

ISC Meeting Tuesday August 1st 2023 at 19:00 hours

Attendees

Don Adams (DA), Robina Ahmed (RA), Steve Applebee (SA), Cathy Bayford (CB), Paul Christmas (PC), Martin Clowes (MC), Andy Payne (AP), Apu Vyas (AV) and Sue Watson (SW).

Apologies for Absence - Sara Page (SP)

1.0 ISC/Club Meeting Logistics

The ISC agreed that future face to face ISC/Club meetings should commence at 15:30 hours and Online Club meetings will continue to be held in the evenings. ISC reconfirmed the desire for 4 meetings a season with majority face to face. SA informed the meeting that the Club review of the July 18th minutes has been delayed due to Club management vacations and that AP has volunteered to take the minutes at the next ISC/Club meeting scheduled for October/November 2023.

Responsibility SA

2.0 History & Heritage

Following confirmation that the is season's exhibition theme will be 'Trailblazers' the ISC Matchday Experience Subcommittee compiled a preliminary list of potential topics which the ISC members were requested to advise of any other suggestions by Friday August 11th to be reviewed/discussed at the next ISC meeting.

Meetings with museum curator professional and WHU historians to be arranged. Online exhibition idea was referenced, for more information on this see the MDEx minutes.

School visits – no further information or clarity as to what this is from the Club.

Boleyn Ground – would be nice to see this celebrated on Bridge 1.

Responsibility SW

Responsibility – AP (museum curator)

2.1 Memorabilia Catalogues

At the July 18th ISC/Club meeting the Club agreed to share the memorabilia catalogue(s), however the catalogue(s) have not yet been provided and no date has yet been given.

Responsibility AP

3.0 Season Ticket Holders Welcome Packs

Following an ISC suggestion the Club will distribute a junior pack and all season ticket holders over 12 years of age will receive a ECL commemorative pack. SA informed the meeting that the packs have been delayed until the end of August at the very earliest and that the Club will advise season ticket holders of the delay and the anticipated availability. ISC can tell supporters that these are delayed via our social feeds, citing no firm dates.

1966 members -the Club are supposed to have an annual event, and intend to reintroduce this event again.

For Information

4.0 Catering

The Club are more aware of that this is an issue this season, unlike last season. The Club have not yet received the pricing from Delaware North for the upcoming season, although there's an expectation that the pricing will be comparable to the end of last season and other London clubs as per the contractual agreement. The offerings will include ISC suggestions for children's meals including fruit juice and gluten free products. The ISC reinforced the advantages of extending the early bird offer timing and add a post-match pricing offer help moderate Stadium ingress and exit flow rates. The Club will schedule a meeting with Delaware North, Cub and ISC representatives. In addition the ISC will contact Arsenal, Spurs and Chelsea to compare 23/24 prices.

Responsibility SW

5.0 Fan Advisory Board

The meeting reiterated the outcome of the July 18th ISC/Club meeting in that pending the internal Club review and the integration of the ISC proposed revisions and the recent Premier League FES Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct will be integrated into the draft MoU, following which a joint Club/ISC review will be convened to cover areas requiring further discussion. SA advised that such a meeting is likely to be held towards the end of August.

The meeting consensus in respect of the FES Terms of Reference was that it is guidance and that there is provision for each Club to customise their FAB to the exiting fan engagement requirements. The Club has requested the ISC's Shared Values and it was agreed to repeat those provided following the March Club FES presentation, Respect, Trust, Transparency, Honesty, Collaborative & Collegiate Approach and Equality of Opinion. Supplemented with Accountability (the club have stated that they cannot have accountability as a shared value), Democracy & Independence. These values will be forwarded to the Club and reviewed at the joint meeting with all ISC members later in August. SA will draft a reply to the Club to share before it goes back to the Club.

Key issue for the ISC in the negotiations in FES/FAB is 1) are we independent? and 2) who chooses the members of the ISC/FAB.

Responsibility SA

6.0 Safe Standing

The Club stated that safe standing pilots in other premier league stadia have raised safety concerns and further investigations are ongoing with LS185 and Newham SSAG. The ISC has proposed the Bobby Moore and Sir Trevor Brooking Lower Stands as the first phase and reminded the Club of the expectation that this will be introduced for the 24/25 season. In the absence of any firm plans the ISC requested the Club to communicate a status report to the fan base including the challenges of implementing safe standing at the London Stadium. ISC to tell fan base 'there is no plan and the Club has agreed to communicate the status on the project'. AP will draft up some Tweets for consideration to all the ISC for approval.

Responsibility SA

7.0 23/24 Season Ticket Pricing & Senior Concessions

The ISC had drafted a statement to be discussed and agreed at this meeting. Spurs and Newcastle have already started campaigns to call their Clubs out about prices. The ISC reiterated their position on the price rises and changes to the senior concession qualification age from 65 to 66. In particular the ISC criticised the implementation timing of the over 66 senior concession change which resulted in a small number of 65 years old supporters receiving only 24 hours notice prior to the renewal window opening that they would be eligible for a concession they would have expected to receive. It was agreed that a further communique/statement would be issued via our channels to support the 'Stop Exploiting Loyalty of Fans' campaign.

Responsibility SA/AP/CB

8.0 Lower West Stand Wall Height

The wall height in question was also discussed and the Club confirmed that the height will not change as it has been successful in reducing antisocial behaviour. Further communication should be made with season ticket holders in the vicinity of the situation and future behaviour patterns should be monitored to ensure that this solution remains effective in the shorter term and remains a requirement in the longer term. ISC agreed to keep this matter open and will press for improvements.

Responsibility SW

9.0 Stratford Walk Post Match Stop Go Crowd Control

ISC has given the Club proposals for potential improvements to the stop go system which is not appreciated by the vast majority of fans which the Club will discuss with Newham SSAG. In addition the Club will arrange a meeting with between Peter Swordy of LS185, Club and ISC representatives. The Club should reduce the number of fans they hold as many fans do feel vulnerable and it is the worst part of their matchday experience. The impact of the London Terrorist Threat is factored into the use of the stop/go boards, yet it is not factored in with respect to parking for disabled, a case of double standards.

Responsibility SW

Collectibles – NFT – this project was closed as far as the ISC are concerned. Not mentioned at the meeting between JH/SA/SW.

10.0 Accounts Questions

The Club answered questions raised by ISC members at the July 18th, ISC/Club meeting and a written response for the record has been requested.

Responsibility SA

11.0 Club Cash

The original draft minutes of the ISC/Club meeting 18th July did not reference the Club Cash discussions that took place at that meeting, which had been added as suggested amendments to the first draft of the ISC/Club minutes, but were not included in the draft minutes sent to the Club. AP requested that minutes should be minutes and a true record of the meeting and this point should be minuted. Also any revisions should be shared with the ISC before sending to the Club.

A motion was put concerning Club Cash , proposed by Hammers United and seconded by WHUSC. ISC had also raised the issue of the over 65 away season tickets, which the Club had to reverse. ISC also raised the issue of a member who had a dispute over their Club Cash balance. ISC discussed the analysis we produced around other PL Club Cash (or equivalent) which led to discussion and agreement that the ISC would offer the Club the following suggestions which were contained in the original motion to improve the scheme for fans:-

1: That the Club agrees to remove the "use it or lose it" deadline for any Club Cash credit imposed on fans at the end of each season. This will be replaced by fans having the alternative to use any Club Cash balance against their season ticket renewal price or have the Club Cash credit refunded to them in their chosen method of payment.

2: That the Club clarifies how the refunds are calculated and the monetary value of all refunds/credits that become Club Cash. This definition must be written into the Club Cash terms and conditions.

3: The Club also clarified that Club Cash can be used to purchase any home match tickets for both domestic and European fixtures, in addition to merchandise from the Club Store. The ISC will develop proposals for improvements including measures to ensure fans spend their Club Cash before the annual expiry at the end of July – (we did not discuss or agree that we would develop anything around this).

ISC will communicate this statement via their social channels.

Responsibility SA

12.0 ISC Constitution Motion

There was a detailed debate around the motion. It was noted that as of this time, there is no process anywhere to cover the make-up of the ISC and there is no process or criteria for welcoming new members should the ISC want to consider accepting new members in the future. AP proposed the following motion, seconded by PC and it was agreed each ISC member was not able to vote

without consulting with their respective committees and report back before or at the next ISC meeting week commencing September 4th.

Motion - That the ISC is to be independent of West Ham United Football Club and accordingly will produce and adopt a written constitution to ensure that it is democratic, accountable, transparent and independent.

AP wanted it minuted that he felt 4 weeks for a vote was too long and that he did not understand why the motion was so confusing to some members in the meeting and apparently controversial.

Responsibility ISC Members to vote on this at the latest by the next ISC meeting date tbc. SA would prefer the vote at the next ISC meeting.

AOB

13.0 Supporters Club

PC notified the meeting that the Supporters Club were unable to reach an agreement with Orbit Live and that their agreement to hire The Last Drop on home match days will not be renewed. The Supporters Club were seeking alternative facilities and requested ISC members to advise of any potential opportunities for a replacement. PC also shared the possibility of the Club building a building that could be used as a social club/museum/hall.

Responsibility ISC Members

14.0 ISC/Club Minutes

AP requested the ISC see minutes before being sent to the Club for sign off as there had been two recent examples of minutes not respecting his comments and sent off to the recipients without any chance for him or others to query why the suggested changes had not been incorporated. Those minutes specifically were the ISC/Club draft meeting minutes 18th July and the MDEx meeting minutes 25th July .

Responsibility SA

15.0 Old School Hammers

AP informed the meeting that Old School Hammers have written to SA re joining the ISC. SA has shared the appropriate emails with the ISC.

Meeting Closed at 21:00 hours