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MINUTES OF THE SUPPORTER CHARTER GROUP MEETING

DERBY COUNTY FOOTBALL CLUB

TUESDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2018, PRIDE PARK STADIUM

**DCFC Supporter Representatives (Alphabetical order):**

Gary Dempsey (GD)	Derby County Disabled Supporters Club (DCDS)
Jim Wheeler (JW)	Rams Trust
Lucy Oram (LO)	1884 Group
Lynn Hemsworth (LH)	Derby County Official Supporters Club (DCOSC)
Nick Webster (NW)	Independent
Paul Watson (PW)	DCFCFans
Pav Samra (PS)	Punjabi Rams
Sally Green (SG)	Match by Match Ticket Buyer
Simon Penney (SP)	1884 Group/ Family Representative

**Apologies:**

Peter Bonnell (PB)	Derby County Collection
David Mortimer (DM)	Rams Active

**DCFC Senior Management Representatives (Alphabetical order):**

Charlene Sharp (CS)	Executive Support
Faye Nixon (FN)	Head of Marketing
Grace Vivian (GV)	Events Executive and Supporter Liaison Officer
Mel Morris CBE (MM)	Executive Chairman
Sarah Poplar (SPo)	Group Sales Executive
Tom Loakes (TL)	Senior Communications Officer

These minutes were produced from written notes taken by GV & SPo at the Supporter Charter Group Meeting.



## 1. Welcome and introduction

- 1.1 GV opened the meeting by thanking all Supporter Representatives and Senior Management for attending the meeting.
- 1.2 GV asked all attendees to introduce themselves and their role within the club.
- 1.3 GV began by asking MM the first question and then presented the questions which had received written answers from the club prior to the meeting.

## 2. Can it be put to the team that occasionally they carry out their warm up routines at the North Stand end of the ground instead of always being in front of the South Stand. Whilst I understand about the 12th man etc, the ground has a 'Family Stand' which is situated at the other end and the supporters at this end do not get to see their club idols close up or warming up.

- 2.1 MM advised that GV should ask the first team for their opinion on relocating their warm up on a matchday
- 2.2 LH stated that the current area in which the team warm up keeps the away team away from their supporters
- 2.3 FN suggested that we could get the players who are not in the squad that day to engage with the North Stand instead. GV to make the suggestion to the first team.
- 2.4 NW asked for suggestions to make the Family Stand more family orientated.

## 3. Is the addition at Pride Park of a club museum on the timeline? The objects you are likely to want, and use, are already available from within the club and Derby County Collection and others.

- 3.1 MM expressed his keenness to identify historic memorabilia from former players
- 3.2 A museum would be on the plans post promotion but for now the full focus is on reaching the Premier League
- 3.3 GV informed the group that Andy Ellis and Derby County Collection are currently running an audit through Pride Park and writing a 'catalogue' of assets that we own.
- 3.4 LO asked if there would be any more 'Ramtiques Roadshow' types of events. This is something we will look into.

## 4. How are individual match ticket prices decided and what factors are taken into account. *Mel Morris obviously thought £25 was a fair price for watching Derby play Manchester United so why would he think any price above that is reasonable for watching a Championship match?*

- 4.1 Tye Harta ((TH) Head of Ticketing) advised before the meeting that match ticket pricing is decided approximately six weeks prior to the fixture.

The factors that we consider when deciding prices in no particular order are:

- Volume of away supporters travelling
- Date & Time
- TV selection (potentially)
- Historical prices
- League position
- What we are charged when we play away

- 4.2 TH stated that MM subsidised tickets for STHs to encourage them to travel to the televised midweek cup fixture. All other tickets were priced at the prices that Manchester United set. MM wanted to encourage STHs to travel to Old Trafford, especially with it being televised combined with being a midweek fixture.



- 4.3 TH said that being a STH always gives you the best value for watching championship games at Pride Park. It works out as cheap as £13.80 per home game (Adult Cat E renewal).
- 4.4 TH said Home Members receive 10% off their own home league ticket and works out on average £24 per game (based on Category E seating)
- 4.5 MM stated that it is not financially viable to lower the prices of tickets because he would have to personally pay the difference.
- 4.6 MM said that it is a case of supporters accepting the price but taking the argument further, maybe to the House of Commons. His concern is about the distribution of wealth between the Premier League and the Championship.
- 4.7 JW asked if there would be the potential of streaming the 3pm kick-offs on RamsTV
- 4.7.1 MM stated that it is illegal to do so, in accordance with article 48.
- 4.8 PS asked if there would be any other offers like that of the 'Bring a Friend' from £20 Vs Aston Villa.
- 4.8.1 This is something we are looking into
- 4.9 JW asked MM if he was in favour of Premier League 2
- 4.9.1 MM responded that he would only be in favour of it if it would bring revenue to the club
- 4.10 NW asked MM's opinion on the European League.
- 4.10.1 MM questioned whether supporters would attend the games, in light of the lack of attendance at the Croatia Vs England game, which was behind closed doors.
- 4.10.2 LH questioned the prize
- 4.10.3 MM said it would be money
- 4.11 PS asked about reciprocal prices
- 4.12 FN advised that it would only be the case if the away club are happy to go ahead with this
- 4.13 MM said that it would have to be cheap for both home and away fans

## 5. FN asks MM to take the opportunity to talk about the football

- 5.1 MM spoke about his conversations with Frank Lampard about the opportunities in front of them and also what could go wrong
- 5.2 Frank Lampard, Jody Morris and Chris Jones presented to the board and impressed them with their lack of competitiveness between each other
- 5.3 MM said that some people may say that Frank needs another coach to support but there's lots that are going well at the moment so it would be difficult to bring a new coach into the team.
- 5.4 MM is thrilled with Frank's work and says he has showed no signs of being a 'rookie'. He has a great intention to detail.
- 5.5 NW felt that players want to perform for Frank due to his success as a player
- 5.5.1 MM said that Frank worked hard as a player and was very talented. Although both new and old players are stepping up.
- 5.6 NW added that without Frank, we wouldn't have attracted players like Mason Mount and Harry Wilson. He also added that it was great to see Frank's involvement with the Golden Rams and his ability to encourage the team to bounce back after two own goals at Chelsea.
- 5.7 JW asked is Frank has changed the 'Derby Way'
- 5.7.1 MM said no, in that he 'does what it says on the tin'!
- 5.8 TL added that Frank also has respect for the players too. He is very professional.
- 5.9 LH said she felt that supporters are starting to believe in the team
- 5.9.1 MM believe there is still a long way to go. We should beware of confidence as it soon becomes complacency and than arrogance.
- 5.10 NW states that players should get supporters involved by going closer to stands and acknowledging them.
- 5.11 MM was clear that he is loving the football at the moment and hopes to continue with the good results
- 5.12 PS asked if there would be funds in place for the transfer window in January?
- 5.12.1 NW mentioned the likes of Alex Pearce, Ikechi Anya, Jacob Butterfield and George Thorne
- 5.12.2 MM stated that these players need game time and are key contributors to the development of the U23 players and that most clubs would abandon these players.



5.12.3 NW suggested that it would be great for Rams TV to interview these players. TL said it would need to be at a convenient time and if the players agree to do this.

**6. Why do the club offer concession rates on 18-22 age tickets for a season ticket, but not individual games?** *The seat next to ours is empty, but clicking on the Buy tickets link for Sheffield United shows its £30 for adults, £21.50 for seniors, and £17 for under 18's.*

*From £17 for under 18's to £30 for an adult is a massive jump to ask the lowest paid workers/students in society to pay, as this is where the 18-22 year olds will often find themselves.*

*Most under 18's will have parents who pick up the cost, and a majority of over 60's will have more disposable income to spend on football than the 18-22 age group, so it seems an anomaly to me to not offer a concession on a match by match basis that is currently available to season ticket holders.*

*I see no real reason that under 22's tickets aren't priced the same as under 18's to be honest, not least because we'll make up the difference in flogging them cheap alcohol at £4.20 a pop.*

6.1 TH stated that we used to offer a "Young Adult Membership" that allowed supporters in the 18-22 age bracket access to a concession ticket for themselves on a match by match basis. Our data proved that this membership had an extremely low demand, which is why the decision was made to stop selling it.

6.2 TH wrote that interest from Students in the 18-22 age bracket has always been low, which is why we are trying to build awareness in collaboration with the University of Derby. We are currently exploring ways to encourage this age group to buy tickets on a match by match basis.

**7. It must be cheaper to buy tickets on line than pay someone to man the ticket office, so why do I have to pay an extra £1 per ticket online even if I buy 4 in one transaction and why do you charge £1 for posting my ticket but the postage cost is 50p. This is penalising people who travel further who can't just nip down to the ticket office to buy tickets.**

7.1 We incur a charge per ticket we sell via the website. A portion of the fee we charge goes back into the constant development of the ticketing website, which will improve the supporter experience when purchasing tickets online.

7.2 We do charge a postal fee that covers the cost of First Class delivery and the order fulfilment cost. We do not charge delivery fees on the following delivery methods as there are no fulfilment costs or postal costs. Print@Home / Mobile Tickets / Collection

**8. In light of the fact that we did not achieve Premier League status at the end of the last season and the owners statement about cutting our cloth appropriately, is the memorial garden / quiet area still being built and if so, when will work begin?**

8.1 Laura Mayes (Partnerships Team) wrote that the memorial Garden planning permission has been approved by the local authority however at this stage there are no plans to begin works on this development. Planning permission is approved for a minimum of three years and this project will be reviewed at the end of the 2018/19 season.

8.2 MM said that it would be part of our plans when we are promoted.

8.3 TL advised that the Partnership Team have alternative plans for the time being which he will pick up with them.

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**9. Would McFarland's bar passes be available for Print@Home and therefore no need to pay for postage?**



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9.1 GV to investigate with TH

**10. For Season Ticket holders that can't attend the game, could there be the option to give a Print@home/paper ticket to someone else instead? Could this be done for Essential Companions too?**

10.1 GV to investigate with TH

**11. JW asked if the suing of Sam Rush would have implications for FFP?**

11.1 MM will not be able to comment.

**12. JW asked if there was any update on the club's relationship with gambling and the presentation made by Andy at the recent Fans Forum.**

12.1 FN said that first-team players and staff had been educated by the EFL about responsible gambling. Andy was part of the workshop.

12.2 JW added that the club don't provide sponsorless adult shirts

12.2.1 GV/FN to pick this up with the Partnership Team

**13. PS commented on the plans for a singing section in the South Stand**

13.1 FN explained that it is difficult to eject Season Ticket holders from their seat.

13.2 GV & FN have a meeting with some south stand supporters to discuss the possible singing section

**14. LO asked about the plans for the Forest Game**

14.1 FN agreed that there would be flags in place

**15. LO asked for the club to support in encouraging supporter groups to put up flags around the stadium**

15.1 Derby County is more than happy to assist with putting flags up for any supporters who would like them displayed

15.2 NW asked if we could lower the East Midlands in Black and White flag. GV to sort

**16. GD praised the work of RamsTV and asked for another screen in the South Stand.**

16.1 MM thanked GD for his words although RamsTV revenue is down due to the red button

**17. MM said that the Matchday atmosphere is great**

17.1 LO asked for the North Stand atmosphere to be enhanced, perhaps through Rammie and Ewie, showing the bounce on LEDs, showing the drummer on the big screen, having an extra drum. GV to investigate further, along with the assistance from LO and SP.

**18. GD asked the club to look into the safety aspect of players kicking the ball into the goal where there is no safety net.**



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18.1 MM suggested putting a limit onto the seats directly behind the goal so that supporters cannot sit there until 10 mins before kick-off. This wouldn't interfere with the warm up in place. GV to investigate.

**19. Could the club investigate the Roadrider parking at away games?**

19.1 GV to set up a meeting with Emma Drury (Disabled Liaison Officer), TH, FN, LH and LO to discuss where Roadrider parks and the access problems Disabled Supporters face when the bus parks away from the ground.

**20. JW mentioned that MM had said that there would be a streamlining of the business. Will this be noticeable to supporters?**

20.1 MM said that there have been financial cut backs and the key focus is on achieving promotion.

20.2 JW asked if there had ben any key positions that have left the club.

**21. PS asked about MM's commitment to the club**

21.1 MM expressed his passion for the club and commented on that there aren't many owners o football clubs that attend Supporter Charter meetings. He spends approximately two days per week working at the club. MM stated that he would be open to other investment and would also be happy for someone to lead the club to bigger and better things. He wouldn't want to be the one to let the club down. MM is proud of where the club is at, especially with the young players coming through and is keen to keep improving.

**22. MM, GV & FN concluded by thanking the SCG for their time and involvement. MM confirmed that there would be another meeting around February time with prospective dates released soon.**