

Minutes of meeting of Supporters' Board, October 29, 2022

Chair: James Errington

Present: Len South, Mellony Shepard, Paul Mayfield, Gill Shepherd, Daniel Pearson

Club Representatives: Gavin Baldwin, Shaun Lockwood

Guest: John Davis

Apologies: Lizzie Robinson, Patrick Queen, Matty Lovell-Davies, Derek Daniels

1. Minutes from previous meeting (September 17, 2022)
 - a. The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.
2. Standing item: Health & Safety, EDI, Safeguarding
 - a. Health & Safety
 - i. SL confirmed a new safety officer has been appointed. Jim Walton will be re-joining the club on 1st November.
 - ii. SL confirms that the club is to be visited by the Safety Ground Authority for the King's Lynn Town FA Cup game.
 - iii. SL gave details of issues with a pocket of fans causing issues following the Barnsley match in the Papa John's Trophy
 - iv. SL confirmed the stance on ticket policy, whereby supporters ideally should be registered on the database before purchasing a ticket.
 - v. JE suggested that guidance on purchasing tickets is made abundantly clear on the website and other outlets, so fans are clear before they arrive at the stadium. This also stops an influx of questions to the social media accounts each matchday.
 - vi. LS makes the point that the Box Office is closed on Wednesdays and the opening times on the website don't reflect that.
 - vii. PM raises the lack of publicity regarding ticket collections for away games, where these are sent to the away ground if not collected in time.
 - b. Safeguarding
 - i. SL raises safeguarding concerns as there is a significant increase in U16s that are turning up to games under the influence of alcohol.
 - ii. SL gave details that there is a significant number of U17 tickets sold for the Grimsby away match
 - iii. LS raises that he would like to see U17s accompanied by an adult on away matches for safeguarding reasons.
 - iv. DP asks if we have seen an increase in our younger fans coming without their guardians due to the 'cost of living crisis'. DP questions if by making these fans come with a guardian, are we having a detrimental effect on growing our fan base.
 - v. LS raises that if those underage don't attend with a guardian, the responsibility of them then lies with the person in charge of the coach and this has caused significant issues in the past.

- vi. Club confirmed that for home games policy is 13 and under need to be accompanied by an adult
- c. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
 - i. SL raises that the club is currently engaged with the Rainbow Laces campaign.
 - ii. GS reports that she had a discussion with a fan on social media who was being homophobic. SL says the club will continue with these campaigns as negative reaction is minimal compared to the positive outcomes they produce.
 - iii. SL reports that the EFL have praised us for our hard work on the Her Game Too movement.

3. Guest Presentation (John Davis – Club Doncaster Foundation)

- a. JD gives an overview of the work that Club Doncaster does and the role they play within the community.
- b. JD reports that Club Doncaster Foundation is one of the biggest charities in League One and League Two.
- c. JD extends an invitation to the Club Doncaster Foundation Awards to the members of the Shadow Board.
- d. JD gives a breakdown of how much of the money donated is split out and gives examples of what these are used to purchase.
- e. JD explains that funding for this comes from the PFA and Premier League as well as their own fundraising.
- f. JD explains that the funding changes yearly and they are finding it particularly challenging in the current environment due to the 'cost of living crisis'.
- g. JD explains what Club Doncaster Foundation did throughout COVID, how they adapted their services and how this effected their business model.
- h. JD explains the process behind which schools are chosen for visits and activities. These dependent on the area of deprivation and how much they buy into Physical Education.
- i. JD explains that the Club Doncaster Foundation also operate in the Retford area and goes on to explain the catchment areas of the club and how each football club are bound to these.

4. Head Coach Changes

- a. GB updates that Gary (McSheffrey) and Steve (Eyre) were relieved of their duties on Monday (17th October).
- b. James (Coppinger) has lead the entire operation and had been identifying candidates for some time as part of his role, as part of his role should be looking forward and planning for all eventualities.
- c. Interviews for the vacant role took place on Tuesday (18th October) where an ideal candidate emerged late into the night.
- d. Contracts were discussed and signed on Wednesday (19th October).
- e. Press was undertaken with Danny (Schofield) on Thursday (20th October).
- f. DP asks if we feel we have recruited in a better way this time. GB says that the emphasis was on James (Coppinger) to deliver on this process now. James had his preferred candidate in his head following interviews and this was backed up using data from an external data company.

- g. GB confirms that talks regarding an assistant manager will continue on Monday (31st October).
- h. JE asks whether the approach of using data will be used more on the recruitment of players. GB confirms that this is already in use, but ultimately the manager has final sign-off on signings. GB confirms that part of the recruitment process for the new Head Coach was ensuring that whoever took that role up was on the same page as the Head of Football Operations.
- i. DP asks if the pay-off of the previous management team would work in the same way as what has happened previously. GB confirmed that his would be the case.
- j. GB raises the point that any costs occurred from relieving members of staff from their jobs wouldn't affect the playing budget.

5. Shadow Board Objectives

- a. SL outlines some of the objectives and gives progress updates against these.
- b. SL confirms that the club is looking at developing an e-newsletter that has football and business updates as part of one of the objectives.
- c. SL goes through fan engagement activities the club have participated and the reaction to these.
- d. SL confirms that Doncaster Rovers are still the only professional football team in England that sponsors its local junior football league.
- e. GB makes the point of outlining the remit of the key responsibilities of the Shadow Board so that this is clear.
- f. SL is to send a further update on the objectives not mentioned in due course.

6. AOB

- a. LS brings up that there has been a negative reaction to the trip to Yorkshire Wildlife Park being cancelled. SL confirms that only 4 supporters were booked onto this and they were all contacted directly well in advance.
- b. LS raises about the regular Armistice Day presentation. With the club having a home tie in the FA Cup, this is to be done prior to the Kings Lynn Town game.
- c. SL confirms that there will be a decision on Monday (31st October) as to whether all stands will be open for the Kings Lynn Town FA Cup game. SL is expecting a strong walk-up crowd based on an up-turn in performances and data received from the last couple of fixtures.
- d. It was confirmed that club are desperate to keep ticket prices low (£10 adults is the same as 2017) but this is coming against rising costs and therefore opening only one stand helps to keep the business case for lower pricing on cup games.