

## **ISC Meeting Minutes 22nd June 2023 19:00 hours**

**Present:** Robina Ahmed (RA-Claret Members), Steve Applebee (SA-Bondholders), Cathy Bayford (CB-DSA), Paul Christmas (PC-WHUSC), Steve Cross (SC-Hammers United), Sara Page (SP-Away Season Ticket Holders), Apu Vyas (AV-Inclusive Irons) and Sue Watson (SW-WHUST)

**Apologies for Absence:** Don Adams (DA-Any Old Irons), Martin Clowes (MC-Pride of Irons) and Andy Payne (AP-Hammers United).

### **1.0 FAB Status**

The Club advised that the draft MoU would be available week ending June 30 (Jake Heath email dated June 22 refers). The ISC discussed the situation and the following reply was subsequently sent to the Club on Tuesday June 27th.

**Dear Jake,**

Thank you for your email detailing the status on the FAB documentation. The ISC members are extremely disappointed that the draft publication deadlines of June 16 and 20 were not met, especially as an ISC meeting was scheduled for a review.

At this stage, without any evidence we all cannot share your optimism that an agreement can be reached in the immediate future, and have serious doubts that the Premier League objective of implementing a Fan Advisory Board for the forthcoming season, let alone the next ISC/Club meeting on July 18th are achievable.

However, when we receive the revised documentation (now planned for week ending June 30th) and have had sufficient time for our review, we'll be in a position to make a more informed assessment of the situation.

**Regards Steve**

**ISC Chair**

**For Information**

### **2.0 23/24 Season Ticket Pricing**

The absence of a formal reply to the original ISC statement was discussed at length and it was agreed that a further statement should be sent prior to the ISC/Club meeting scheduled July 18th. Subsequent to the meeting the following email was sent to the Club on Tuesday June 27th.

**Dear Jake,**

Although you have personally advised that the Club is not minded to review the announced season ticket price rises or implementation of the Over 66 senior concession, it is incumbent on me to remind you that a Club reply to the ISC email dated May 12, requesting answers to the following three questions, remains outstanding.

**1. Why is an 8% increase justified?**

**2. Why was it necessary to change the qualifying age for a senior concession?**

**3. Why implement the over 66 change with only 24 hours notice?**

The ISC statement described the Season Ticket price increases as "excessive and unjustifiable" and the introduction and implementation of the Over 66 senior concession as "insensitive and inexcusable".

The ISC subsequently requested feedback from its individual members' fan groups which unsurprisingly was overwhelmingly negative, with significant responses received from the West Ham Supporters Club, Bondholders, WHUST and Hammers United, including a petition set up by Hammers United signed by 5,371 fans.

The ISC considers the Club's conduct in this matter to be autocratic and arbitrary and these decisions negatively impact every single season ticket holder, **but especially supporters who have now reached 65 years of age** who would have budgeted for a senior concession season ticket, denied only 24 hours prior to the ticket renewal window opening. In summary we feel the Board has acted with a blatant disregard of and appearing oblivious to the needs of supporters currently facing a cost of living crisis. The ISC feels such actions leaves supporters wondering if the Club is sincere in achieving genuine fan engagement and are contrary to the spirit of the MoU. Furthermore, the Club's actions jeopardises the Club and ISC relationship at a time when both parties are about to negotiate the terms of the ISC's transition to a Fan Advisory Board (in accordance with the Premier League's Fan Engagement Standard).

**WHU ISC**

**For Information**

### **3.0 18th July 2023 ISC/Club Meeting**

The following topics were agreed as agenda items for the July 18th ISC/Club meeting.

1. 23/24 Season Ticket Pricing
2. 23/24 Catering Pricing & Offerings
3. Safe Standing Plan
4. Lower West Stand Wall
5. Memorabilia & ECL Trophy Plans
6. New Season Ticket Holders Welcome Packs
7. Collectables Collection Launch Plan
8. 23/24 Kit Launch

**For Information**

### **4.0 Season Ticket Relocations**

The meeting discussed the season ticket relocation process post the renewal window and SA agreed to seek clarification from the Club.

**Responsibility SA**

#### **4.1 SC email dated 21st June 2023**

SC expanded on his email to the ISC membership (dated June 22nd) and the consensus was that while the outcome of discussions with the Club are of paramount importance, communication of ISC efforts on behalf of our supporters is also important to increase the ISC profile and inform all supporters of their opportunity to identify areas for improvement, especially match day experience. A variety of topics were discussed and in summary it was felt that going forward lessons needed to be learned from past experiences to maximise the potential opportunities going forward.

**Responsibility All ISC Members**

#### **Next Meetings**

The following meeting schedule was agreed

July 6th 19:00 hours ISC Meeting (online)

July 18th 15:30 hours ISC/Club PreMeeting (Supporters Club/The Last Drop)

July 18th 18:00 hours ISC/Club Meeting (London Stadium)

**Meeting Closed 20:45 hours**