

Walsall Football Club Supporters Working Party Meeting

Held in Executive Box 5 at the Banks's Stadium, Monday 6th November 2018 15:00

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

DM confirmed that the Club have now received an official response to the request made to the landlord Suffolk Life.

Following a question posed at a previous Supporters Working Party Meeting, the Club through its professional advisors, have approached the Landlord Suffolk Life to discuss the possibility of a rent-free period for two seasons to allow it to divert the funds that would have been used to make rental payments into Dean Keates' "Player Budget".

We have been advised in order to grant such a request the Club would firstly have to establish that such an agreement could be evidenced as normal commercial practice between a landlord and tenant, and secondly, demonstrate our inability to meet rental payments through the submission of annual accounts and forecast profit & loss and cash flow information. Furthermore, the Trustees of the scheme would also be required to obtain the professional opinion of an appropriately qualified chartered surveyor to support the request.

At this moment in time, the Club is unable to satisfy either criteria.

With this in mind, coupled with the fact the Trustees of the scheme are duty bound to comply with the strict regulations surrounding pension scheme investments, the conclusion is that the Landlord would be unable to grant a rent-free period for the desired purpose.

DM confirmed that the work to improve the Legends Bar is ongoing.

DM confirmed that the trophy for Fan of the Year was presented to Jack Huskisson by George Dobson.

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

SG will provide an update at the next meeting.

3. Update from Walsall Supporters Trust

SD raised the question on behalf of supporter Greg Oxley regarding ticket prices and ticketing structure. DM asked SD to obtain further information to enable further discussions to take place regarding this item.

SD enquired whether the Junior Saddlers Away Travel Section would be re-instated. DM confirmed this would need to be discussed with the Community Programme and asked SD to obtain more information to discuss with the community team – community@walsallfc.co.uk.

SD asked whether the transfer money for Amadou Bakayoko has been split 50/50. DM stated that the usual 50/50 split is in place but, as discussed at the summer Fan's focus, this will be looked at on a transfer by transfer basis. The Bakayoko money will be split 60/40 (60% into transfer budget).

SD confirmed the Toy/Food Bank collection will take place at the Coventry City game on 8th December. SD to advise DM the date the Food Bank delivery will take place. DM will confirm date of the Hospital Visit once advised by the Community Programme.

SD expressed his thanks to John Heighway "Swiftly" for his efforts last weekend including post-match to allow Michael Dobson's children the chance to get a photo with him. DM agreed, as did everyone else, what a good job John is doing.

SD raised the question regarding Baby Changing Facilities in the Men's toilets. DM confirmed there is not enough space but there are changing facilities in the toilets in the Savoy Lounge which can be accessed. DM advised he will ask Dan Clarke to produce more signage to make people more aware of this facility.

SD enquired as to the reasons why not enough turnstiles were open in the Lower Tier on Saturday. DM confirmed this was due to a staff shortage. SD then asked if possible that announcements can be made in the Stadium Suite when this happens again to make fans aware. DM confirmed this can happen and will ask Mark Lee to advise the PA Team as early as possible to allow announcements to be made.

SD asked whether there will be an End of Season Dinner this season. DM confirmed that this event will take place this season.

SD asked regarding the non-production of a programme for the Checktrade Trophy game against Middlesbrough. DM explained that this was not cost effective to produce a programme for this game but a programme for the Port Vale game will be done.

SD advised that the Match Ticket winners for the Charlton Athletic game at the recent Trust Event Fans v Legends game were Gavin Lewis and Anthony Holroyd.

SD asked for clarification on the FA Cup game against Coventry regarding ticketing. DM confirmed it's All Ticket for Away Supporters only and apologised for the initial incorrect story posted onto the website.

SD asked whether a Card Reader will be installed in the Bescot Bar. DM discussed the club's desire to move to a cashless stadium within the next 4 years.

SD also raised the question as why there are no flags on the flagpoles. DM advised that this is an item for the Commercial Team and will pass onto them to look into.

SD advised the next Open Meeting for the Supporters Trust is on 18th November.

4. Disabled Supporters Association

IB advised the DSA currently has 58 registered members and 49 members on the Facebook page.

IB asked whether more disabled parking will be made available. DM advised that Laura Greenhouse, Disabled Supporter Liaison Officer is currently collating information from other Clubs and the Club will be a position to advise further once this is complete and discussed.

IB then asked if there will be alternative car parking for the Coventry and Sunderland fixtures. DM confirmed there will be and will ask LG to send the information to the DSA and to the Club's Media Team for them to put on the Club website. The Car Park team will be briefed accordingly for these matches.

IB advised he made no further progress on the Audio Commentary since the last meeting and will advise when progress is made at future meetings.

IB advised the Social Night at The Victoria raised £1000 with £500 for Teddie Phillips and £500 for the DSA. The next DSA event is on 7th December – Legends Night. All tickets have been sold and more prizes have been donated for the evening.

IB advised the questionnaire being by the DSA will be between 10 and 12 questions and will be finalised at the next Committee Meeting at the end of November. At the next meeting the Committee will also be exploring ways as to how to use the money raised so far for the benefit of the Disabled Supporters. It is hoped the answers to the questionnaire will help these decisions be made.

IB advised the next Open Meeting of the DSA will be held in January.

5. Club Update

DM updated the meeting on the progress of the Legends Bar.

Russell Martin has signed since the last meeting.

Ben Purkiss has also joined the Club on non-contract forms and is assisting the Manager in opposition analysis and provide support for the younger players at the Club.

6. Trust and Club Joint Activities

None.

7. Other Business

No other business was discussed.

DATE FOR NEXT MEETING MONDAY 3rd DECEMBER AT 9.30am - 10:30am subject to confirmation.

The meeting closed at 16.20.