

**MINUTES OF THE TWELFTH MEETING BETWEEN THE SUPPORTERS' COMMITTEE AND LIVERPOOL FOOTBALL CLUB ON 10 MAY 2014 AT ANFIELD.**

**Representing the LFC Supporters' Committee:** Paul Amann (PA), LGBT Supporters; Sam Armstrong (SA), Female Fans; James Benson (JB), Fans in the Merseyside Area; Anna Burgess (AB), Away Fans; Jeanette Dodd (JD), Vice-chair and Disabled Fans; Karen Gill (KG), Honorary President; Bob Humphries (BH), Chair and Season Ticket Holders & Hospitality Fans; Damien Moore (DM), International Fans (West); Abu Nasir (AN), Ethnic Minorities; Richard Pedder (RP), Official Supporters' Clubs; Matthew Selby (MS), International Fans (East); Laurie Whitehead (LW) Non Season Ticket Holders & Official Members; Laura Woodcock (LWo), Families and Young People. **Representing Liverpool Football Club:** Ian Ayre (IA), Managing Director; Gill Derbyshire (GD), Head of Customer Service; Phil Dutton (PD), Head of Ticketing and Hospitality; Billy Hogan (BHo), Chief Commercial Officer; Michelle Kirk (MK), Equality and Inclusion Advisor; Colin McCall (CM), Disability and Accessibility Officer; Matt McCann (MM), Head of Press; Rachel Newman (RN), Quality and Development Coordinator; Andrew Parkinson (AP), Operations Director. **Facilitator:** William Montgomery (WM)

**1. Welcome and introductions:**

- 1.1. WM welcomed all present, particularly Matt McCann (MM), who as Head of Press was attending his first committee meeting as was Rachel Newman (RN) who is the Club's Quality and Development Coordinator.
- 1.2. BH announced that all the Committee were present. This was largely on account of the meetings being set at the beginning of the season, which allows all the members to plan accordingly.
- 1.3. BH continued by saying that the Committee conducted a ballot between the members to identify, which four members would retire on rotation in accordance with the Governance Handbook. The four positions that will retire following this meeting will be those that represent LGBT Supporters, Ethnic Minorities, Official Supporters' Clubs and Non Season Ticket Holders & Official Members.
- 1.4. BH continued by offering his thanks to Paul Amann, Abu Nasir, Richard Pedder and Laurie Whitehead, respectively, for their outstanding contribution during the past three-years. The recruitment process to find suitable replacements would commence shortly with the goal of filling the posts in advance of the next meeting.
- 1.5. BH continued by offering his congratulations to the Club, Brendan Rogers and the team for a fantastic season regardless of the outcome of the final game that was to take place against Newcastle United tomorrow.
- 1.6. BH also acknowledged the support provided by the fans over the season, particularly the Spion Kop 1906 who have helped to recreate the atmosphere enjoyed in previous seasons by providing the flags and banners that have followed the team up and down the country. Quoting Bill Shankly, he said: it's the Holy Trinity of Club, Team and Supporters that enables success to happen.
- 1.7. IA offered apologies on behalf of Susan Black who could not attend the meeting due to a prior commitment.
- 1.8. IA continued by offering thanks on behalf of the Club and its owners for the Committee's dedication during the season. He said that as well as what is

achieved during these meetings, it the outcomes that follow which are impressive. When the Club originally conceptualised having a Supporters' Committee there was a view that the Club was attempting to sanitise the engagement with fans but the reality was that the Club was keen to have a more meaningful and constructive dialogue. As the format has progressed, we seem to be achieving more and more tangible results. The frequency of the meetings seems to be appropriate, and the content is good. Internally, the Club feels that the outcome from what was first envisaged is a positive one.

- 1.9. Echoing what BH said about the achievements of manager and team over the season, IA said that there is now a belief in the Club, and a better spirit across the Club. The Club is not only about the people who work in it, but the fans that support it also. We are all one. People now feel the change and believe that great things are about to happen. The change comes about because of how the Club [owners, manager, team, and fans] act and its been quite telling how the media has perceived the Club during the past twelve months. The shift has been nothing but a positive one. The impact of the fans that line the streets and cheer the team on prior to each game has had a really positive effect on the manager and the players alike. Even directors of visiting teams have observed that they would not be able to replicate that level of support at their own clubs.

## **2. Matters arising from the previous meeting:**

- 2.1. BH said that at the last meeting it was incumbent on the Committee to provide a list of outstanding actions. JD conducted an audit of past minutes and email threads and produced the definitive list that was forwarded to IA as agreed.
- 2.2. BH continued by thanking RN for her support in assisting the Committee and Club in achieving some movement with all the outstanding issues. We've made good progress, but there are some negatives.
- 2.3. BH said that he'd been very disappointed with some of the responses received, and the lack of response for some of the issues raised.
- 2.4. BH continued by saying that the principal owners committed to attend at least two meetings each season, but an owner has only attended one meeting this season. The Committee would like them to attend, as it is important that they experience not only what is said, but also how it is said. At the Fans' Forum the previous evening, BH was asked if the owners would be in attendance, but he could not confirm either way. It would be considered a real commitment on behalf of the owners if they did attend at least two meetings each season.
- 2.5. BH asked if the Club could double its efforts in ensuring that agreed actions are dealt with in a timely manner. He advised that he sent an email to IA and his PA on 21/03, regarding outstanding issues, and then sent it again on 31/03; an acknowledgment or response to either message has not been received.
- 2.6. BH believes that more success could be achieved if the Club would commit to dealing with the issues raised in a timelier manner. Having to repeatedly chase the Club for responses is not a good use of the Committee's time, which could be better spent engaging with the fans they are supposed to represent.
- 2.7. A brief discussion took place on the merits of using the first part of each subsequent meeting to briefly review the list of agreed actions, to determine

what has been achieved since the last meeting and identify the reason why some issues remain outstanding. There was a consensus that this was a good idea and that a review process would be established in time for the inaugural meeting of the coming season.

- 2.8. BH advised that the atmosphere at the Fans' Forum the previous evening was really positive. The mood of fans from the first forum to the fourth showed a marked improvement. The Committee received praise and a good number of positive comments, some of which were also directed at the Club. The fans have welcomed the results achieved through these meetings, and the number of positive emails the Committee has received over the past few weeks has endorsed this view.

### **3. Discussion on the redevelopment of Anfield:**

- 3.1. BH opened this part of the meeting by advising the Club that since its formation, the Committee had received more correspondence in relation to the redevelopment of Anfield than any other topic raised to date. He continued by saying that there is great excitement around the redevelopment of the stadium and that the plans have been broadly well received.
- 3.2. *Q1: BH stated that the proposed new stand appears to offer extensive hospitality facilities, but season ticket holders and general admission fans would like to know what allocations would be available to them. Can the Club provide a detailed breakdown of the allocations for hospitality, season tickets and general admission?*
- 3.3. PD responded by saying that it's important to look at this from a stadium-wide perspective. The Club sells around 4,000 hospitality seats per game. The idea with the new Main Stand is to increase this to around 6,500 across the entire stadium.
- 3.4. PD continued by saying that there are approximately 2,500 hospitality seats in the Centenary Stand. In the new Main Stand there will be three tiers with the middle tier predominately being used for hospitality. The Club also has off-site hospitality that uses the Anfield Road Stand. The idea will be to consolidate hospitality mostly in the new Main Stand and Centenary Stand. The net result will mean that there will be uplift in general admission seats in other areas of the stadium.
- 3.5. IA said that without the uplift in corporate hospitality seating it would not be possible to redevelop the stadium and suggested that PD shares with the Committee a breakdown of the percentages before and after re-development.
- 3.6. PD said that the percentage allocated to hospitality is currently around 9.5% of capacity. When the new Main Stand is open, this will increase to approximately 12%. However, the exact figures pre- and post redevelopment will be shared with the Committee following the meeting.
- 3.7. BH said that some fans have been on the season ticket waiting list for many years and see the redevelopment as an opportunity to finally obtain their own season ticket and it would be good to know how this will be addressed as part of the redevelopment.
- 3.8. AB asked if the Club could make available a small allocation of tickets for purchase on the day to help those who can't afford to pay in advance.

- 3.9. PD responded by saying that based on past demand, if the Club made available, say, 500 tickets for such a purpose, there would be nothing stopping 40,000 fans attending a big game expecting to get into the ground via pay on the day, potentially causing a security and health and safety risk.
- 3.10. PD continued by saying that for some games, particularly midweek, this may not be a problem, but the final game of the season resulted in 46,000 fans trying to purchase 400 last minute tickets online. For the Club to implement such an approach, it would need to do so for every game and not just the less popular ones. Fans would expect it to happen, irrespective of the opposition.
- 3.11. IA stated that there are last minute tickets available through the buy-back scheme and a small number of such tickets were released through the scheme for the final game of the season. These tickets are available online and notified to fans via the website.
- 3.12. *Q2: LWo asked if there was potential to have a 'boys pen' situated somewhere in the ground.*
- 3.13. PD said that this matter has not been discussed at Club level yet, but it is certainly something that could be looked at. He continued by saying that the Club has a new policy of encouraging young adults to attend cup games, particularly cup games. He said that he would be happy to take the issue away and discuss this with the Committee following the meeting.
- 3.14. AP said that the 'boys pen' as was and where the Club is now is a very different proposition and the Club will need to be very mindful of how any re-introduction would be managed and controlled.
- 3.15. CM said that the biggest potential problem would be in the area of safety. There have been safeguarding issues at other football clubs that necessitated a reversal of approach. So the first and foremost issue that would need to be addressed would be one of safety if the Club were to locate a group of children and young adults in one area. This requires a great deal of thought to ensure that it is done for the right reasons and implemented effectively.
- 3.16. *Q3: SA asked what would happen to people's seats during the development and what will happen to those same seats post the re-development. For example, will they be denied access during the development and where will they be sitting on completion.*
- 3.17. AP responded by saying that in terms of the re-development itself, if the Club proceeds as planned, then construction will commence at the start of next year. There will be no impact on seats during the coming season. For the following season and up to the opening of the new Main Stand in August 2016, there will be some seat loss but this will be kept to an absolute minimum. Once the exact numbers are known, the Club will liaise with the fans concerned which will largely be restricted to the final few rows of the current main stand.
- 3.18. PD continued by saying that the Club is looking to introduce a season ticket amnesty and this is something that was needed prior to the opening of the new Main Stand. The Club didn't take the tough decisions in the past and there are now pockets of season ticket holders and hospitality seats scattered all over the stadium, some just single seats in the middle of a row. What the Club should do as part of the re-development is take a step back and revisit the seating allocation across the entire stadium. A season ticket amnesty

would not be an opportunity for the Club to take people's seats from them, but more an exercise in allocating an actual name to a particular seat.

- 3.19. IA continued by saying that there is an opportunity to sit friends and families together who may only be currently separated by a few seats or rows. People may not mind moving, if they have a chance to sit with people they want to sit with. The problem, however, is knowing the identity of the actual the season ticket holder.
- 3.20. PD continued by saying the Anfield issues 24,500 season tickets to 16,000 people. Some fans have multiple season tickets in their own name, even though they are actually giving/selling the seat to someone else. This is a legacy issue from many years ago. The Club currently has 28,500 people on the season ticket waiting list.
- 3.21. IA said that there are a number of issues with the current system. If season ticket holders keep the season ticket in their name and simply pass it on, the waiting list will never reduce. However, this is a debate that needs to involve the fans, as there will be winners and losers whichever path is taken. The problem of ticket holders selling on their tickets is a problem the Club is keen to address. The Club only receives the face value of the ticket, and nothing more, so if the fans really want the Club to clamp down on this issue of touting and profiteering, then it will be compelled to do so.
- 3.22. *Q4: SA asked if people will be able to purchase their actual seats rather than them being tossed in a skip following the redevelopment. Some people will have sat in the same seat for many years and would be loathed to see it discarded when they are prepared to put it to good use.*
- 3.23. AP said that this would be something that Club will be prepared to take away and investigate. The reality is that some fans might want them, some may not and the Club will determine if a purchase or gift scheme for the benefit of individual fans or sporting clubs can be implemented.
- 3.24. *Q5: PA said that the Club has indicated that the season ticket waiting list is about 28,500 strong. When will this be re-opened in light of new seats becoming available and how many more will the Club allow to join the list?*
- 3.25. PD said that he was a little skeptical about opening it again as even with the redevelopment of the Main Stand and Anfield Road Stand the additional seats will not be sufficient to clear the current waiting list. He said he can't envisage a situation where the current list will ever reduce to zero, but the Club will consider re-opening it when it gets to, say, less than 10,000.
- 3.26. *Q6: JB asked what provisions are being introduced to improve the parking, transport and access links to allow the increased number of supporters travelling to Anfield on a match day?*
- 3.27. AP responded by stating that as part of the planning application that the Club will be submitting must include a transport strategy, the premise of which is that there will be no increase in private vehicles. This is based on the fact that the Club has done extensive research into people's habits on match day both now and in the future. The findings suggest that people's use of private vehicles on a match day is actually reducing and the number of parking spaces in the planning application will be no more than are currently available now.

- 3.28. AP continued by saying that the Club has had numerous discussions with the bus companies and other public transport operators and that they are committed to increasing the number and frequency of buses in use. The Club will be looking at how it can better communicate the transport options available to fans on a match day.
- 3.29. AP said that one of the advantages of the proposed re-development is the improvement it offers to the walkways, both around the stadium and through Stanley Park. The net result will mean that it is will be much easier to get into the stadium. Signage will be improved to inform people how best to get to Anfield and the website will be enhanced to do likewise.
- 3.30. JB said that it was raised at the Fan Forum the previous evening that a fan that uses the train cannot get his electric wheelchair on or off the accompanying soccer bus. A council member has often stated that it is easy to walk from Sandhills and Kirkdale, which it isn't. If the soccer buses are not fit for purpose, it is creating an extra obstacle for fans.
- 3.31. CM said that this should not be the case and the Club has worked closely with Merseytravel over the years to ensure that such issues don't arise. The Club was advised that all soccer buses were accessible. To discover that this is not the case is disturbing and one that the Club will address with Merseytravel.
- 3.32. *Q7: RP asked what parking facilities are available for non-disabled and will the re-development offer increased parking facilities for blue badge holders and can the Club ensure that such areas are patrolled to prevent abuse.*
- 3.33. AP responded by saying that overall the total parking provision will be 2,100 spaces, all under the Club's remit and located in Stanley Park, Anfield Road and a few other sites. The total number of spaces available only represents an increase of about 30 from what is available now. The premise of the transport strategy is not to increase the number of private vehicles in use on match days.
- 3.34. JD asked if the redevelopment will result in an increased capacity for blue badge holders and will such spaces allocated for badge holders be patrolled effectively to prevent abuse.
- 3.35. AP confirmed that there would be an increase in the number of spaces for blue badge holders. Some of the space will be available in Anfield Road and Stanley Park. The Club is working out the exact numbers but will comply with the percentage that is required as a proportion of total spaces available. There will also be an increase in drop-off spaces, which have proven problematic in the past. The Club will investigate its process for patrolling spaces reserved for blue badge holders and will take any necessary steps to ensure abuse is eradicated.
- 3.36. IA said that one of the advantages of the new design is circulation around the stadium making it easier for everyone, including disabled fans, to access different areas around the stadium.
- 3.37. CM said that the Club has put a few proposals in place and Stewards will be in place armed with a list of who's reserved a blue badge-parking bay. The Club doesn't accept blue badges as proof of disability to enter car parks. Users must notify the Club in advance so that they can be entered onto the list of authorised users.

- 3.38. *Q8: MS asked about the feasibility of Phase Two of the redevelopment of Anfield and what it was dependent on.*
- 3.39. IA responded by saying that the Phase Two of the redevelopment is dependent on settling on an economic model so the redevelopment is viable financially. If, for example, the new Anfield Road Stand was to cost £50m to build, the Club has to think about the uplift in general admission seating and the return it is likely to get set against the capital investment. Whilst there is a design solution, the Club needs to find an economic solution. Although this is not clear now, it will become clear in the near term so Phase Two can go ahead in accordance with the planning application.
- 3.40. *Q9: AB asked if the Club makes it easier for away fans to support their team by positioning them behind the goal.*
- 3.41. AP responded by saying that one of the reasons a great atmosphere is achieved at Anfield is that away fans are situated behind one of the goals. At some grounds the atmosphere can be diluted if the away fans are too far away from the action on the pitch. As part of the Phase Two development, the Club will be looking to move the away fans to the other side of the Anfield Road Stand to make access easier and more secure.
- 3.42. JD asked that if the away fans will be getting moved to the other side of the Anfield Road Stand, what would happen to the 31 wheelchair bays that are located in that area?
- 3.43. AP responded by saying that the Club had not reached that level of detail as yet, but would look to provide full wheelchair provision [as part of Phase Two]. The Club would also look to resolve the current situation where the away fans are positioned in front of the home support. During Phase Two, the Club would also resolve the problem of access on account of the height of the roadside kerbs etc.
- 3.44. *Q10: DM asked what plans does the Club have to make the redevelopment iconic and incorporating, amongst other things, a large Liver bird, This is Anfield motif, the five stars symbol, and the European Badge of Merit, into the design? Also, will fans be able to purchase individual bricks similar to other sponsored public buildings?*
- 3.45. AP responded by saying that one of the advantages of remaining at Anfield is that the stadium is already iconic. Also the stadium is not an arena, but features four very different stands with very different meanings attached to them. The new Main Stand is going to be significant when set against the other stands, and its design will ensure that the noise is directed towards the pitch which will help retain the atmosphere within the stadium.
- 3.46. AP continued by saying that with regard to the specific detail such as the options mentioned, the Club has not had those discussions yet, but when the time is right it will engage with the contractor to ensure such ideas are considered.
- 3.47. AP said that the Club is considering offering a facility for fans to purchase individual bricks for use in the construction of the new Main Stand and that it will ensure that whatever option is chosen is appropriate and in keeping with the Anfield legacy.
- 3.48. In response to a question about the Hillsborough Memorial, AP said that the

Club had been contact with the families about the new location of the memorial, which will be a key feature of the new Main Stand. The Club has also engaged with the families about a temporary location during the construction phase.

- 3.49. In response to a question about naming rights, BHo said that there is an opportunity to consider working with the right partners on a possible naming convention for the new Main Stand, and its associated hospitality lounges.
- 3.50. *Q11: JD said that if the stadium capacity increases following the completion of Phase One to 54,000, according to Accessible Stadia Guidelines there should be a minimum of 238 wheelchair spaces but it appears that only 70 new spaces will be available taking the total to 181 [assuming the additional 11 spaces are made available in the Kop this summer]. Will the club sign up to an agreement stating that whatever the final capacity is achieved, at least the minimum number of wheelchair spaces will be provided.*
- 3.51. CM confirmed that on completion of Phase Two the Club would commit to 248 spaces being made available. If Phase Two does not happen, then the Club will exhaust all avenues to ensure that the Club is compliant with the guidelines.
- 3.52. AP continued by saying that the Club is committed to improve the number of wheelchair spaces. During the summer months the Club is committed to add a further 11 bays taking the total to 111. The planning application across the two phases will get the Club to the required number in accordance with the Accessible Stadia Guidelines. Phase One will significantly increase the number available, but the Club is still to determine what is actually achievable. The new Main Stand will meet the requirement for a new build, but the Club recognises that it will still be short when the whole stadium is taken into account. However, on completion of Phase Two, the Club remains committed to be fully compliant within the guidelines.
- 3.53. There was a group discussion on why the Club can't commit to meeting the requirements of the guidelines from completion of Phase One and the opening of the new Main Stand. The Committee's view was that the Club should commit to providing 238 wheelchair bays as part of the redevelopment of the Main Stand, and, if necessary, make further provision, beyond the guidelines, through the use of flexible seating.
- 3.54. IA suggested that the Club speaks to the architects to determine what can be done to help make the Club compliant by providing the required 238 wheelchair bays once the new Main Stand is completed.
- 3.55. *Q12: AN asked that, following the redevelopment of the Main Stand, will the Club be applying to Uefa to host the finals of both the Europa League and Champions League and will the stadium have the capacity to host alternative events, such as boxing tournaments and music concerts?*
- 3.56. IA said that until the Club is in a position to move the Anfield Road Stand, the pitch would not be big enough to host Uefa finals, as it does not currently meet the required dimensions. With regard to concerts and other sporting fixtures, this is very much down to the City Council. However, given the good relationship that the Club now has with the Council following its involvement in the regeneration of the Anfield area and that greater distance will have been created between the stadium and the remaining residential housing, this should be feasible providing the licensing issues can be overcome.



- 3.57. In response to a question from JB about relocating the Club's offices to the stadium, IA said that this is not something the Club is considering, but that it will be considering relocating to the area. It's simply not practical, or economic to have corporate offices located within a sporting stadium.
- 3.58. *Q13: LW asked as to what thoughts have been given to redeveloping The Kop and the Centenary Stand beyond what is planned with Phase One and Two?*
- 3.59. AP responded by saying that there would be little opportunity to redevelop The Kop or the Centenary Stand beyond their existing size or structure, but there might be opportunities to provide additional seating in some parts of those stands, but the opportunities will be limited. That said, the Club is committed to update and refresh the existing facilities across all its stands on an ongoing and opportunity basis.
- 3.60. *Q14: JD asked if the Club is going to give assurances to hospitality guests about the availability of tickets for finals.*
- 3.61. PD responded by saying that the Club's current policy is to guarantee a cup final ticket to any seasonal member of a hospitality lounge. However, the Club has not made any further commitments beyond this and the policy will be reviewed in advance of the opening of the new Main Stand.
- 3.62. BH said that he accepts that some of the issues raised today are going to take some time to implement, not least because of the early stage of the redevelopment. However, it is important that supporters feel that they have the opportunity to have an input at an early stage. It is hoped that some of the issues raised today will result in a timely response, and ideally before the next meeting. For example, the provision of the wheelchair bays is an emotive issue, and one that needs addressing as a matter of some urgency.

#### **4. Any other business:**

- 4.1. There were no urgent matters arising, save for RP asking that if the Football League does implement the B Team league to sit between the current League 2 and Conference divisions, the fans would like to have some input in how it is structured and developed.
- 4.2. The date of the meetings for the coming season will be fixed once the fixture list is issued by the Premier League in June and subsequently finalised shortly afterwards.

**5. Key actions for this meeting:**

- 5.1. Committee to agree with the Club the entire list of outstanding issues prior to a discussion at the next meeting [2.7].
- 5.2. Club to provide the Committee with a percentage breakdown of hospitality, season tickets and general admission seats across the stadium, both before and after the redevelopment of the Main Stand. [3.5]
- 5.3. Club to consider the introduction of an area specifically for children and young adults and discuss any options with the Committee. [3.13]
- 5.4. Club to introduce a season ticket amnesty to determine which fan actually sits in which seat. [3.18]
- 5.5. Club to determine if the discarded seats in the current Main Stand can be purchased or gifted to individual fans or to sporting clubs. [3.23]
- 5.6. Club to consider opening the season ticket waiting list when the current list reduces to less than, say, 10,000. [3.25]
- 5.7. Club to discuss accessibility issues on soccer buses with Merseytravel. [3.31]
- 5.8. The Club to investigate its process for patrolling spaces reserved for blue badge holders and to take any necessary steps to ensure abuse is eradicated. [3.35]
- 5.9. Club to considering providing a facility for fans to purchase individual bricks as part of the construction of the new Main Stand. [4.45]
- 5.10. Club to discuss with architects the possibility of providing a total of 238 wheelchair bays once the new Main Stand is completed. [3.52]