

Supporters Working Party Meeting

Banks's Stadium (Executive Box 5)

3rd April 2018

Present

Stefan Gamble (SG) and Daniel Mole (DM) – Walsall Football Club

Margaret Vardy (MV) and Kevin Paddock (KP) – Walsall Football Supporters Trust

Joanna Sainsbury (JS) and Richard Sainsbury (RS) – Walsall Football Club DSA

Apologies

Walsall Football Supporters Club (The Saddlers Club)

Minutes

Sue Lane (SL)

1. Points still to action from last meeting

Wall of Fame Bricks being ordered in next batch (June/July) for Granville Palin, Willie Penman, Geoff Morris, Albert McPherson and Roger Hynd.

Dan Clarke (WFC Marketing Manager/Supporter Liaison Officer) has now populated the empty advertising boards around the Stadium as requested.

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

No representative of Walsall Football Supporters Club was in attendance.

It is understood that the Chairman and Committee members have resigned but the Football Club has had no official notification of this fact.

SG has received an email from Colin Bromley advising that he has resigned from his position of Secretary for personal reasons. SG commented on the good work that Colin has done over the years for the Supporters Club and asked that his contribution be recognised and the Football Club's appreciation minuted.

3. Update from Walsall Supporters Trust

MV confirmed next meeting of the Supporters Trust will be taking place soon.

KP has been voted onto the Board at last meeting.

Ian Astbury and Dean Neville have resigned from the Board.

Replacement of the Membership Secretary will be discussed at the next meeting.

DM asked for Supporters Trust members numbers to be confirmed. MV advised she would speak to the Board and report back to the meeting.

AGM planned for May or June.

Membership drive planned for the next few months. Membership fee is £2.00.

Asset of Community Value Nomination

Discussion took place regarding the Trust's application to have the Banks's Stadium designated as an Asset of Community Value (ACV).

SG and DM confirmed that while the Football Club has itself always considered the Stadium a Community Asset it should have been discussed with the Football Club as matter of courtesy prior to the application going in.

MV said that the Trust Board had discussed the application and they did not feel that they needed to discuss the matter with the Football Club in advance.

SG made the point that as a ACV a six-month moratorium period may be required prior to any potential sale and this may put off any potential future investor/owner and may even create a barrier to the Club itself in purchasing the Freehold.

That said, SG stated that the Club or Land Owner would be unlikely to object to the Application.

KP asked if the Club had received Trevor Reece's information regarding Pension rules. SG confirmed receipt and advised he had forwarded information the information onto the Chairman.

MV and KP confirmed that Steve Davies had attended the EFL Fans Forum with slides put on social media.

MV advised that Dave (Olly) Beckett had emailed a question for this meeting as to whether the Chairman would consider a rental break for two years to allow the Manager to improve the team. DM and SG noted the question and will report back at the next meeting.

Walsall Advertiser

It was noted that the Walsall Advertiser has gone out of business. Neil Ravenscroft will still do his weekly column which will now be posted on the Supporters Trust Website.

SG & DM expressed their disappointment in the Town losing its local newspaper.

Early Bird Season Tickets

MV enquired how the Early Bird Scheme had gone. SG confirmed that the numbers are slightly down on last season but much higher than anticipated.

End of Season Dinner

DM and SG confirmed discussions re this event are still ongoing. Supporters will be kept informed.

Walsall FC Trust FC

KP confirmed the Trust team played Wolves recently but lost 8-0. Matches against Port Vale, Northampton and Preston North End are all coming up. More players are required for the team.

Flag

KP referred to the Flag that was lowered in the Upper Tier at the Wigan game to welcome new manager Dean Keates. KP asked why this was removed by Stewards.

DM and SG advised they were not aware of this but would discuss with Jim O'Grady (Walsall FC Safety Officer) and feedback to the meeting.

Kiosk

KP enquired as to why the kiosk in the corner was closed due to maintenance. SG advised this was due to flooding and needed to be repaired.

4. Disabled Supporters Association

JS and RS were welcomed to their first meeting.

JS confirmed there are currently 25 members of the DSA, 20 adults and 5 children. The Club has 75 Disabled Season Ticket holders. Peter Hart has been confirmed as Lifetime Ambassador for the DSA. The DSA has its own separate Facebook Group, Twitter Feed, Email Address and Bank Account. A website is almost ready to go live.

The DSA has its own poster advertising board in the St Francis Community Stand. JS mentioned that one of the posters had been water damaged. SG confirmed the Club would be happy to re-print.

DSA representatives have attended the North West DSA Regional Forum at Anfield and will attend a meeting on 19th April with the Midlands DSA's at Aston Villa.

Discussions have also taken place with Wrexham and Portsmouth DSA to share ideas. The DSA also recently supported the Level Playing Fields, week of action.

The DSA AGM is scheduled for 5th September with Kieran Reynolds from Level Playing Field and Peter Hart planning to attend.

The DSA has two social nights planned on 4th April and 27th April. In addition, an open meeting was held on 7th March with Laura Greenhouse (Walsall FC Disability Liaison Officer) with the next meeting planned for 2nd May.

JS then confirmed a list of issues which had been raised with Laura Greenhouse and gave an update to the meeting.

Issues which were raised which have already been sorted were: away day information on parking, coach drop off and isle seats at stadiums given to the DSA so information can be passed onto members.

Issues still to be discussed/resolved:

Supporters standing in front of disabled fans during the last ten minutes of matches. The quality of stewarding and whether there is a possibility of a disability steward in each of the stands. DM to discuss issues to be resolved with Jim O'Grady.

Condition of disabled toilets, doors not locking, water leaking and faulty taps. DM to ask Bryan Taylor (Walsall FC Stadium Maintenance) to look into conditions and cost repairs where necessary. Discussion then took place on changing places and a bed with a hoist. DM to ask Laura Greenhouse to look into this. JS confirmed she will enquire as to whether funding is available for this.

A warm room for disabled supporters in inclement weather was discussed with the match relayed on TV and whether the storage room in the corner of the Tile Choice Stand could be turned into an accessible room for Disabled Supporters. DM advised that there is a room already allocated for this, the Legends Bar.

JS also enquired as to whether a Sensory Room would be possible.

JS also asked whether accessible coaches for away games are available as supporters who might want to go to away games will not go because of no accessible coaches.

The DSA will continue to work with Laura Greenhouse to communicate ideas.

5. Trust and Club Joint Activities

MV advised that the Walsall FC Foundation Under 12's in Sierra Leone had just reached a Cup Semi Final.

DM asked if Steve Davies can pass on an email address on to SG and DM so an email of congratulations can be sent from the Club.

6. Other Business

SG advised the focus of everyone at the Club is now on the next three games which are crucial to the outcome of the Season.

DATE FOR NEXT MEETING TUESDAY 8th MAY 2018 AT 15:00

The meeting closed at 17:20.