**SP Meeting 19th September 2017 at STFC**

Present:

Chris Wynne; Roger Groves; Mike Davis; Joshua Wynne; Rob Lewis; Rachael Dilloway; Barry Davies; Harry Challoner; Jill Lucas; David Allsopp; Brian Caldwell; Helen Hall; Joyce Pulford; John Bailey; Richard Vernon.

Apologies:

Ian Jones; Simon Moore; Selwyn Plant; Steve Price; Malcolm Lane; Marion Lane; Colin Storey; Paul Coyne; Ian Payne.

Chris Wynne opened by making an announcement that Martin James had decided to step down from the SP. It was agreed to place on record thanks for the great work Martin did in initially setting up the concept of a Supporters Parliament and his work on it thereafter. Martin’s input will be greatly missed, however he will always be welcome back in whatever capacity in the future.

A general invite was put to the floor for anyone who would be willing to assume the role of taking the minutes at meetings. It would be greatly welcomed and they should contact Roger or Chris to offer their services.

1. **Safe Standing Update**

Mike Davis gave a general update on progress. The deadline date has been removed and the required figure reduced from £75,000.00 to £62,500.00 due to seats no longer being required for the back row. This would not reduce the capacity of the Safe Standing area. Thanks were given to all who had donated and helped the project in any way. Additional thanks were also conveyed to the OSC and Away Travel Club who had both made recent hefty donations.

It was suggested the club look into the use of the TV screens in the concourses and also on the scoreboard to enhance the exposure for Safe Standing.

1. **Away End Capacity**

A question was asked as to why the capacity on the away end had been reduced to 1500?

Brian stated it had always been 1500 since he had come to the club. This was as agreed with Alan Roberts (previous Safety Officer) not to sell the first 3 rows.

Brian has spoken with the new Safety Officer and it has now agreed to sell row B which will increase capacity to 1633. Row A is for disabled supporters etc.

1. **Ticketing Procedures for Games where Large Away Followings are expected**

The question was raised of can the club look at making it easier for home fans to purchase tickets where large away support is anticipated.

Currently a deadline is set a few days before a game whereby fans must be registered to be able to purchase for the home end with previous purchasing history. This is done to prevent away fans from buying in the home end.

Brian has been giving thought to this as he wants to encourage fans along and does not want to place unnecessary hurdles in the way. He has agreed with the Ticket Office that home fans can still register in person at the club after this deadline so long as they provide proof of local address.

Unfortunately On-Line registrations must be suspended, as addresses cannot be verified.

1. **Supporters buses**

An issue was raised about a problem that occurred at the Wigan game where the bus from the town centre was full so did not pick up from Shirehall. Normally when this happens the bus drops off at the ground and then goes back to Shirehall. However, on this occasion it did not happen thus leaving supporters stranded there.

Harry Challoner, who catches the bus at Shirehall, has agreed to act as a point of contact and given his mobile number to the club and taken a club contact number in return so he can call and alert someone if there are any future issues.

Brian has previously stated that for busier games he will look to put on two buses from the town centre and he reaffirmed that commitment.

1. **Lidl update**

BC informed the meeting that the construction company Lidl appointed had gone bust. Lidl are currently looking for a new contractor and discussions are ongoing. The original planned opening date was Feb 2018, but this will now be put back at least two months. BC will continue to update the SP on developments.

1. **Fanzone for December – Winterfest?**

A question was raised as to whether a winter festival themed fanzone could be considered by the club for the two Saturday games that month. Included in the idea put forward was to have Gluhwein, Bratwurst and even an Ompah Band! This was seen as having great potential. Mike Davis and Helen Hall actually have connections with a local Ompah Band and it was decided to look further into this. Brian will talk to Jamie Edwards

1. **Squad Photo**

It was asked if there will be a squad photo done and if so when?

Brian said it will and that a date needed to be agreed with Paul Hurst. A Monday was the preferred date for PH but given the number of recent Tuesday games coupled with the fact the manager had given the players Monday off following good results when there was no Tuesday game meant it had not yet happened. Hopefully it will be done soon.

1. **iFollow Live Commentary**

An overseas iFollow contributor had asked why there was no commentary on the games?

Brian explained that all clubs had been led to believe that they could use the BBC commentary, but on the eve of the season clubs were told this was not so due to the contractual agreement between the EFL and BBC and that clubs would need to provide their own commentary. This had left clubs no time to look at alternatives.

As it stands, Ian Whitfield is looking for a suitable person. Freelance Commentators is one option, but they are very expensive. Another alternative being looked at is to use a media student from a university.

They want one person who is able to do commentary on all games, home and away. Brian agreed to speak to Ian and ask if Ant Thomas knew of anyone who could take this on.

1. **Bins in South Stand Concourse**

It was raised that bins were needed around the buffet area in the South Stand.

It was thought from those present that there were bins round the concourses but Brian said he would look further at this. Any ideas to reduce potential littering must be seen as a positive and Brian was pleased to see fans take a keen interest in keeping the stadium clean and tidy.

There is a certain safety aspect with bins but Brian saw no reason why clear plastic bags on hoops could not be used.

1. **Memorial Garden**

Diane Davis (Mike’s mum) has taken up responsibility for general upkeep of the garden. She has reported a broken fence slat and Brian said he would have it looked at by the clubs maintenance man and fixed.

It is noted that several roses have died. Simon Moore is aware and these will be replaced. Simon was not present to update, but it was thought this would probably be in the springtime to allow them every chance to bed and survive.

Special thanks were given to Diane for her time and effort in keeping up the appearance of the memorial garden.

**A.O.B.**

1. **Fan Card**

Brian reported that over 500 had been sold at the time of the meeting. The take up was very pleasing.

There was a large take up on the eve of the Wigan game. This had presented some problems as the cards need to be printed with their own unique barcodes. It meant a delay with cards being issued. Also there had been some reports of cards not scanning at the turnstiles.

There were some online issues too, which the club were working with Ticketmaster to iron out.

Overall it has been viewed as a great success and it is hoped the problems encountered were just teething problems due to the intensity of numbers. Brian did ask any fans who may purchase one in the future to make allowance for the time factor in registering and printing the card

1. **Christmas Shop/Ticket Office in Town**

It was asked if the club was considering having any unit/shop in town.

Brian said they had actually been offered a unit from September onwards. Taking into account high town centre rentals along with the costs of staffing and it was felt it was not a viable venture and would not generate the income to cover these outgoings. A lot of people now purchase their tickets online and there is also the online club shop people are using too.

1. **West Stand Concourse Decoration**

This is Jamie Edwards project. He has secured funding to decorate the West Stand similar to what has been done in the South Stand. Through Brian, he wanted to ask those at the meeting what sort of things they would we like to see. Jamie needed ideas as soon as possible.

Next meeting: Tuesday 10th October at STFC