

West Ham United Supporters' Trust

Steering Committee Minutes

Date of meeting: 1st September 2022

Location: Virtual by Zoom

Present: Nick Drane, Kevin Hind, Mark Inskipp, Anthony Knight,
Rachel McFetridge, Terry Reynolds, Sue Watson, Chris Wheal

Apologies: Richard Elliot, David Shaer

1. Chair's welcome and apologies for absence

Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all present

2. Minutes of Last Meeting and matters arising

After a short discussion it was agreed that the next meeting of the Steering Committee would include an agenda item on Board Policies. Chris would circulate a note to inform the debate. Following correction for a misspelt surname the Minutes of 02/08/2022 were agreed as a true record.

Actions: Chris to circulate a note summarising any inconsistencies between FSA Model Policies and WHUST Steering Committee operating practice and highlighting options for potential flexibilities.

3. Match Day Experience

Anthony set out the background to some of the work he is leading on opportunities to enhance the match-day experience by maximising the impact fans can have at the London Stadium. In summary the ambition is to create dedicated, high-intensity/impact areas at each end of the Stadium. He had reached out to Eintracht Frankfurt Ultras. They had shared how they work with their club and how they self-fund and how they take a very active role in making sure their Ultra fans have a significant match-day impact – including, but not limited to, singing, flags and displays and use of pyrotechnics. It was a model approach he was keen to explore further for WH. He talked the Committee through some of the main elements of a presentation he had shared earlier - highlighting developing propositions including potential:

- Introduction of safe-standing areas at each end of the Stadium along with changes to the design and layout of the Bobby Moore and Trevor Brooking Lower tiers and the expansion of these newly created zones by way of infill of the current mezzanine gaps and movement of existing display screens;
- Dedicated stewarding would be required for the safe-standing Ultra areas to establish and maintain the close relationships needed to support effective planning and safe and successful delivery of specific match-day activities;
- Exploration of the appetite/options for dedicated sponsorship of the Ultra areas and for a degree of autonomy for fan-led match-day arrangements in those parts of the Stadium;
- Creation of a Chicken- Run like area as part of wider initiatives to reach out and offer match-day opportunities to younger people in Newham;
- Creation of a Family Zone in Trevor Brooking Upper;
- Exploration of issues around any possible relocation of the area for Away fans – subject to Premier League and other relevant rules and provisions. Anthony noted that feedback from other WH fan groups had been broadly positive. His conversations with the ARUP architect suggested that the potential design and layout ideas set out in the presentation seemed technically possible; didn't look likely to involve major structural works/cost and did not look likely to impact adversely on athletics and/or other use of the Stadium. The architect had agreed to look at possible locations for a Chicken-Run.

Summing up the discussion which followed, the Chair thanked Anthony for his continuing leadership on this matter. As the workload was expanding it was agreed it would be helpful to seek volunteers for a working group to support Anthony.

Actions: Anthony to arrange a meeting of his Match-Day Experience WG to include Kevin, Mark and Sue.

4 Women at the Match : Intrepid Irons

Introducing the item, Rachel highlighted some of the key points from her earlier paper to the Committee, including that:

- She had met with Fulham Lillies, Pride Of Irons, Women of Watford and Villa Belles all who had been supportive in sharing ideas to get Intrepid Irons up and running;
- Set up an Instagram, Twitter and Facebook account for Intrepid Irons. The Twitter account already had over 320 followers;
- Researched accessible training opportunities for girls within the Foundation;
- Reached out to Her Game Too;
- Spoken about women at the match and Intrepid Irons on Talk Sport radio,

and

- Continued to explore FSA Affiliate membership and search for a suitable local venue to host pre-match meetings with away fans. Next steps include establishing a constitution and committee.

Actions: All. Expressions of Interest in membership of Intrepid Irons committee to Rachel

5 Current workstream update

5.1 Fan Led Review. Nick summarised the latest position, noting that the election of a new PM and potential Cabinet changes could impact current expectations. On the Pan-London FLR initiative, he had so far had expressions of interest from Chelsea, Millwall, Brentford and Charlton. A first meeting at the end of September was planned but he would review timing in the light of final responses and developments iro government and FSA campaigning.

5.2 Independent Supporters Committee

5.2.1 Sue fed back from the 23 August ISC meeting noting that the club were supportive of safe-standing but flagged that they didn't own the Stadium. ISC has been asked to table a draft Action Plan setting out their top 4 priorities to aid focus and track progression. She had proposed: (i) safe standing, walk- ways and fan- zone (ii) vendors and catering and (iii) history, heritage, (iv) stewarding and SLOs. Ticketing was already a stand-alone item. Next steps included refining and finalising a draft Plan. Sue would share the latest ISC minutes once they had been agreed.

5.2.2 Sue noted that the FSA was still considering next steps in relation to the two complaints referred to it. No timings for their action were known at this point.

5.3 Stewarding / SLOs Sue reported that the club were looking to recruit a significant number of SLOs.

5.4 Community Event -Terry noted that this remained on hold awaiting availability of the club to meet to agree progress to delivery. He hoped to get a meeting in the next fortnight, but the delay so far inevitably meant the Event moved out to late-October/early November.

5.5 #TerraceTalk. The meeting noted Dave's update.

5.6 Independent Advisory Group (Metropolitan Police) Minutes of 28 July IAG circulated earlier for information. No matters raised. Sue shared that she would be attending a Public Policy IAG on 6 September which would be focusing on safety and security at larger scale public events and activities including large scale street celebrations, demonstrations and football matches.

- 5.7 Ticketing.** Chris reported that Nicola had responded positively to his reaching out. The next meeting of the Ticketing Sub-Committee would be on 5 September. He was starting to think about how best to express/frame and share customer asks iro the Ticketing Experience.
- 5.8 Broadcasting.** Mark has earlier shared the minutes of the last Premier League/Broadcasters meeting. There was agreement that recent examples of the handling of rescheduled matches with very short notice changes were unacceptable.
- 5.9 Catering.** Mark advised that the price of a pint at the Stadium had moved and was now in line with that at Arsenal and Chelsea. Tottenham remained the outlier. In discussion, the situation at West Ham was contrasted unfavourably with drinks costs at other major sporting events in London. It was noted that it would be unacceptable to drop Tottenham from the average calculations just because beer there was less costly. Sue and Mark will be meeting with Club and Delaware North.
- 5.10 New Membership Strategy.** A meeting on this led by Richard and including Mark, Anthony, Sue and Nick to be arranged.
- 5.11 Communications and Media.** Chris reported that he had approached East London University to explore potential interest in a WHUST media/comms internship. He would await the response and then arrange a meeting with Dave, Mark, Rachel and Nick.

Actions:

Sue to share ISC minutes.

Richard to arrange meeting on New Membership Strategy

Chris to arrange meeting on Communications and Media.

6 AOB

It was agreed that papers to be circulated should be a max of 400 words and reach Mark by close 7 days prior to the relevant Committee meeting.

7. Date of next meeting

20th September...*(subsequently changed to 21st September)*. - papers to Mark by close 13th September

The meeting ended at 8:00pm