

SP Meeting 15th August at STFC

Present:

Chris Wynne; Martin James; Roger Groves; Mike Davis; Joshua Wynne; Rob Lewis; Rachael Dilloway; Barry Davies; Harry Challoner; Jill Lucas; Dave Richards; Stewart Price; Lynn Price; Brian Caldwell; Ian Whitfield; Jamie Edwards; Helen Hall; Joyce Pulford; Richard Vernon; Thomas Corbett; Sarah-Jane Somerset; Martin Rans; Nick Gurden; Rosie Sabin; John Bailey; David Allsopp, Rev. Phil Cansdale; Steve Price.

Apologies:

Ian Jones; Simon Moore; Selwyn Plant; Glyn Price; Malcolm Lane; Marion Lane; Justin Gill.

1. Open day feedback – Jamie Edwards has produced a report a link to which is attached. There were concerns about the cost of beer at £4 a pint by the caterers MPM. They are adjusting this downwards for the next and subsequent matches. Jamie is requesting a group of fans to volunteer as a committee to organise the Fan Zone. The Junior Shrews packs had started to be sent out from 1st August.

Comments from the meeting – Could do with more for the older children to do. The band were really good but the music from the stadium PA did compete. (Apparently the manager wishes the players to warm up with motivational music playing in the stadium.)

Advertising the position of the Fan Zone from the other side of the stadium was suggested to encourage fans, home and away, to attend. Contact away clubs about the Fan Zone. Have meeters and greeters who encourage attendance.

Supporter groups were all squashed in one corner, would rather be spread out. JE asked if the supporter groups would consider putting in £100 each to help provide a large marquee for them all to be positioned in.

Why was that fixture chosen for the Open Day would not a non-match weekend be better? (BC said that they were possibly looking at the August Bank Holiday next year. This year it was poorly supported. It needs a working party to get together and organise the event.)

The meeting was asked if they would support Open Day being on a non-match day. This was unanimously supported.

Martin James elaborated on the past Sunday open days which proved immensely popular, with player training on the pitch, stadium tours including the dressing rooms, control box, boardroom, food and drink provided by the club, community activities and supporters groups spread around the ground and concourses, sometimes the new shirt was released that day on sale, shop open for business, hospitality displays in the boxes, players signing autographs. Free parking at the ground encouraged attendance on a non-match day. Thousands attended.

JE was asked if club sponsors could be asked to provide a £50 donation towards the Open Day costs.

Next year Lidl will be open and may attract more attendees.

An August bank Holiday date would give more time to publicise at home matches.

2. Season ticket issues – BC admitted that the Club could have done better with the issue of the season tickets. At 2.45pm on the first match day they were still being printed off. Going forward the season ticket card will be used every season so unless there are new season tickets or replacements needed, fans will keep their existing card.
3. Turnstile gates being locked at 3pm. – Stewards had not been helpful. Only one turnstile was open after 3 pm yet there were still queues at the ticket office. BC had spoken to the Safety Officer but he was not aware of any issues. BC is to speak to him to ensure that the head gateman checks to see the queues outside and to communicate with the Safety Officer before any gates are closed. He will look at the CCTV images and make the decision. More are to remain open post 3pm. A point was made that there needs to be someone in the West Stand ticket office who can make decisions or communicate with the Main ticket office if there are issues to be resolved rather than sending people around the stadium to the main office.
4. Buffets/Concourse catering – MPM put an article on the club media asking for feedback on their service. They have taken on the contract very late and are looking to understand the demands, what will sell, how much etc. BC had fielded a lot of e-mails from fan and had forwarded them on to MPM. It will take a few weeks to bed in but feedback is welcomed.
5. Fanzone bar prices – dealt with in 1. Above.
6. Toilet seat update – Roger Groves had a quote for the replacement of 65 toilets, (13 male and 52 female) which was £34,000. Which did not include delivery or fitting. The existing aluminium bowls were of a type that could not accept retro fitting. He was waiting for other companies to get back to him. The question was asked could we have say 2 replaced per toilet block at a much reduced cost? Who is going to pay for it? This has been an issue since the stadium opened. It was suggested from the meeting that the facts should be put in an article and publicised through all club media outlets so that the fans know the actual situation.

Comments were then made to BC that the toilets were not adequately cleaned and were dirty before matches. BC said that a cleaning firm were responsible for the cleaning and that it was done. He also said that they were checked before each match. He said he would speak to the owner of the company about it. Members of the meeting disagreed that they were inspected or cleaned well enough. As with the toilet seats this was a customer care issue that the club needed to take seriously. BC was asked if cleaners could go into the toilets whilst a match was going on to ensure they were kept clean. He felt this was not a viable proposal and will speak to the cleaners about general issues.

AOB

1. Tribute to Chris Smith – thanks were received from the family to the club and supporters of STFC and Northampton for the 64th minute tribute to Chris. They were in Spain but word had got to them and they had now seen a video. Chris Wynne will write a letter of thanks to Northampton Town.

2. Memorial garden – thanks were given to John Lumley for volunteering to remove brambles and other weeds from the back of the garden. Also to Diane Davis for offering to help with weeding of the beds. The club keep the grass cut. Some roses have died and will need replacing. The Rev Cansdale said that there had been 14 ashes internments so far.
3. Prediction Competition – thanks to sales on the Open Day a pot of £130 was now available to the winner at the end of the season.
4. Safe Standing donations continue to come in, standing at over £14,000 on the night of the meeting. BC said that Andy Tretton was returning to work after his holiday and that he would be contacting the commercial database about the project.
5. A question was raised as to whether cash donations could be received for the Safe Standing project. At present this was not the case but between the SP and the Club an arrangement will be made for this to happen before the next home match.
6. Repainting of the stadium – BC said that the situation remains the same that the legal battle between stadium constructors, Halls Construction and the paint firm are on going. The Club have been advised not to touch anything. Regular surveys are done on the existing areas.
7. Shop opening – Could the shop open for longer after the matches? BC will look into this.
8. Are clubs told how many fans are expected at away matches as Nottingham Forest appeared to be completely unprepared for the numbers of STFC fans who attended the match. There were many issues with the stewards at that match which the club were aware of and had made known to Forest.
9. Super Blues discount – does this still exist at the Club Shop? There was confusion about this. BC said that he had had conversations with the SB about this stopping so it was not available anymore.
10. Will Town have a team in the Reserve League this season? – BC said Paul Hurst had decided no. He would arrange friendlies as and when required with other league clubs. He was also looking at Under 18 fixtures being played at the ground.
11. Shropshire Senior Cup – BC said that PH would always put out a reserve/youth side in this fixture as it was good for their development. It was not part of his full squad preparations.

Next meeting: Tuesday 19th September at STFC.