

Independent Supporter Committee –Executive Club Meeting Minutes

Date of meeting - 3rd June 2021

Timing - 5-30-7pm

Representing Independent Supporter groups (ISC)

Jim Dolan (JD) (Pride of Irons) Interim Chair

Don Adams (DA) (Over 65's representative)

Steve Applebee (SA) (Bondholders)

Paul Christmas (PC) (West Ham United Supporters Club)

Cathy Bayford (CB) (Disabled Supporters Board)

Apu Vyas (AV) (Inclusive Irons)

Andy McConnell (AM) (Hammers United)

Kevin Hind (KH) (West Ham United Independent Supporters Association)

Sue Watson (SW) (West Ham United Independent Supporters Association) Interim Vice-Chair

Representing West Ham United Football Club

Karren Brady (KB) Vice-Chair

Tara Warren (TW) Executive Director

Ben Campbell (BC) Head of Communications

Ben Illingworth (BI) Head of Operations

Nicola Keye (NK) Director of Ticketing

Jackie Ferdinand (JF) Director Safeguarding & Inclusion

Jake Heath (JH) Head of Supporter Services

Graeme Ford (GF) Head of Marketing

Jamie Fox (JF) Head of Corporate Affairs and Public Relations

Mark Noble (MN) Club Captain

Louis A (LA) Two Circles (Club Survey Consultant)

Independent Observer

Ashley Brown (AB) Football Supporters Association, Head of Governance and Supporter Engagement.

Mark Noble

Mark opened the meeting by thanking the supporters for their continued support during these tough times. He said how much he was looking forward to the Europa League games under the flood lights of the London Stadium together with another great Premier League season. Finally he can't wait to see all the fans in a full stadium and their continued support throughout next season.

For info

1. Club Survey

LA introduced the club survey by emphasising it is part of the Club's strategy to build and grow a stronger relationship between the Club and supporters. GF advised it will form part of the qualitative and quantitative data to drive internal club decision making.

LA presented a series of slides to be used to develop strategies for improvement adding the next phase will focus on the experience of international supporters. The slides covered four topics, Relationships Engagement & Communication, Ticketing & Membership and Matchday Experience.

It was agreed that the presentation must be treated as confidential as it had been intended for internal insight, though TW said she was happy to share it with the ISC. TW said it would be useful to work with the ISC and others on a future survey to help determine the priorities of the entire fan base to help inform a constructive agenda for the Club and ISC, reaffirming that the Club needs to know what success looks like in order to identify and deliver the best outcomes for supporters.

Resp ISC Members

2. Last Game of the Season Review

KB said she was incredibly proud of our supporters and referenced the feedback received from the Premier League and local authority confirming how well everyone observed the new COVID protocols on the day.

NK reported the communications, processes and protocols worked extremely well. Only two tickets were printed on the match day but disappointingly there were a number of fans who did not attend despite purchasing a ticket.

BI added that stadium access and egress was good, transportation okay and operationally a positive experience with the Police Commander having a very quiet day.

Four issues were raised as follows:

2.1 CB raised the issue of exemption wristbands and lift assistance was inconsistent.

2.2 PC advised of a heavy handed approach of Newham Rapid Response teams.

2.3 JD reported that there was a shortfall in the catering.

2.4 CB added that there was no initial catering support for disability supporters.

Resp JH agreed to follow up with PC and CB and feed into steward briefings for upcoming season.

3. Plans for Next Season

NK advised that season ticket sales are progressing with seat reallocation and new sales the next steps. While COVID-19 protocols for next season remain to be determined, ticketing allocation priorities unchanged with loyalty points frozen from 2019/20 season. NK said the Club would not necessarily be continuing any protocols specific to Covid if not needed, but we will need to remain flexible to changes in guidance/processes.

BI advised steward training for next season is in progress for the return of 60,000 capacity.

3.1 KB confirmed safe pickup points will be trialled for away match coach travel.

Resp BI

3.2 The Club requested the ISC to participate in a joint submission to E20 regarding the addition of street vendors on the Stadium approach.

Resp TW & JD

4. Ticketing

4.1 KB/TW confirmed that the Club is taking up the ISC proposal to facilitate a process for fans to donate club cash to provide tickets to NHS staff. This will be facilitated through the West Ham Foundation. The ticketing subgroup will progress and agree the details.

Resp NK & KH

Furthermore it was agreed that in future all ticketing issues would be covered by the ticketing subgroup, with any major unresolved issue elevated to the executive committee on an ad hoc basis.

For info

4.2 £2 Ticketing Fee for Southampton Game

KB advised the booking fees from the Southampton game would be refunded. The booking fee refunds are to be made in club cash or the original payment method if requested and this will be done within 7 days.

Resp NK

5. Newham SAG ISC Representation

Whilst the club endorsed an ISC representative to discuss Club issues with the SAG alongside the Club, it was recognised that the SAG committee was already highly populated. BI raised the request with the SAG. An agreement between the SAG and SGSA was made to enable the Club, SAG Chair and the ISC to meet separately re: SAG matters to ensure our supporters are represented. The Club would also liaise with the ISC prior to SAG meetings.

5.1 The Club endorsed ISC representation on SAG matters via an ISC Subcommittee to meet with the Club, SAG Chair and ISC at key points throughout the season

Resp SW & BI

6. Updates/Overview of:

6.1 Owners Charter

KB advised a Premier League meeting will be held later this month.

For info

6.2 London Charter

Best practices to combat all forms of discrimination, hate crimes and online abuse etc. The London Charter has inputted and advised on a Premier League-wide initiative and has been put forward to pilot the scheme. The collective goal is that the initiative is Premier League-wide at the earliest opportunity.

Resp EDI Group

7. ISC/Club Engagement Calendar

It was agreed that future meetings should be scheduled to support key milestones. The ISC will revert back with a list of key milestones so that the club can align meetings in support of key decision making.

Resp JD & JH

8. Kit Design

Kit design milestones for 2022/23 season will be incorporated into future meetings scheduled (see also agenda item 7 above).

For info

9. Diversity & Inclusion

JF introduced herself as Director Safeguarding and Inclusion and outlined her role to promote an inclusive culture, a sense of belonging for all to have an enjoyable match day experience. JF will work with key stakeholders to develop strategies and action plans and looks forward to meeting all supporter groups.

For info

10. Fan Awards

KB advised that the trophies would be awarded at the end of season Player Awards as usual as agreed by the ISC and the Club, with the Supporters Club presenting the original HOTY trophy to the player at the first home match of the new season to enable as many supporters as possible to experience the presentation.

For info

AOB

TW confirmed the shortlist of names for the statue is under consideration, with the players families, before being put to a fan vote across club channels.

Away and Claret Members representatives election will require a 10-12 week lead time, following selection of the polling company.

For info

MEETING CLOSED