR thanked everyone for their time and confirmed that the date for the next meeting will be released to Members closer to the time. The meeting was then closed