

## **Walsall Football Club Supporters Working Party Meeting**

**Held in 1888 Lounge at the Banks's Stadium, Monday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 15:00**

- Present:** Daniel Mole (DM) and Stefan Gamble (SG) – Walsall Football Club  
Steve Davies (SD) and Trevor Reece (TR) – Walsall Football Supporters Trust  
Ian Buckingham (IB), Lesley Buckingham (LB) and Dave Beckett (DB) –  
Walsall Football Club Disabled Supporters Association
- Apologies:** Walsall Football Supporters Club (The Saddlers Club)
- Minutes:** Nick Adshead (NA)
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### **1. Points still to action from last meeting**

SG confirmed that the Club are still awaiting an official response regarding the request made to the landlord Suffolk Life.

DM confirmed that the work to improve the Legends Bar has now started.

DM confirmed that there is now a Programme Stall in the Stadium Suite open to all supporters' pre-match.

DM referred to the Memorial Service which took place on 15<sup>th</sup> September and was well received by everyone, thanking SG and SD for their support and efforts in making the event a success. SD confirmed that the event was well received by all of the families that attended.

SD raised the trophy for Fan of the Year Jack Huskisson. DM advised they have been ordered and asked NA to chase for a delivery date. The trophies have now been collected today and plans will be made to present the trophy to Jack.

### **2. Update from Walsall Football Supporters Club (The Saddlers Club)**

No representative of Walsall Football Supporters Club was in attendance.

### **3. Update from Walsall Supporters Trust**

SD expressed the Supporters Trusts concerns of the Live Streaming of matches. SG advised that this is an EFL trial until the end of October then the Clubs will be asked to vote on whether or not to carry on with Live Streaming. Ultimately, it is the Clubs who will decide, not the EFL.

SD referred to the incident with the steward at the Doncaster game which he had raised to WFC Safety Officer Jim O'Grady and advised that FSF Representative Martin O'Hara had also been in touch re the incident. DM confirmed that the steward had been spoken to by Jim O'Grady and if the FSF want re-assurance they should speak to Jim.

SD enquired about the plans to improve the Bescot Bar which both DM and SG confirmed that plans are ongoing.

SD enquired re the sell on clause for Tom Bradshaw. SG confirmed the Club does have a sell-on should he ultimately complete his Transfer to Millwall on a permanent basis any income

will go into the managers budget. However, it is important to note that anything the Club does receive will be net of any amounts already received from Barnsley to-date.

The question was asked as to why only one turnstile was open in the Lower Tier on Saturday. DM and SG advised that this will be passed Mark Lee for his observations. ML confirmed Just to confirm that on Saturday there were 4 stiles open on the lower tier instead of the usual 5. There were 2 cash and 2 ticket.

SD asked if there were plans to do a Student Match Ticket. SG responded saying that this will be looked at next time we do ticket price reviews in the next close season. However, the Club already offer 'Free Football to all Under-18s' and a half price season 'transitional' season ticket for Under 19s.:-

SD asked whether the Club would look to re-open a Club Shop in town for those supporters struggling to get to the Stadium. SG answered saying the Club would not be looking to re-open a Shop at this stage as it was not commercially viable. In its last few years of operation the Town Centre Shop lost money. This is also set against the backdrop of the increasing prevalence of Online Ticket and Retail Purchases. DM asked for SD to find out the reasons why supporters are struggling to get to the ground and report back so the Club could look into it.

SD advised that a print of Dean Keates goal at Swindon that won the League Two title in 2007 is close to being finished. The first 25 copies will be signed by some of the players involved in that squad. SD also confirmed that profits will go towards the Club's Youth Development Scheme and purchasing more bricks for the memorial wall.

SD confirmed plans Fans v Legends game on 28<sup>th</sup> October are coming along nicely. Wayne Thomas and Dean Keates have confirmed they will be playing for the Legends.

#### 4. **Disabled Supporters Association**

IB confirmed the new Committee members which were appointed at the EGM on 1<sup>st</sup> August; Ian Buckingham (Chair), Tony Richards (Vice Chair), Stefanie Tomes (Secretary), Lesley Buckingham (Treasurer), Dave Beckett (Fundraiser & Procurement). IB also confirmed that Jacqui Keen (Community Liaison) was co-opted on 5<sup>th</sup> September.

Further Committee Meetings took place on 5<sup>th</sup> September and 26<sup>th</sup> September with the next scheduled meeting arranged for 10<sup>th</sup> October.

Constitution & Side Policies were agreed at the Committee meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> September. IB then confirmed the revised aims of the DSA are:

- To represent ALL disabled supporters of Walsall Football Club, regardless of the nature or extent of disability
- To help facilitate a positive match day experience for all disabled supporters, both of Walsall Football Club, and any visiting disabled supporters
- To help maintain and improve disabled supporter facilities at the stadium
- To provide important disability information regarding Walsall Football Club matches, both home and away

IB advised they are hoping to confirm the next Open Meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> November at the Banks's Stadium. Going forward the plans are to hold these on a quarterly basis in August, November and February with the AGM in April.

IB asked if the Club would object to the DSA using the Club Crest/Badge subject to request, which was agreed they could on a one-off basis. All future requests to be out in writing to SG and DM and considered on an individual basis.

IB confirmed that a new Membership Application form has been designed and is GDPR compliant and is available in either paper format or downloadable via the DSA website. Membership currently at approximately 50 despite some recent resignations with new members also joining. The DSA are planning to do a membership drive through their own website and asked for promotional support from the Club which was agreed.

IB advised that the current DSA website is being rebuilt and will be relaunched imminently. A new Facebook group has been created as the original group was linked to the Former Secretary's personal account. The new account is connected to the DSA email account and if Committee Members change in the future, this will not impact the Facebook group. IB confirmed that within one hour of the new one opening the original group had been closed down. The new group currently has 44 members.

IB and DB confirmed details of Fundraising events for the DSA that are coming up; Third party event on 26/10 at the Victoria Club and a Legends Night and Quiz on 7<sup>th</sup> December. Thanks, were offered by DB to DM and SG for the donation of raffle prizes for these evenings. DB then confirmed that the signed Dean Keates shirt has been put for auction and the current bid stands at £200.

The DSA enquired whether Teddie Phillips could be invited as a guest of honour at a future match. DM confirmed the Club are in regular contact with the family and there is an open invite for Teddie to attend any game.

IB advised future plans of the DSA are to raise funds to assist those supporters with limited mobility to provide fleece blankets and inflatable cushions. The visually impaired supporters with audio commentary. DM asked IB to look into costs of the audio commentary with Laura Greenhouse, WFC Disability Supporter Liaison Officer and come back to this meeting.

A questionnaire is being prepared to issue via DSA website and email and it was asked if the Club could promote via Club website and Social Media outlets, Matchday Programme, which was agreed.

IB raised issues re parking charges levied on 15<sup>th</sup> September at the Doncaster Rovers game, where parking stewards insisted all disabled fans pay £4 charge including those with WFC issued parking permits and also enquired if WFC would waive parking charges for all blue badge holders SG & DM to discuss and report back. IB advised that many fans were angry on issue. IB also asked about the provision for more disabled parking spaces in all car parks immediately adjacent to the stadium. SG confirmed the Club would look into the matter.

IB and DB thanked WFC for support relating to ponchos presentation but announcement that should have been made simultaneously was not done. DM apologised for this. IB asked

if the announcement can be made at the match against Shrewsbury on 2<sup>nd</sup> October. DM agreed that this will be done and will ask Daniel Clarke to inform the Stadium Announcer.

#### **5. Club Update**

SG and DM confirmed the Club are happy with the start to the season.

SG confirmed that funds are available for the Manager to strengthen the Squad. Any signing before 1<sup>st</sup> January would need to be a Free Agent.

SG also confirmed that the Club are currently in negotiations with players to extend contracts.

DM advised that a number of the Young Professionals are out on loan.

SG confirmed that Dean Keates has revamped the backroom team, with particular focus on the Scouting Team [and Recruitment](#).

#### **6. Trust and Club Joint Activities**

SD advised he is taking some kit over to Sierra Leone on Wednesday that was donated by the Academy when he visits for the naming ceremony for Abdulrahman Kalokoh's son. The Club also send their Congratulations to Abdulrahman and his family.

#### **7. Other Business**

No other business was discussed.

DATE FOR NEXT MEETING MONDAY 5<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2018 AT 15:00

**The meeting closed at 16.35.**