

ISC Meeting Tuesday 27th February 2024 at 18:00 hours, held on Zoom

Attendees

Cathy Bayford (CB), Paul Christmas (PC), Andy Payne (AP), Kevin Hind (KH), Apu Vyas (AV), Robina Ahmed (RA)

Apologies for Absence - none

Meeting was called to primarily discuss and agree the future of the ISC and how other fan groups can apply to join the ISC.

ISC continuity and potential new members

AP proposed the use of an AI tool to create meeting summaries, which he had previously used and found to be effective. He offered to send the raw transcript of the meeting to the team, after the meeting and then would use the raw text as a basis for the meeting minutes.

The team then discussed their experiences with other clubs who are forming FABs. AP informed everyone that the Everton Fan Advisory Board had reached out to make contact ahead of the Everton game. RA had agreed to meet up with members of the EFC FAB. AP explained the Everton Fan Advisory Board's background as far as he can surmise, but was planning on meeting via Zoom on Wednesday 28th February and all ISC members were invited. AP would report back in due course.

AP voiced concerns about the Club's attitude to the ISC following the Club /ISC meeting, highlighting the lack of follow-up and failure to provide meeting minutes four weeks after the meeting with the Club took place. He also mentioned that emails from Supporters Services had been received but there was a lack of response from key Club executives. Karren Brady had written to the ISC to reassure us that she wanted to be across these issues and if we were not getting answers to go back to her. The team agreed on the importance of consistency and asking questions, even if the Club choose to ignore them.

PC suggested that support services mail could be distributed to anyone at the Club's end, so there was a lack of accountability. It was agreed that the liaison from the Club would improve when the new supporter liaison lead started in mid-March.

CB stated that there had been no feedback to the query the ISC had sent about 'collection costs' for online orders placed at the Club shop.

AP had a meeting with Josh and Jo from POI to discuss the replacement of Martin Clowes who had stepped down. This meeting was planned for Thursday 29th February and AP would report back.

AP discussed the status and potential of the Independent Supporters' Committee (ISC) to remain in place even when the FAB was established. All agreed that this should happen and that it would ensure that the independent fan groups could meet independently of the Club, given the Club's position around the independence of the proposed FAB. The ISC are free to invite applications from other fan groups according to the FAB group appointment process document drafted by the FSA.

AP proposed that the ISC creates a communication plan that all members can agree to. We should give the Club a week's notice before making any announcement public, this allowing the Club time to respond. AP suggested that we would release our outstanding ISC minutes from 2.2.24 once we

were public about the continued future of the ISC. PC summarized Andy's suggestions as a strategy that could provoke a response from the Club which is needed.

The team discussed the importance of being assertive in negotiations and decision-making, with PC emphasizing the strength and independence of the ISC. AP, PC, and RA also clarified their role as independent representatives, not necessarily representing the Club, and agreed on the need to document their roles and responsibilities. They also considered extending an invitation to other representative groups, such as overseas and women's groups, to join them as part of the FAB.

AP voiced his concern around the uncertainty surrounding the Club's response. CB and AP discussed the Club's interpretation of Premier League guidelines, and how the Club might attempt to own the FAB. KH suggested that the Club could not prevent fan groups from meeting regularly, and AP emphasized the need for a clear plan that could be easily communicated to fans. AV added that the Club would likely default to their understanding of the Premier League's recommendation even though it is at odds with the ISC and FSA's understanding.

AP expressed confidence that we had addressed all necessary aspects and were ready to move forward, despite potential challenges. He emphasized the need for clear communication and emphasized the importance of understanding our objectives. CB suggested we use flowchart style diagrams to show the relationship between groups. PC brought up the need to clearly communicate the structure and reasoning of the ISC and FAB, when known, clearly to fans.

AP stated that we had a comprehensive criteria for fan groups to apply to join the ISC and that the FSA will support and assist with this initiative. The team discussed and agreed that the 18-month timeline for groups to establish themselves before applying to join, was both a factor that was based on FSA guidance and one we agreed with although it could be reviewed if the ISC felt an application merited it. The ISC also agreed to keep an open dialogue with other fan groups, such as the Hammers Alliance. The group agreed that the ISC will advertise the opportunity for other fan groups to apply to join the FAB as part of the comms plan.

AP emphasized the importance of mentoring and creating a succession plan for fan representatives to ensure the continuity of the ISC and in due course, the FAB.

Letter to the Club about the change in kick off time for Europa League round of 16 home tie

AP reminded the group that there had been no response from the Club to our letter of 24th February 2024 and pointed out the Club's mistake in not announcing the kickoff time change earlier. He suggested that the Club could improve fan relations by offering refunds to those who can't attend the tie.

AP and CB clarified a misunderstanding related to a Facebook post written by Hammers United which indicated the fan group were leading on the communications with the Club regarding the FC Freiburg game's early kick-off time, rather than it being an ISC initiative. AP stated that the wording was likely taken from the four ISC Tweets that went out highlighting the ISC letter to the Club from Saturday 24th February 2024. AP agreed to make a comment on the Hammers United Facebook page to ensure there was no misunderstanding.

AP also proposed addressing the Club's lack of response to their refund requests for the fans who had purchased tickets for the home tie against Freiburg in advance and before the kick-off time was changed late on Friday 23rd February 2024. RA suggested using social media, particularly Twitter, to engage with the Club and let fans know what is happening. RA suggested a humorous approach to

highlight the number of days since the Club had not responded. AP agreed and noted that the ISC Twitter engagement and following was growing and active. PC emphasized the importance of communicating with the fans all the way and proposed responding to the Club's email from Karen Brady, to push for answers if we don't receive satisfactory answers from the Club.

Everton FAB meeting

AP informed the team about meeting the Everton FAB (see above) at the upcoming at Goodison meet and greet for volunteers. RA volunteered to meet with them on Saturday 2nd March 2024.

PC confirmed his attendance on behalf of the ISC at the Premier League/ Football Supporters Association meeting at the Premier League offices Wednesday March 6th 2024. RA suggested that when we attend meetings we should take pictures which would enhance our online presence. League Performance and European Football

Meeting closed at 18.52