



BWFC Supporters' Trust

MEETING NOTES

Subject: BWFC & BWFCST Quarterly Meeting No 5

Venue: University of Bolton Stadium

Meeting Date: 01 November 2022 @ 10.00am

Present:

BWFC: Neil Hart (NH), Ben Cowcill (BC), Phil Mason (PM)

BWFCST: Ian Bridge (IB), Robin Fletcher (RF), Shane Stopforth (SS), Paul Wood (PW)

MINUTES

1.0 Purpose of Meeting

The meeting is the fifth scheduled quarterly meeting between senior BWFC personnel and BWFCST board representatives as referenced in the joint Memorandum of Understanding signed by both parties in August 2021.

2.0 Matters Arising

a) Minutes of third quarterly meeting held on 05 Aug '22 were approved and are available on the trust website.

b) **FanZone:**

- FanZone now fully operational and both club and trust have received positive feedback.
- Attendances have been good, with capacity regularly achieved for league games.
- Additional shelters are being progressed to increase and improve protection from rain and provision of radiant heaters also being considered when temperatures fall.
- Supporters' Trust cabin now branded with trust representatives available to engage with supporters before games.

c) **Cashless Operation and ANPR Carparking**

- Cashless systems are now in full operation throughout the stadium and FanZone and are operating satisfactorily.
- ANPR systems are now in full operation. There are still reports of some evidence of fines being levied by Parking Eye and any contact regarding any queries or disputes should be addressed to carparks@bwfc.co.uk. NH did report that the recent RLWC event, with 24,000 in attendance and carparks in full use, passed off with no problem.

d) **Bus Operation**

- BC reported that numbers using the club-subsidised bus service have reduced from last season and that the operation was under continuing review.
- The current Greater Manchester transport situation is also undergoing change and it was agreed that club and trust would collaborate on assessment of matchday transport generally.
- It was confirmed that buses will be operating as normal for the FA Cup game on 05 Nov '22



e) Fan behaviour

- The trust had 2 representatives (PW & IB) in attendance at the SAG meeting on 16 Aug '22. Both attendees felt that as their involvement was only for the later part of the meeting, there was little opportunity to raise spectator-specific matters. It was explained that much of the agenda at SAG meetings is not particularly relevant to trust input.
- Considering this experience, it was agreed that a more effective method of engagement would be for club and trust to continue with ongoing dialogue ahead of future SAG meetings and the club would undertake to present results of such discussions to the full SAG when future meetings are convened.
- Assurances were given by BC and NH that this would be the most effective way of presenting trust input to the full SAG meeting.
- PW advised that a situation had arisen after a recent game when the gates to the pedestrian route to the Tesco carpark were closed and this caused some problems with crowd movement. BC said he would investigate.
- IB also reported having been advised of an incident at the railway station after the recent Barnsley game when police involvement to attempt segregation and access to trains had resulted in one train leaving the station without full occupation and had potentially created and not solved segregation issues.
- BC advised that the club would be using an external party to assess and advise on the club-controlled crowd dynamic. The aim is to make such measures as effective as possible and ensure that the confrontational aspect of managing large attendances is minimised.
- NH referenced the recent life-banning order issued by the club in response to continuing unacceptable behaviour from one particular individual. Whilst the club do not take any comfort from such an action, it is felt necessary to emphasise that such behaviour will not be tolerated in future.
- The whole situation continues to be monitored, with the club continuing to look to act proactively to improve safety and matchday experience.

f) Disabled Facilities Working Group

- RF gave an update on events since the last meeting. These involved a series of meetings and site inspections being held, a joint club/trust working group now in place, together with ongoing consultations with Level Playing Field and other external organisations, all with the aim of identifying priority areas for disabled facility upgrading.
- RF advised that a disabled supporters survey will be carried out by the trust in the near future in order to assist in prioritising future improvements.
- PM advised that he would make an introduction to Richard Slater, BWitC member of staff, with a view to assisting the operation of the working group.

g) Supporter Survey

- NH advised that there is an intention to carry out a supporter survey, likely in the early part of 2023, and that the trust will be consulted during development of the content.

3.0 Any Other Business

- a) Half season ticket sales are proceeding well and it is hoped that last season's numbers can be matched, or bettered. In addition, the Bolton Primary Schools Half Season Ticket initiative, as per the trust's suggestion, is also generating encouraging take-up. The trust agreed to also promote wherever possible.
- b) 1st issue of Trust Quarterly Members Newsletter now published.
- c) IB confirmed trust AGM will take place at end of Jan '23 and NH agreed to discuss involvement from club – to be discussed further when date confirmed.

4.0 Next quarterly meeting date

To be held on Friday 06 Jan '23 – to be confirmed

