

## Questions and comments from BWFCST Affiliates discussed at Quarterly Meeting held on 05 November 2021

### FanZone

Why do Bolton Council need to approve Fanzine plans?

*Answer - as the Fanzone will be outside of the stadium, it will be subject to planning rules and regulations and will need a submission to the Council*

Wasn't FanZone originally going to be inside in Bolton Arena? Why is it outside given winter weather problems?

*Answer - the BWFCST trialled Fanzone in Bolton Arena a few years ago. It wasn't well attended as supporters didn't like walking across Burnden Way and then back to the stadium*

*The external location will be very much as other clubs and the use of the Premier Suite as recent hit-and-miss operation is not practical as other uses are planned for this internal space*

When will FanZone be announced and open?

*Answer - BWFC website featured a post on 04 Nov announcing collaboration with BWFCST. Programme will depend on Council approvals being gained*

What security will be in place for FanZone given that it is spread about the stadium and open to away fans?

*Answer - security will be the subject of discussions with the Safety Advisory Group and will be treated in a similar manner to security within the stadium*

Who will be responsible for policing unsociable behaviour, club stewards/police or both?

*Answer - as previous answer*

Will there be any family friendly area made available?

*Answer - yes, it is very high on the list of priorities to be as inclusive as possible and include family-friendly facilities*

What measures will be put in place to allow safe pedestrian access around the concourse?

*Answer - this aspect will be fully considered as part of the approvals and security provisions as noted above*

Will there be toilet facilities available?

*Answer - yes*

### Facilities

Do we have an evaluation of the success of the cashless kiosks on the stadium?

*Answer - cashless facilities are proving to be popular and successful and it is planned to also introduce into corporate areas in the future*

Have BWFC considered serving beers in small plastic bottles instead of the draft beer to save time and lower the queue?

*Answer - did not discuss due to time limitations and further input/comment required from club*

Can low alcohol drinks be introduced so that fans can take a drink to their seats?

*Answer - would need to be zero alcohol as no alcohol is permitted in seating areas. One for further assessment*

California, London (and, I would guess all other) affiliates 100% behind improving matchday experience for disabled supporters

*Answer - the subject of disabled facilities is an area for separate discussion and BWFCST will look to involve the BWDSA directly in any such meetings*

Can disabled toilets in both north and south stands be upgraded?

*Answer - as above, to be subject to separate discussions*

Can changing places be provided in toilet on the ground floor of stadium or in the hotel?

*Answer - as above, to be subject to separate discussions*

There are no food or drink outlets in the health care suite, we have to go to ground level or level 3 using the lifts. Can something be provided?

*Answer - as above, to be subject to separate discussions*

Are we sticking with traditional running out music rather than changing every few seasons etc?

*Answer - not discussed at this meeting due to time limitations*

Any thoughts on bringing in local craft breweries for the kiosks? This would improve options for fans and also support local business. Many clubs do this very well, Brighton especially.

*Answer - this is under consideration under the Fanzone development*

### Membership Scheme

*Several questions below are general in nature. Discussion took place about the reasons for the membership scheme and about the coverage from the club prior to and after release.*

*The following is a brief summary of those discussions, with some of the more specific question answered directly:*

- i) NH advised that a membership scheme has been under consideration for a while, but recent crowd disturbances had meant that pressure was increased on the club by the authorities (including EFL) to introduce further measures to facilitate identification of the minority who look to cause trouble.*
- ii) The scheme has been introduced quickly and at no cost to supporters and registrations now amount to around 6.5k (incl approx 2.5k season ticket holders) as at 05 Nov '21*
- iii) The ticket office staff have been dealing with all queries regarding membership registration and assisting with and answering queries received*
- iv) It was accepted that no contact was made with the trust prior to announcement and implementation of the scheme*
- v) It was accepted that some people are saying they are unhappy with the scheme and will not join*

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- vi) *It was suggested that the club should issue a further statement with a positive approach and identifying that assistance is available to all who need it to sign up*  
vi) *The club acknowledged that some problems in the process do exist, but that they will continue to tweek the systems to make signing up as simple, straightforward and quick as possible.*

Members living outside the North West (e.g. London, Norway) make the trip to watch home games a couple of time a year and often bring family and friends who will not want to sign on as members

*Answer - many members outside the North West have signed up as members already. It is a personal choice, but the club stated that the scheme isn't intended to make attending games more difficult*

We have London Whites living all over the South East who attend one or two 'local' away games. What is the rationale for making them become members?

*Answer - if tickets are to be booked by BWFC fans whether home or away, the requirement for security and identification of problem supporters is the same for both home and away games*

I have had a membership card for years, I thought it was a lifetime membership

*Answer - this is a digital membership system administered by the club. Is this question relating to BWFCST membership, perhaps?*

Why renew membership every year?

*Answer - the system requires annual renewal to remain effective in the eyes of the authorities*

Is the new membership scheme simply a knee-jerk reaction to Wigan trouble?

*Answer - see summary above*

Isn't the membership scheme massive overkill?

*Answer - see summary above*

Why do Season Ticket holders need to apply to be members (from next season)?

*Answer - did not discuss due to time limitations and further input/comment required from club*

If Season Ticket holders need to be members, and BW already have their records on file, why can't they be automatically registered?

*Answer - did not discuss due to time limitations and further input/comment required from club*

There are many people in the UK irrationally set against any form of identity card. Are BW prepared to lose them as supporters?

*Answer - did not discuss due to time limitations and further input/comment required from club*

Casual fans will no longer bother to attend games 'on a whim' if they have to register as members

*Answer - did not discuss due to time limitations and further input/comment required from club*

Members living in London regularly bring work colleagues, children and neighbours to games in the area who support other teams. They will stop coming if they have to become BW members

*Answer - see summary above*

We can (sort of) see the rationale for a membership scheme for home games but not for away games

*Answer - see summary above*

If the purpose of the membership is to identify troublemakers and ban them, they will just register again under a friend's name, It won't solve the problem

*Answer - did not discuss due to time limitations and further input/comment required from club*

Can we have a family membership?

*Answer - each membership is individual, but can be linked to a master membership holder for subsequent ticket purchases*

Were ST consulted or informed of the membership scheme before it was announced? If not, why not?

*Answer - see summary above*

### **Behaviour**

Does BW Board have any new initiatives planned against (e.g. racism and homosexual) harassment from the stands ?

*Answer - the club continues to assess, evolve and implement Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) policies*

Would it be a good thing to make a clear statement against all kinds of harassments (e.g. banners on the stadium screen, on the website etc)?

*Answer - did not discuss due to time limitations and further input/comment required from club*

Can anything be done to stop people standing up in seating areas so that children/old folks can see the game?

*Answer - this is a continuing problem in all fully-seated football grounds and is being addressed where possible by stewards*

Some Norwegian football clubs are preparing for how to react if any of the players comes out as gay. Are Ian Evatt and the team prepared to support any teammate who comes out?

*Answer - did not discuss due to time limitations and further input/comment required from club*

### **External**

How much do Wanderers Board know about the Fair Game initiative and what is their view of it?

*Answer - board are aware of Fair Game and currently further assessment is being carried out*

Does the Wanderers Board support the Fan Led Review of football governance in Parliament and are they in favour of an independent regulator for English football?

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*Answer - did not discuss due to time limitations and further input/comment required from club*

Do Trust Board members meet with other Trust Boards when they visit Bolton or when Wanderers visit them (e.g. Was anyone meeting with Pompey Board yesterday)?

*Answer - no formal meetings with other trusts have taken place on a matchday. However, there is regular contact with other supporters trusts via active engagement through the FSA*

Latin America has great players with potential, some EFL clubs are focusing in our continent. It's a great idea to make a plan to take players from Latin America to Bolton.

*Answer - did not discuss due to time limitations and further input/comment required from club*

### Hotel

Are there any upgrades planned to the Whites Hotel as the rooms and facilities generally are beginning to show their age?

*Answer - did not discuss due to time limitations and further input/comment required from club*

Would it be possible for an away FanZone to be set up on the hotel forecourt?

*Answer - this is a possibility and is on the overall Fanzone agenda, but will be subject to further evaluation after consultation with the appropriate authorities*

### Assistance

Would a BW Board member be willing to join the Norway affiliate 25th anniversary meeting and meal in Bolton after a home game in Q1 2022?

*Answer - in principle that would not be a problem. Once details are available, this can be discussed further.*

We used to get a bag of BWFC merchandise (small stuff, not too expensive) once a year, to give away to winners of competitions in Norway. Would it be possible start doing this again?

*Answer - did not discuss due to time limitations and further input/comment required from club*

Is there any assistance (financial or contacts with ex-players in USA like Stu Holden) that BW Board can give us as we are just starting up as a group?

*Answer - trust and club will assist wherever possible and relationship is now being developed*

Late notice of potential game date changes is very unhelpful; several London Whites paid £80 for advanced train tickets which would have been lost if Sheffield had been cancelled

*Answer - fully understood and the club will, at all times, attempt to ensure fixtures take place on the scheduled date and time. However, there are sometimes matters beyond the clubs control*

What ideas does the Club have about international affiliates? (Benefit to being affiliates, events, sharing our activities in the official account or matchday programme)

*Answer - the club is willing to work with the trust in an attempt to assist in developing the relationships with the trust's affiliate network.*

### Tickets

London Whites (and Lancaster) have had a great relationship with the Ticket Office for 20 years. They have made it easier to get tickets for big games. Is this over now?

*Answer - the club ticket office will assist wherever possible, but always in accordance with any ticketing restrictions that are in place for specific games. Club keen to keep relationships with all*

Many London (and other distant affiliate) Whites travel to home games 3 or 4 times a year. Is there any way that affiliates could buy one or a small number of Season Tickets to share?

*Answer - did not discuss due to time limitations and further input/comment required from club*

Will we see more game promotions as have previously (i.e. cheap tickets/ free for children, etc) for some 'lesser' games?

*Answer - always under assessment*

Could the Club target the odd less attractive away game with cheap/free/sponsored family-friendly travel?

*Answer - did not discuss due to time limitations and further input/comment required from club*

I have 3 children who come to games. It is very unclear if they need membership. If they do, how do I get one? Difficult on the site as no options given. Clearer instructions needed.

*Answer - children do need to be registered as members. A call to the ticket office will help all with the membership process*

### Finances

Can we get some feedback on the ambition of the club and when finances will permit investment in some better players?

*Answer - the club are moving towards establishing a more sustainable operational model and this will take time. Player recruitment is always on the agenda but will not be carried out recklessly*

I think Neil mentioned getting to 'operational break-even' in a couple of years; can he say any more about that timescale?

*Answer - the progress to operational break-even is under constant review and will remain so*

When do FV expect to have paid off all debt associated with takeover, or has it already happened?

*Answer - did not discuss due to time limitations and further input/comment required from club*

Does business plan include investment from outside / board members?

*Answer - did not discuss due to time limitations and further input/comment required from club*

Are the current club sponsors with us for the long term or will we move to a move commercially beneficial sponsor as we move (hopefully) to the Championship?

*Answer - did not discuss due to time limitations and further input/comment required from club*

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### Identity

I think the community work is very good and helps enormously

*Answer - thank you. Comments and feedback always appreciated*

I would like to see a 'proper' name for the stadium although accept naming rights bring in needed income

*Answer - did not discuss due to time limitations and further input/comment required from club*