

ARSENAL SCOTLAND SUPPORTERS CLUB

MINUTE OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING Sunday 23 July 2017, 14.00 hours, Alfredo's Glasgow

Present:

Mike Buchanan – Chairman/Home Ticket Officer (MB)
Alan Speed – Treasurer (AS)
Martin O'Donnell – Ticket Manager (MO)
Chris Alexander – Away Ticket Officer
Caz Moir – Grampian /North East Rep (CM)

Apologies were received from:

Mark O'Connell – Glasgow Rep
Jamie Lynch – Lothian Rep
Tich Wighton – Fife Rep
Dan Coyle – Grampian /North East Rep
Ryan Mills – Lothian Rep
Eric Mutasa – Glasgow Rep
Charles Brooker – Acting Secretary/Merchandising

In the absence of the Acting Secretary, CM was asked by MB to take notes and provide minutes of the meeting.

MB advised that due to other commitments, Charles Brooker (CB) had stepped down from the Acting Secretary role, effective immediately. It is not clear if CB will continue with Merchandising but MB will discuss this with him prior to the AGM. Dave Harold has kindly agreed to assist with preparation for the AGM when a permanent Secretary will be voted in. CA asked if this meant that candidates would be sought for the role. MB advised that Dave will be asked to provide notice of this vacancy along with AGM papers in order for candidates

to be indentified for a vote to take place at the AGM for a permanent Secretary.

Matters Arising from Previous Minute (22 January 2017)

Gift to Dave Harold: MO advised that this was still in progress and he was liaising with CB regarding this.

Ticket Distribution: MO advised that things continued to run as before with some tickets being posted upon request of members. MB raised that members do at times, contact Ticket Officers very close to date of a game expecting to get a ticket (Cat C games being most popular). While it may be possible that tickets are still available or can be sourced at late notice, it would not always be possible yet those members making such requests are displeased when they cannot be accommodated.

CA raised a point relating to change of fixtures due to TV coverage. In the event that there is a change to the date/time of a game, members who initially requested tickets but can no longer attend due to the change do not readily notify the Ticket Co-Ordinator that they no longer require the ticket and it is only when the member is contacted to confirm a ticket has provided that members advise it is no longer required. It would therefore, be helpful if members informed the appropriate Co-Ordinator if they no longer require a ticket for any reason.

Website: It was agreed that the Website is not being utilised well enough and needs to be updated and perhaps upgraded. It was thought that CB had offered to do this but it was not clear if this has been handed over by Colin Shanks and as CB has now stepped down, clarification of roles regarding the website needs to be sought as it may be necessary to identify a new

website Administrator.

Charity Donations: Due to the uncertainty of responsibility for the website, no information on how to request a charity donation from ASSC has been posted. This will be included in the updating of the site when an Administrator is confirmed/identified.

Coaches: MO reported that the minibus trip to Middlesborough went well but reiterated that he would not be arranging coaches for the coming Season. There was mixed discussion about coach trips including cost effectiveness, interest, fixed package (must include ticket). It was agreed that coaches in general are too expensive, include a lot of responsibility re: alcohol, conduct, co-ordination and although there are pros and cons to providing coaches the general consensus was that the option was there for area reps to arrange their own coach or self drive minibus if they wished but most members now prefer to make their own arrangements.

Expenses for Attending MC Meetings: MB asked that AS ensure CM was provided with £10 towards travel cost.

Membership Officer: MB advised that Ryan Mills was no longer available to take on this role in the new Season and that Dave Harold had agreed to continue in this role for the foreseeable future.

Agenda Items

Roles within Management Committee and Communication (CM): It was highlighted that latterly, there seems to be less recognition of specific roles within the committee and responsibilities are not clearly owned by those with nominated responsibility resulting in a more collective approach to some issues. CM gave an example of a recent discussion which she felt gave

the impression that some reps do not perceive that they have a role or responsibility to the Club.

MB acknowledged this and explained that when the Club started there were no reps, then as more people joined, longer term member identified from the areas to act as a contact for new members and as more active members were identified and started promoting activity, area reps became part of the Club. CM felt that there was a clear role and responsibility for reps to contribute to the social and business aspect of the club.

After further discussion and contribution from all present, it was acknowledged that there is an inequality, specifically within the Area Reps with regard to activity, attendance at meetings and how they are recognised.

CM suggested that this inequality may have contributed to some of the less favourable responses and remarks that have been noted within the Facebook pages during the past season. CM also raised communication within the committee could be improved upon and that this could also improve relationships. MB alluded to some Facebook conversations which start out very reasonable and escalate into arguments or hostility and committee members should take responsibility to end a conversation if it reaches that stage. MB will comment on this at the AGM.

CA noted that the more social side of Club activity had reduced and that this may be due to the increasing number of members. MB suggested this may also relate to the standard of performance of Arsenal FC is at the time – agreed by all!!!!

Management Committee Meeting Frequency (MO): A proposal was made that the Constitution be amended to allow for Management Committee meetings to be convened as required (currently no less than 4 per year) as good turnout at meetings was not logistically

possible. It was agreed that this could not be considered a logistical issue as there is no reason to suggest that non-attendance from any area are unlikely to be due to distance or transport issues. CM also reiterated that the lack of face to face meetings may also have some bearing on the relationships and adverse comments that were previously noted. Based on this discussion and that this was the first season of the new Constitution that there would be no changes proposed at the AGM.

Ticket Charges (MO): It was agreed that an Away tickets for Adult members will be provided at a flat rate of £30 with non-members being charged £40. For Junior Away tickets (now under 16) these will be subsidised at a minimum of £5. However, there may be opportunity to allocate an additional, discretionary subsidy dependent on the sale of spare Away tickets to non-members. CA will manage this on a game to game basis.

Home tickets charges will be reviewed for the 2018/19 season.

MB raised that money was being lost by subsidising non-member Juniors and that the subsidy should be available to Junior members only. This was agreed and MB stated that another reason for this was that members are accountable. CA advised that there is a process in place where the name of the ticket purchaser is recorded with the Row and Seat number to ensure that anyone receiving tickets from ASSC can be identified and held accountable for any issues that arise.

It was also agreed that members should be made aware that disruptive behaviour may lead to ejection from the stadium and ASSC being notified of this, leading to consequences for the member, ASSC and in the case of

a Season Ticket being utilised, the person who has allowed his/her Season Ticket to be used by ASSC. MB will raise conduct and representing the club at the AGM.

MB noted that some people were asking about Under 18 tickets and it was thought this may be available in other clubs. It was agreed that ASSC will remain in line with Arsenal FC and provide Junior tickets to Under 16s and Adult tickets only.

Ticket Ballots (MO): Discussion took place regarding the Ballot issue. MB feels that by proposing that others become involved that his integrity is being brought into question. MO stated that it was to protect Ticket Officers from any type of unfair criticism.

CM explained it is not the integrity of MB or any of the Ticket Officers that is being questioned and confirmed that this is not the case from members comments but it does appear to be the lack of transparency conveyed by the assumed reluctance to share ballot results within the membership.

CM acknowledged the arguments around confidentiality and members being influenced/pressured, but all that is required to be shared to satisfy members is the list of names in the order they were drawn from the ballot. MB also noted that when a ballot was required, he would withdraw both his and his son's name in the interest of fairness. CM argued that this was not fair as MB and son were missing the opportunity to go to the most popular games and by sharing the Ballot responsibility amongst the areas, this would allow them to be included. It was agreed that involving other areas in Ballot process would be trialled and evaluated over the coming season.

Further discussion in relation to ticket allocation raised

several other issues:

There are often requests from members regarding accommodation, directions, etc when going to games. Based on this and earlier discussion about late requests, not cancelling requests, etc, CM offered to put together a process and guidance on how to request tickets with details of timeline on requesting a ticket, who to contact, how outcome will be communicated, payment, etc. CM will liaise with Mike, Chris and Martin as necessary to produce the guidance.

Date of AGM (MB): Based on televised games and availability of management committee, it was agreed that the AGM will be held on Sunday 17 September 2017 at 16.00 hours after meeting to watch the Chelsea game. Full details will be communicated to members next week.

Management Committee Member for Dumfries and Galloway (MO): Noted that there has not been a MC Representative for this area. Discussion suggested that this is due to the widespread area which meant that members from Dumfries and Galloway could be located close to other areas where there are reps and venues to meet for games. It was agreed that this could be trialled and then if considered appropriate may become permanent. Notification will go to members with a DG postcode to show interest if they wish to be considered as the “trial rep” and this will be addressed at the AGM.

Treasurer’s Report (AS): A summary of the accounts was provided. AS noted a loss against Match Transport and Merchandising but this is likely to reduce when all payments are accounted for. MO asked if there is confirmation of payments being transferred into the ASSC account and it would appear this is not always the case. MB advised that for Home ticket payments, he has asked members to provide a screenshot of the

payment as soon as it is paid. AS noted that due to the difficulties with access during the transition, it was not possible for him to check if a payment had been cleared. It was also noted that some members are stating a date on which they will make a payment and not confirming that they have actually paid. This may therefore, not be taken into account for checking that payment has actually been made on the advanced date and it may be that not all payments are confirmed. CA advised that there should not be these issues in the coming season as MB, AS and he will be working more closely together to ensure there is full transparency with regard to who has made payments for tickets. CM added that when the guidance document is complete, the payment process will be clear and this too will help with the process.

MB made a suggestion on how to reduce excess funds by subsidising Home Game tickets. This was considered a reasonable proposal. AS suggested that it may be more appropriate to hold off on this until the 2018/19 season. This was agreed.

AOCB

MO raised Eric Mutasa's query regarding Rangers memorabilia which had been presented to Arsenal FC during a visit by Rangers FC and was donated back to ASSC. Auctions and raffles had been suggested in the Glasgow area but it was acknowledged that there may be interested Ranger's fans throughout Scotland. It was agreed to arrange a formal raffle with printed tickets to be distributed to all reps to sell as widely as possible.

All proceeds (after expenses of printing, postage, etc) will be donated back to the Arsenal Foundation. MO agreed to prepare ASSC raffle tickets along the same lines as the drinks vouchers that were provided on Cup Final day to get things in place.

There being no other business, MB thanked those present for attending and the meeting closed at 16.30 hours.

The next meeting will be the AGM on Sunday 17 September at 13.30 for the Chelsea game and 16.00 for the meeting. Venue: The Constitution Bar, Constitution Street, Leith, Edinburgh.