

**CHELSEA FOOTBALL CLUB
SUPPORTERS' CONSULTATIVE FORUM 2016-17
2nd MEETING MINUTES**

Meeting held in the Vialli Suite, Chelsea FC at 6.15pm on Wednesday 7th December 2016.

Attendees	Club title/ group represented
Alexander, Chris	Club Finance and Operations Director
Ashmore, Michael	CFCUK
Atkins, Steve	Club Head of Communications and Public Affairs
Beerman, Clayton	Chelsea Football Fancast
Brockway, Jim	Guest – Hammersmith and Fulham Police
Buck, Bruce	Club Chairman
Coady, Debbie	Chelsea Supporters Trust
Daine, Nav	Club Head of Concessions
Gould, Robert	Home season ticket ("ST") holder
Herring, Alan	Over 65's
Hider, Kevin	Disabled
Kontzoglu, Iraklis	Overseas branch
Last, Nick	UK branch
Levy, Eddie	Hospitality
Lopez, Mark	Family
Merifield, Stephen	LGBT
Newby, David	Club Marketing Manager
Overstall, Keith	Club Head of Security
Regan, Andy	Forum Chairman
Scammell, Jon	Club Marketing Manager (Matchday and Kids)
Smith, Graham	Club Head of Ticketing/ Head of Supporters' Liaison
Strange, Ruth	Member
Wall, Gerard	Away ST holder
Walters, Jez	CFCNet
Wittich, Margaret	Chelsea Supporters Club
Wright, PC Paul	Central Football Unit

Apologies for absence

Barrett, Michael	16-21's
Fiorellino, Trizia	Chelsea Supporters Group
Kimberley, Steve	UK branch

(Action points are underlined.)

POLICING

The Forum Chairman welcomed our guests – Jim Brockway and Paul Wright.

Jim has been involved with the Club's policing for five years and has been the main point of contact for 1 ½ to 2 years. Paul is based in the Central Unit in Lambeth and has been in the football office since 2007, becoming the intelligence officer for the Club since 2010. Paul travels with the Club and liaises with away match police both domestically and abroad.

The Forum Chairman thanked representatives for submitting the following topics for discussion.

Touting

Representatives commented this seems to be a perennial problem outside the ground and are aware of online attempted sales as well. The police responded they are aware this is a topic of great annoyance for many fans. It is very difficult to deal with given the level of evidence needed to prosecute possible offenders but expect their officers to take action against it outside the ground. Police numbers at a match are based on the risk of disorder and police numbers have reduced over recent years. Touting is not a priority on a match day though. Specific police are not allocated for touting and 11 arrests were made for the first half of last season. When the matter is taken to court, the police have to prove the tout's actions will contribute to disorder in order to obtain a banning order. Financial punishments are not that great and the victims are often based abroad so it's hard to build a case against a tout.

One representative commented that touts were fighting each other at one match and over all touting is hugely embarrassing for the Club and its fans. One supporter was told by an inspector that he would place police near the touts in the hope of disbursing them. Over all the authorities are not dealing with the issue. The police responded it investigated an exclusion zone for a time but that just moved touts on to a different area.

Representatives asked why there can't be a change in the law but the police repeated it's not a match day priority and when tackled head on, building a sufficient case is difficult. A subsidiary of the police service deals with online fraud and the police encourage the reporting of potential scams. Here too there is significant underreporting by victims.

It was raised by a representative that touts block the path for those leaving the tube station. The police welcomed such reporting as a potential way to tackle touts. The Club is happy to forward reports from fans.

West Ham away

The police had previously commented they couldn't discuss this match in detail as there's an ongoing investigation but it was raised by a representative that gates were locked at the end

preventing fans from exiting and also the lack of segregation in the concourse was dangerous. The Club had three meetings with West Ham before the match and a debriefing after, as well as holding a subsequent meeting with supporters' groups. West Ham appear to be aware of problems and are improving the situation every match day. Comments should be passed to West Ham and they have responded quickly to comments made to date.

Family enclosure

It was raised that families have to exit by away fans who can be aggressive. Some family stand members wait for away fans to disburse first due to scuffles. Also coins were thrown by Spurs fans but stewards appeared not to deal with the matter satisfactorily. The incident was reported subsequently to the match liaison officer. The police responded that away fans sometimes move seats but they are investigating the Spurs incident and will try to identify any culprits from CCTV.

The police added that they categorise matches, with category B matches being higher profile in which more police segregate home and away fans outside the East Stand/ Shed End corner. If there are problems the police welcome reports to themselves or stewards.

The Club added that it expects stewards to be responsive to reports and it is experimenting with more body worn cameras to assist stewards prevent friction across the segregation lines.

Away end segregation

In response to a question, the Club responded that it assesses appropriate segregation on a match by match basis and has increased segregation for some matches. It's sometimes difficult to take out seats. Any changes next season to segregation would affect the home section.

CCTV

In response to a question the police commented there is some CCTV along Fulham Road. For the new stadium security would be a significant factor and the Club and Council could start afresh with this issue. The police confirmed they have used cameras to identify touting.

Temporary stadium

The Club commented that it can't discuss policing at a temporary ground. Any decision on a temporary ground would be subject to planning permission being received and the Club making the decision to proceed with a new stadium.

Match day timing

The police stated that just because sizable police numbers are not in place until two hours before kick-off, the area is still patrolled before then. It was raised by a representative that touts are often there long before two hours pre kick off.

Away fans

The police commented that it's seldom the case away fans are kept in post-match. Powers technically exist but such a policy is unlikely to be used in modern domestic football. This tactic is rare in this country and using force to prevent persons leaving can create greater risk of injury to supporters and staff.

The Forum Chairman thanked the guests for attending.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING/ MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no changes to the minutes. The following are action points from the last meeting:

Checking ID

The Club confirmed this only happens when it's suspected an adult is trying to enter on a child ticket.

Collection of pre-match purchases from the Megastore post-match

The Club commented this happens on a case by case basis at the manager's discretion.

Beer tokens/ pre-paid food and drink

Issues will be addressed during the presentation later.

Advertising boards covering the Osgood plaque in the Shed End

The Club commented that the Osgood family has made no objection to the positioning of the plaque.

INVESTIGATION INTO HISTORICAL SEXUAL ABUSE CLAIMS

The Club stated it had issued a lengthy statement on Saturday expressing its horror at possible events and in particular involving Gary Johnson. The Club takes this issue very seriously and no further comment can be made as an investigation is underway. Terms of reference are being established and a precise timescale can't be announced. The Club has met with the police and is liaising with the FA and Premier League.

TICKETING

Away ticket split

One representative raised on behalf of a fan the issue that membership is far less of a financial commitment than an ST so members should not be entitled to 40% of the away ticket allocation after away ST holders, hospitality etc tickets are accounted for. The Club responded that the decision was made by the Forum originally and the Club is happy to take account of current views of representatives. Another representative said it's usually easier for a supporters club to obtain extra ST tickets than extra members' tickets.

Representatives agreed that the current balance is fair.

Loyalty points based on historical support

It was raised that historical support could be taken into account. The Club responded that Liverpool has a closed shop as those who went to all matches last season have guaranteed tickets this season. This is not particularly desired here as new supporters wouldn't get to away matches. There are other, non-ticket, ways in which long term loyalty could be taken into account. If a new stadium is built we would have a large number of ST holders who could never obtain away tickets, with the system used by Liverpool.

The Club can offer about 8,000 tickets to 80,000 members per home match. Seats together sell out in 20 minutes to members for our home games. We want to grow the ST numbers in a new stadium. The Club already has to displace Shed ST holders if that end goes to away fans. 24,500 is enough ST holders at present due to domestic cup and UEFA competition match displacement. With an expanded stadium we expect the ratios to be similar for seat configuration.

One representative suggested that members' long term loyalty could be rewarded but others commented that it's unfair to have loyalty taken into account for members and not for ST holders. The Club repeated that this would lead to a closed shop in that category. The balance of having bigger matches sold on loyalty points is fair. Overseas supporters' clubs want access to the bigger match tickets with fewer points but our current system is fair over all. A supporters' club representative suggested their members are happy with the current system in this regard.

Loyalty points

It was raised that the current number awarded encourages fans to purchase away tickets for the points only and not attend. The Club responded that it has already stated it will review

away cup games next season as at present a supporter receives 5 points. AA domestic league matches are 1 point each, other domestic league matches are 3 points with European games getting 5 points. Home cup sales are helped by 5 points on offer so the only question is away domestic cup matches.

Representatives commented there have been empty spaces for domestic away cup matches with Leicester a particular problem. The Club said West Ham away tickets were sold to fans who have bought for other away matches. It was suggested by a representative that away matches don't need loyalty points as it just encourages non-attendance whilst another suggested one point per game.

In response to a question the Club stated it's possible to break down loyalty per tournament. A representative suggested the same loyalty points be awarded for domestic away cup matches as the equivalent away league match.

In response to a question the Club said it is possible in theory to have European away match style ticket collection but then tickets can't be transferred. All tickets are sent out at present and every away match allocation is a sell-out. The problem of empty spaces at Swansea was probably not due to Club sales.

Sunderland away is sold out. Those buying just as juniors were checked and the sale revoked. Some representatives disliked the idea of a ticket collection point for domestic games as it would be impractical, for instance West Ham away on a weekday. ST holders need the incentive of loyalty points to help sales. The £30 price for away tickets is welcome on one hand but has caused problems on the other.

Disabled fans tickets

In response to a question the Club commented that all fans are treated equally and the total away allocation includes disabled and non-disabled supporters. The disabled away ST was abolished as there are only, for example, three wheelchair positions at Loftus Road for away fans so there would be no chance of new fans getting tickets. There is a lot of variation in disabled spaces between grounds.

Ticket exchange

The Club said that away ST holders have signed up for all matches so there is no reason for them to have access to the ticket exchange for those matches.

Group stage ST

In response to a question the Club commented that this was abolished as UEFA have the right to a large number of tickets for their matches so many ST holders may have to be moved. A group stage ST just complicates the situation. In a large stadium we could introduce this.

Purchase limit

The Club was asked why there is a limit of four away ST tickets and responded this was raised to ten tickets for West Ham for away ST holders as that group had committed to matches anyway. This was on a trial basis. For home cup matches ST fans just buy their own tickets.

Transferring away European STs

The Club confirmed there is no transfer of these as membership for the away ST didn't sell out and a transfer would act as a disincentive for a fan to buy their own ticket. Also loyalty points would be taken by a non-attende

Ticket system

The Club was asked if there are plans to upgrade the system and if so whether fans can pick their own seat. The Club said there is an upgrade planned for 2018 and the option is there at present to pick your own seat but it's turned off as tickets are selling so fast. It takes three minutes to buy a ticket and a lot longer to choose a specific seat. There may be these options presented in the future with the risk of missing out if you try and choose a specific seat.

Membership suspensions

The Club commented that many memberships are suspended due to some form of touting and new methods of dealing with this are being considered. Increasingly, naïve supporters are being scammed. Most touts outside the ground are providing real tickets but unauthorised online sales often result in no ticket being provided. Tickets going on general sale to our away end were ending up with touts as happened with Everton here. The FAPL has been approached about dealing with this issue generally. If a club commits to 3,000 tickets here, they have to pay for them regardless if they are sold or not. We don't go on general sale for our away matches at all. Some clubs are taking less than the whole allocation here but the vast majority are taking all available tickets.

Onsale dates

The Club was asked to consider selling dates carefully, as Spurs and Hull were set for the same date. Bournemouth went on sale six to seven days after they were announced. It's

understandable that away match ticket dates may change but we know when home match tickets are available. The Club responded that the Bournemouth announcement was made in good time but away matches and cup games can change the dates originally anticipated for home league sales.

Ticket exchange listings

The Club is aware that not all friends and family can be viewed and is addressing this.

Cup match allocations

The Club confirmed there are 10% of tickets allocated for away fans for the League Cup and 15% for the FA Cup. This is 4,000 and 6,000 seats respectively for visiting fans with 1,500 or 3,000 places offered for league matches and 5% for European matches.

Junior tickets

The Club was asked to allocate junior tickets at the front of away sections due to fans standing. The Club said this can be considered but all dates of birth would have to be checked.

The Club will consider all ticketing comments for next season's policy.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Building Bridges

The Club was asked to provide badges for fans to show their support prior to the relevant match. It responded that stickers are provided free and badges will be available for purchase, ideally ahead of the relevant match. The Club added that it is looking for supporters to get more involved in the Foundation's work.

Proxies

In response to a question, the Forum Chairman confirmed the policy for these meetings that a proxy can attend in place of a supporters' club or supporters' group representative as long as the proxy is also an official of that organisation.

Temporary stadium

The Club commented that it has all available information from possible stadia, but any decision would be subject to planning permission being received and the Club making the decision to

proceed with a new stadium. The Olympic Stadium was considered one of the options originally.

Nike kit

The Club was asked if our traditional kits could be kept in mind when the new kit is designed. It responded it is well aware of supporter feelings on the issue.

Match day car parks

The Club said there will be limited parking in a new stadium and probably in the surrounding area if the ground is redeveloped. There are no plans to arrange more parking spaces.

Spurs away

The Club confirmed the allocation was reduced at White Hart Lane due to segregation.

Safe standing

In response to a question the Club stated that at the FAPL meeting it was willing to consider the reintroduction of standing but has concerns that have been expressed at these meetings previously. The Club wants to have a presence at FAPL discussions and there is no timescale set to the best of the Club's knowledge. The new stadium will be adaptable. The Club added that it has seen the standing process at Celtic.

FOOD AND DRINK PRESENTATION

The Club presented details of the beer token system and Express App. The aim of the facilities is to address queueing problems and provide fans with more choice. We are the only FAPL club to offer such options.

About 2,000 beer tokens are sold per game and have been offered for five years. They are the fastest means of selling beer around the stadium. Tokens can be redeemed at the Singha bars and they are sold at bar points and by promotional staff. The process of selection, payment and delivery should cut the normal transaction time of 45 seconds to less than half that. Tokens are sold on a match by match basis to avoid counterfeiting and can be used for any item at the bar.

The CFC Express app provides a pre-order option from 48 to 12 hours before kick-off. Items can be updated frequently so for instance festive treats can be offered during December. The Club wants to focus fans' attention on items available in specific areas of the ground. Purchases can be collected at 20 locations in the ground and there are over 2,000 registered users.

The Club was asked if a Club delivery service for catering was possible and responded it has looked into this.

The Club commented that the Matthew Harding Upper provides structural difficulties in having Express collection points but the App tells fans where their nearest serving point is. Loyalty benefits of some kind will be tested on the App. In the front of the West Stand and in the East Lower north side there is a delivery service for disabled supporters who can choose if they want their delivery pre-match or at half time. Another representative commented that no correct order has been provided yet. The Club will investigate further. This is a new journey for the Club and positive feedback is gradually coming through. Beer can't be served in the family section because the kiosks face the pitch. There is a range of products available at kiosks where alcohol can be served.

The Club hosted a food tasting thereafter and representatives were asked to provide feedback.

The meeting finished at 8.05pm.