



Minutes

Title of Meeting:	MK Dons Supporters' Board – Meeting 03	
Date of Meeting:	Monday 12 December 2022 at 6.30pm – 8.30pm	
Attendees		
Name	Attended	Organisation
Andy Gibb (AG)	A	Group Marketing & Sales Director at Stadium MK
Hannah Alker (HA)	A	Head of Marketing at Stadium MK
Antoni Fruncillo (AF)	A	Head of Communications at Stadium MK
John Samuel (JS)	A	Supporters' Board
Louise Walsh (LW)	A	Supporters' Board
Ollie Charnock (OC)	A	Supporters' Board
John Brockwell (JB)	A	Supporters' Board - Secretary
Tina Kenny (TK)	A	Supporters' Board
Alexander Jovic (AJ)	A	Supporters' Board
David Wright (DW)	A	Supporters' Board
Carol Head (CH)	A	Supporters' Board
Jim Mann (JM)	A	Supporters' Board - Chair
Antony Yates (AY)	A	Supporters' Board
Tom Gidley (TG)	A	Supporters' Board
Pete Winkelman (PW)	A	Chairman at MK Dons FC
Liam Sweeting (LS)	Part Time	Sporting Director at MK Dons FC
Dave Clorley (DC)	A	Artwork & Graphics Designer at Stadium MK
Bobby Winkelman (BW)	A	Director at MK Dons FC
Lee Scriven (LSc)	A	Promotions at MK Dons FC
Apologies:		
Bailey Bedborough (BB) – Supporters' Board		

1	Discussion on the current state of affairs at the club and the SB's direction	
	Pete Winkelman shared his thoughts on the current performance on and off the pitch at the Club. Pete was very open and the main areas of discussion were as follows:	
a	Change of Head Coach Pete said that he considered the change of Head Coach to be a sad event but the position that we are in is not good enough and we all have to take accountability, own it, do more and achieve more. The search for a Head Coach continues but, in the meantime, the support from the senior players was tremendous and helps us navigate difficult times so that will buy us time to run the process	
b	Recruitment of a Head Coach Liam Sweeting (LS) is co-ordinating our search for a new Head Coach. LS is clear on the profile of Head Coach that the club needs, someone to give leadership, raise the standards of the players and teach them how to win.	
c	Player Recruitment Unfortunately, the summer was a difficult period with many players departing either by way of transfer or returning to their home club. This left us in a position where we had too many players to recruit. The way the transfer system works is that the headline transfer sum is not available to spend immediately and is accounted for over a number of years. Therefore, replacing like-for-like is not always possible. Additionally, when you buy players from lower leagues you are paying in full up front. This means that whilst you have money in the Bank for next season and the season after but there isn't the full amount to use now. LS has had 3 of the best windows that PW has seen anyone in his position have. Due to the fact that we have more players than we'd like to have this year, we are spending significantly more money than we were last year. However, it is worth being clear that no players are forced upon a Head Coach, if they don't feel we should sign them we won't – it's as simple as that	
d	Current issues We are working at ways of encouraging attendance – the most effective way is if we are successful people will come, as we saw last year our numbers went up. Our away support was the best in our history, there are more young people coming. We got Lewington's wrong because we tried to be too helpful. We had a space and allowed it to be used without fully checking with the correct people. We've ended up fixing it in the best way we can taking into account the compliance issues. So people are saying "put a wall in", he'd love to put a wall in. He could then put normal chairs in but it would then have a limit of 100 to 120 people and that's why the club aren't putting a wall in. The next issue is heating. The outdoor heating that the club were planning to put in there isn't acceptable to the authorities as the area is slightly enclosed. The club then looked at fan heaters and after purchasing one and trying it they	



	<p>discovered that due to the space and open nature of the area it had no effect. Therefore there's a choice, leave it as it is or put a wall up etc and drastically reduce the capacity. The club's view is it's better left as it is as it's not unusual for a football club to have an outdoor bar area and ours is at least under cover whereas others are exposed to the elements</p> <p>PW – could the SB go out to supporters regarding the wall and ask if they'd prefer a reduced capacity so that a wall could be built, comfortable seating and heating provided?</p> <p>Another example is the ticketing system. It clearly isn't working in the way that we would all want and we are working hard to resolve that for next season</p>	<p>Comms Group (OC, TG, DW, BB)</p>
<p>e</p>	<p>Supporters' Board</p> <p>PW gave guidance on the SB's aims and direction. He indicated that he didn't want the SB to consider itself a supporters' organisation because we have the MKDSA and Dons Action who can campaign, put banners up etc. The SB works for the club. It's the clubs SB, it's a method of getting out and getting the feelings of the whole fan base not just those associated with the supporters' groups, representing the whole ground and trying to be as inclusive as possible. One of the first things he hopes is that the SB can help the club achieve is much better messaging because so much is down to communication. SB members can be there so that supporters can talk to them at matches and bring up issues that may be personal to them.</p>	
<p>f</p>	<p>Club Shop</p> <p>PW – The deal is similar to the previous deal with Nike/Just Sport; they run the shop and we get a royalty fee. We did this for two reasons to trial it as we hadn't worked this way for 15 years and to get the deal with a hot new brand. Castore do the ordering and chose what goes in the shop. They were given the previous sales data. We are currently in contract with Castore and next season kit, with a twist, is already on order. There is a break clause in the contract but hopefully next year will see a marked improvement with supply and range. The club have now agreed with Castore that the we will man the shop during the week, Castore come in on match days. This enables continuity of the staffing of the shop.</p> <p>There was an expectation that Castore would do a calendar, but they haven't. The opportunity for the club to supply pictures to an organisation such as the MKDSA to produce an MK Dons calendar was discussed at the meeting but discounted due to time constraints. It was agreed that issues such as this should be highlighted to the SB earlier in future so that timely corrective action could be discussed.</p>	<p>AG</p>

g	<p>Match Day Experience</p> <p>Trevor Marshall is now back and there is a definite improvement in half-time entertainment. Junior football club Take over Days have also been introduced and are proving very popular. It's a slow introduction of activities that were popular before Covid that had to be dropped due to the protocols that applied. At the moment mascot packages cannot be reintroduced due to the lack of children's kit which is an important part of the package. TK requested that the screens are utilized to advise supporters who the groups are on the pitch at half time and pre match and what activities are taking place.</p>	
h	<p>Parking</p> <p>The current system is Event Parking's system who operate our car park on match and event days. To make proper use of ANPR at our site we need to introduce a site wide traffic surveillance system which is a much bigger project than the current handheld system. We are therefore looking at whole issue of parking is currently being looked at and will be presented to the SB before implementation.</p>	
i	<p>Away Travel</p> <p>JM highlighted that both pricing and lack of a coach to Bristol were causing concern amongst supporters.</p> <p>AG responded that the club had tried multiple times to hire a coach for Bristol but had been unable to source one. Pricing of the coaches is based on 75% occupancy and over the year away travel breaks even.</p> <p>AG offered to hand away travel over to the MKDSA if they were willing. JB explained the history of away travel and the fact that the MKDSA used to organise this before the club took it over.</p> <p>LW suggested the possibility of looking into away travel season ticket.</p> <p>JM suggested in the future that the club publicise the reasons for not running a coach for example Bristol explaining to supporters the rationale (two weeks' notice of the match, rail strike, non-availability etc).</p>	<p>LW/JS</p> <p>AG</p> <p>AG</p>
j	<p>Communication</p> <p>JM stated that this needs to be timely. Examples were given about the lack of knowledge of what the club is doing in the community and that the EFL website is lacking in quality.</p> <p>It was agreed that the club needs to explain the reasoning behind decisions (Bristol Coach for example) and publish these as early as possible instead of last-minute communication lacking detail.</p> <p>AF pointed out that at the moment there is a lot to communicate and therefore the club need to be conscious of what and when to talk about offers and upcoming events. There are limits to the amount of info on the home page of the EFL website.</p> <p>PW is committed to staying with the EFL website and asked if AF and the SB could detail the issues with the EFL website and also look at clubs that have moved away from it to list improvements that they have made. He would welcome a SB report into the website, PW mentioned that a new EFL digital contract will be in place for the 2024 season and will then bring</p>	<p>AG</p> <p>AF, Comms Group (OC, TG, DW, BB) plus input from Supporters' Board members</p>



	<p>any suggestions to the attention of the EFL to hopefully influence the structure of the digital channel in the future.</p> <p>LSc stated that the SET currently do not have any one person to look after PR and Media and as a result of this the club often hear about events held without any time to react. There is a lot of good work taking place without any publicity. PW agreed to take this up with the next SET board meeting. JM stated that if the club are making any changes to routine they must make it clear what's happening and why it's happening and if it is important to the football club financial e.g. closing Cowshed bar for the snooker.</p>	PW
	The formal part of the meeting commenced	
2	Standing Items	Action
	<p>All members confirmed that they no Conflicts of Interest related to matters being discussed. Apologies were received from BB who could not attend due to the rail strike.</p> <p>Minutes of Meeting held on 6th October 2022 were unanimously approved.</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p>
3	Supporters' Board messaging	
	<p>CH asked what one message do the club want the SB to give to supporters' sitting near them at the next match?</p> <p>PW – there are two things. The Ballroom being open for everyone on Boxing Day with various activities and the season ticket offer to bring a friend for free on the 14th Jan.</p> <p>AG's view was that it would assist if the SB members explained why the club were doing things like shutting the Cowshed bar when snooker is in the Arena so that supporters can understand the implications of not catering for these events.</p> <p>AF – we need to get across to supporters that whether they like the players or not we need to get behind them. Supporters play a big part during a match encouraging the team. Supporters need to remember that players read social media and what is said about them affects them when they play.</p>	<p>SB Members</p> <p>SB Members</p> <p>SB Members</p>

4	Matters Arising	
a	Away ticket late arrival (AG) As agreed the item was submitted by AG for the EFL meeting agenda but unfortunately it wasn't selected for discussion. AG confirmed that MK Dons had followed the correct process when informing the away clubs of ticket requirements and the issue was with the away club. The supply of away tickets hasn't been an issue recently and hopefully that will continue to be the case.	
b	Injured Players attending Lewingtons (AF) They were in the Lewingtons bar at the last match and it's planned that this will continue going forwards.	
c	Disabled Parking charges (AG), PW confirmed that the 50% reduction will now continue into next season. This will be reviewed with the SB next season to confirm the policy for the following season.	
d	Team Sheets for Partially sighted supporters' (AF) Meeting to be arranged between those affected and AF by CH.	CH
e	Reminders to supporters and club employees on club policy for death of a supporter (AF) In response to the SB request the Death Policy has now been published on the club website.	
f	Photo and profile of SB members to HA (ALL). DC took photos at the meeting and AF will publish these and bio's on the website.	
5	MKDSA ITEMS	
	Nothing to present	
6	Dons Action	
a	Incident at Wycombe October game The club's Safety Officer has been emailed four times with regards to this, only replying this week. The response talks about the incident being under investigation but it would have been good if the original emails had at least been acknowledged. PW stated this comes down to how we handle complaints. AG confirmed that the club has now reduced the number of email addresses that are listed for complaints and a member of staff will now be made solely responsible for replying and closing out the complaint.	



<p>b</p>	<p>Top 3 items from Supporters' Survey</p> <p>Connection between fans and the club, already covered during this meeting.</p> <p>Lewingtons – feedback has been mostly complementary: “better than when the area cleared”, “it’s happened a lot quicker than I was expecting”.</p> <p>Matchday Experience was the top concern. The atmosphere was highlighted by our fans in teenage to early 20’s age group. AF stated that the Dons Action group do an unbelievable job of creating an atmosphere. There was a suggestion of paper “clappers” being considered for a game with a larger attendance which will encourage younger attendees to clap along with “MK Army”. OC suggested that hand held flags could also be a good idea.</p>	<p>AG</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>TERMS OF REFERENCE</p>	
	<p>The review group from the MK Dons Board made two slight modifications to the Terms of Reference discussed at the last meeting. These modifications were approved by all and the Terms of Reference can now be published in the Supporters’ Board section of the MK Dons website.</p>	<p>HA</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>CODE OF CONDUCT</p>	
	<p>A marked up version was provided by the club before the meeting. To be circulated and discussed at the next meeting</p>	<p>JB</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Communications Group feedback</p>	
	<p>TG presented a document with ideas of how to progress this and how to encourage supporter engagement with SB.</p> <p>PW agreed to take the document and discuss internally with feedback to the next meeting.</p> <p>Look at having a communication sub group meeting just after Christmas for feedback to the next meeting.</p>	<p>PW</p> <p>Comms Group (OC, TG, DW, BB)</p>

9.	Disciplinary Process	
	All SB members to review and feedback if any changes required. If the member has no issues raised then the policy will be adopted. JB to circulate via email.	JB/All SB members
10.	DATE FOR NEXT MEETING	
	JB – for info SB now affiliates of FSA	
	JB - EFL Supporters Sanctioning Guide has just been issued. PW requested that the SB look at these and feed back to the club. The club will also discuss internally and take into account the SB feedback.	JB to circulate
11	DATE FOR NEXT MEETING	
	Tuesday 7th February 6:30pm PW requested that as we may need additional meetings as we still in the “forming” stage if possible additional meetings should be in work time. It might be a subcommittee discussing certain topics.	HA to book room
12	AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING	
	JB to work on the agenda and circulate with all Board members ahead of next meeting.	JB to collate agenda items