

Walsall Football Club Supporters Working Party Meeting

Held in Executive Box 5 at the Banks's Stadium, Tuesday 8th May 2018 15:00

Present: Stefan Gamble (SG) – Walsall Football Club
Trevor Reece (TR) – Walsall Football Supporters Trust
Chris Light (CL) – Walsall Football Club DSA

Apologies: Daniel Mole (DM) – Walsall Football Club
Walsall Football Supporters Club (The Saddlers Club)

Minutes: Nick Adshead (NA)

1. Points still to action from last meeting

Flag

SG updated the meeting that the Flag that was lowered in the Upper Tier at the Wigan game was removed by Stewards because it was covering the advertising. The supporter was offered the chance to place it on the empty seats or the safety rails between the Middle Tier and Upper Tier, which was refused. The flag was eventually fixed to the back wall of the Upper Tier.

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

TR advised the meeting that there are 1,525 registered members of the Walsall Supporters Trust. However, not all are current paying members. The position of Membership Secretary will be replaced at the AGM.

Asset of Community Value Nomination

It was noted that the Trust's application to have the Banks's Stadium designated as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) has been accepted. SG confirmed the Club has been notified and that the Club have always considered it to be a Community Asset.

End of Season Dinner

SG confirmed that due to the fixtures and uncertain outcome of the season the it was not possible to schedule an Awards Dinner this season. The Bradford fixture re-arranged for Tuesday 1st May and the Fleetwood fixture kicking off at 5.30pm on the Saturday didn't help either.

The End of Season Winners were announced during the day on Saturday. Congratulations to the winners; Supporters Player of the Season Joe Edwards, Young Player of the Season Kory Roberts, Community Player of the Season Liam Roberts, Goal of the Season George Dobson, Players Player of the Season Erhun Oztumer and Fan of the Season Jack Huskisson.

SG stated that the Annual Awards Dinner would be back on the Agenda for 2018-2019.

Walsall FC Trust FC

TR confirmed the Trust team are still playing matches but still struggle to get Players to commit to Away fixtures.

Safe Standing

TR asked if the Club would consider safe standing being installed at the Stadium. SG responded saying if there was changes to current legislation and the will was there amongst supporters then it is something the Club would look at in the future.

Matchday Programme

TR enquired whether the Club will continue to produce a matchday programme and the current discussion to change the rules. SG responded saying the Club will continue to have a matchday programme next season.

4. Disabled Supporters Association

CL confirmed there are now 54 members of the DSA and have had membership cards printed.

Nicky Devlin has agreed to be the Player Ambassador for the DSA.

An evening was held with Peter Hart at the end of April attracted 40 people and this was a fantastic success.

An Open Meeting was held with Laura Greenhouse on 2nd May and the next meeting is scheduled for 4th July.

The DSA now have a full-page advert in the Match Day Programme and a slot on the Club News page. It was raised that an article written by the DSA didn't go in the Northampton programme as requested. Action for Dan Briggs (Walsall FC Official Programme Editor) to include in the first programme of next season.

The DSA now has its own dedicated website: www.walsallfcdsa.co.uk

The gate between the Tile Choice Stand and St Francis Stand is now kept shut until the end of the game to stop people walking past wheelchair supporters in the St Francis Stand.

Taps and Locks have now been fixed in the Disabled Toilets.

The Legends Bar in the St Francis Stand does have the match relayed but no heating – DSA have asked if portable heating can be put in the room. WFC to look into this.

Details for away games such as accessible seat numbers and whether supporters coach can drop off near the Stadium's is now displayed on the WFC website and on the DSA websites.

Joanna Sainsbury and CL attended a meeting with Walsall College Supported Learning Sports Students to encourage them to attend games and social events of the DSA. Easy ticket purchase options arranged for them.

Members attended a meeting of the West Midlands DSA groups at Aston Villa FC recently and plan to meet every three months to share good practice and ideas. Next meeting is at West Bromwich Albion FC.

The DSA have arranged for a representative from Astor-Bannerman to visit the Stadium in June to assess the possibility of a Changing Places Toilet and if viable provide 3D plans for funding applications.

CL has organised blankets for supporters to use in the cold weather on match days.

Flyers have been produced to be distributed with Season Tickets. Action Laura Greenhouse to confirm we have the flyers.

CL asked if the Club can provide a steward to co-ordinate the Disabled Parking behind the St Francis Stand instead of the Disability Steward as he is needed inside the Stadium. SG said WFC will look not this and discuss with Jim O'Grady (WFC Safety Officer).

The DSA will continue to work with Laura Greenhouse to communicate ideas; which include training for stewards, signage and marked out disabled bays for parking, a disability steward in each stand, making access to the Legends Bar suitable for wheelchair users, a replacement steward for Dave Gollins when he isn't available.

5. Trust and Club Joint Activities

TR advised that the Walsall FC Foundation Under 12's in Sierra Leone had unfortunately lost their Cup Final in a Replay. TR thanked to Wayne Thomas, Mark Gillespie and Phil Smart for the donated equipment.

6. Other Business

TR raised questions regarding the backing of the manager for next season to which SG responded saying the Board have no desire to have another season like this season and will obviously support Dean Keates with everything he would like to implement.

SG confirmed that there are a number of projects taking place during the Close Season to improve current facilities at the Stadium.

DATE FOR NEXT MEETING MONDAY 4th JUNE 2018 AT 15:00

The meeting closed at 16:05.