



## **Minutes of Bradford City Supporters Board Meeting**

**Venue:** Online via Microsoft Teams

**Date:** Thursday 23/02/2023, meeting commenced at 7.00 pm

**In attendance:** Tony Bates (Chair), Wayne Robinson (Vice-Chair), John Barker, Steve Gorringe, Christine Tarren, Ian Taylor, Adam Baker, Jonnie Carrington, Marco Townson (BCAFC), Ryan Sparks (BCAFC).

**Apologies for Absence:** Richard Johnson, David May, Keith Taylor.

### **1. Welcome & Introductions**

The Chair welcomed all members present; Jonnie Carrington introduced himself to all attendees not present at the 26<sup>th</sup> January meeting.

### **2. Review of Minutes/Actions from previous meeting**

The Minutes of the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023 Meeting, having been circulated were accepted as a true and correct record together with the separate circulated Action Log which forms part of the record of meetings.

Matters arising from these documents were as follows:

Supporters Board Bulletin was to be circulated by the Club with their "City Talk" email to ensure widest circulation.

It was noted that safe standing comes with lots of associated guidance and rules which the club has to follow which will provide strict guidance on location and volume of safe standing including both a Home and an Away section of the ground. The Club also noted that persistent fan standing at games may cause bodies such as the council to impose capacity limits on fan attendance so it is hoped that safe standing may avert some of that issue

The suggestion of a cover above the Fire Memorial is still being reviewed, Ryan Sparks emphasised the Memorial and items placed in tribute are cleaned and maintained several times a week as a standard part of Club practice.

### **3. Updates from the Club not captured on Agenda**

Marco Townson reported that he was now the Club's Supporter Liaison Officer. Following discussions at the 26<sup>th</sup> January meeting, improved signage was to be placed to aid



spectators leaving the Kop. Liaison with Bradford Council was planned over general access to areas surrounding the Kop for departing supporters.

Turnstile procedures for capturing Ticket codes had been reviewed to ensure all codes were scanned and captured.

It is planned to have effective Wi-Fi access in the stadium before the end of this season on a sign up basis.

#### **4. Supporters Board involvement in Club business planning**

A full discussion took place as to how the Supporters Board could have input into Club business planning. Ryan Sparks outlined that much planning and decisions are made much earlier than may be assumed i.e. Kit designs for the 2023/24 season were signed off in September 2022. Season ticket costs and strategy is an ongoing process throughout much of the year.

As part of an extended conversation regarding Season ticket prices for 23/24, the club confirmed that the cost of season tickets is remaining the same as this season. They are conscious that cost of living is increasing for all and are keen not to impact on the wider fan base if this can be avoided. As part of this stability of price for the standard season tickets (this will be 3<sup>rd</sup> season in a row without increase), the club are having to increase some other prices to address loss making areas. The costs of suites (and linked to this 25 year season tickets as they come with a suite upgrade) will have to raise as they have become loss making areas because of rising costs such as energy prices. The club also confirmed they are planning on making improvements to the suites during the summer as they are aware that refurbishments are needed in some areas.

The club also explained that Direct Debit option will remain in place for the new season tickets but will run at 10 monthly payments rather than 12. This is to avoid fans making two payments side by side some fans current Direct Debit payments didn't commence until as late as August

Other business planning decisions by the Club had to take into account the current "cost of living crisis" and understand the impact this has on supporters.

The new Loyalty Points scheme had been reviewed throughout the season including input from the Supporters Board and would be the subject of a questionnaire shortly.

Current turnover is the highest for the Club in any of the seasons we have been in League 1 and League 2.



It was understood that there were no rigid or set dates in the planning process but the Club were determined to ensure current and growing liaison with the Supporters Board to be an established and important process.

#### **5. Commercial Activities of Supporters Board**

Currently the only fixed costs for the Supporters Board were the monthly domain and email costs although a conversation had taken place with Michael Shackleton (BCAFC) focusing on supporting Club commercial initiatives and adding value to the fan experience. Examples of this could include driving further funding/equipment for Billy's Coop along with maybe helping with setup costs and increased bandwidth of free Wi-Fi for fans.

A working group of Supporters Board members would explore our ideas and involvement further. Alignment of plans and decisions with the Club is vital to avoid duplication of effort and also to compliment/add to current strategies where possible. Also to consider alignment with activities of the Community Foundation Charity too.

#### **6. Player of the year Awards**

It was agreed that the Supporters Board would continue to present the "Unsung Hero" Award, but would instead look to gather nominations from the wider fan base and seek testimonials which could be uploaded to the Supporters Board website for wider visibility of as many of these unsung heroes as possible.

#### **7. 120th Anniversary Plans**

The Club representatives reported that events were planned for the 2023/24 season.

#### **8. Increasing Communication – 6 monthly highlight report**

As detailed in item 2, this would be circulated in the next issue of "City Talk".

#### **9. Questions from Fans**

##### **a. Flooding outside ticket office**

**Club Response:** This would be reviewed and reported back



b. Would it be possible for the club or WYP to give fans advance notice (ideally before a match day) if they are planning on blocking access on Midland Road to home fans after a game?

**Club Response:** The decision is made by the Police, as soon as the Club is informed about a closure; the decision is immediately communicated in the ground by both PA and Scoreboard announcements. The Police decisions are rarely if ever made in advance, for example the decision to close Midland Road at the Mansfield match was made by the Police at Half-Time.

#### 10. Working Group Update

The next project was painting the lower concourse of the Kop, commencing with white paint. Ideally six volunteers were needed per session, with the work ready to commence once volunteers were in place.

#### 11. Junior Supporters Initiative

The Chair had held an email conversation with Ian Ormondroyd (Community Foundation CEO) a meeting was now to be scheduled to discuss and progress.

#### 12. Any Other Business

A full discussion took place over the use of Pyrotechnics by away supporters at the Mansfield home match and social media comments by the Mansfield Police Liaison Officer.

Adam Baker had contacted Nottinghamshire Police and the PLO and secured a retraction of the initial social media comments as well as a comprehensive explanation.

Adam was thanked for progressing this issue. For completeness a copy of the Police response is attached below and forms part of these Minutes.

*“Subject: RE: Pyrotechnics at Valley Parade 04/02/2023*

*Morning Adam*

*I have clarified the context of the tweet on Twitter. I apologise if it was misinterpreted. There was no mention of pyros being thrown by Bradford fans on the day.*

*As stated I do not condone the use of pyros, and the camera was focused on the East Stand in case of pitch encroachment where the players were celebrating. I then spun round and noticed the pyro which you can hear me say to make West Yorks colleagues aware. The*



*footage along with the grounds CCTV was able to identify an offender of whom West Yorks detained on conclusion of the game. I am awaiting an update on the matter as to whether he was arrested and what action they are taking against him.*

*Both Mansfield Town FC and the Police have had a positive impact on pyrotechnic use at the One Call stadium with the use of detection dogs and education of our younger supporters who have previously been caught. This has seen no pyrotechnics used at home fixtures by our fans; however there seems to be a culture amongst Mansfield and other travelling support from other clubs that they are ok to use them on 'Big' away days.*

*Hopefully, the individual identified on Saturday will serve as a deterrent to others who think it is acceptable."*

Ian Taylor requested support for Bingley Bantams online auction of a Microsoft Surface GO2 Tablet, to raise funds for "One in a Million" Charity. The auction subsequently raised £220.

**Date of Next Meeting:**

The date of the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023 via Microsoft Teams

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm.