

Minutes of the Blackburn Rovers Fans' Forum

Ewood Park, Tuesday 13th March 2018 – 7.00pm

Present – Fans' Forum

Tris Stock
Neil Duckworth

John Wareing
Savio Mathias
Mark Hitchen
Jennifer Lewis
Alan Birkbeck
Annette Birkbeck
Anthony Corry
Ray Williamson
Gordon Ormerod

Present from BRFC

Steve Waggott
Mike Cheston

Lynsey Talbot

1. Apologies for absence

Bharat Parmar
Jim Holden
Terry Crawford
Steve Birtwell
Rob Parker

2. Matters Arising from Minutes of the Previous Meeting 16th January 2018

- **Migration of fans from Jack Walker outer to Centre during games**
ND reported that he understood that this is still happening. LT stated that a steward had been put in place but that there were still some issues to resolve.
- **Car Park F Capacity**
TS stated that JH reported that there still seemed to be an issue at the Wigan game.
SW stated that the club would look at this and other points raised.
- **Ticket Priority for Away Games**
TS stated that there had been some complaints about the ticket arrangements for the Fleetwood game, where a number of regular attendees at away games had failed to get tickets.
It was expected that the game at Bristol Rovers would be the only away game left where arrangements would need to be carefully handled – there would only be around 1,150 tickets available. Other games were not expected to sell out.
- **Blues Bar Beamback**
SW stated that the beamback to Blues Bar for both the Walsall and

AFC Wimbledon games had been a great success. He outlined the economics for a beam back with the Football League. The League charged £700 for a beam back, plus a further £350 for commentary and £360 for an engineer to be on site for any technical issues. So the ticket price to fans covered the costs and the club could make a profit on bar sales. The success of the beam back had led to the club considering opening up some lounge space as well for future games with some food and drink packages offered.

- **Team Photos**

LT reported that Rob Gill should be producing the team photos later that week. SM pointed out that individual player photos had run out at a recent player signing and that they were not available in the club shop.

3. Lack of Replays on the Big Screen

TS reported that many fans were disappointed that there were no longer replays available on the big screen. MC replied that the contract with CreaTV had been reduced as a cost saving exercise after relegation and that the ability to show replays had been one of the services lost. He agreed that this particular aspect would be reconsidered should the club get promoted.

4. 2018/19 Season Tickets & Matchday Pricing

MH asked whether the club was considering an early bird season ticket offer for the 2018/19 season. SW replied that various proposals were currently under consideration.

TS stated that a number of fans were asking whether the club would consider a cut price deal for one of the remaining home games this season as a few clubs had done. SW responded that the club were considering such an offer at a future home game with the Peterborough game being possibly the most attractive to do such a promotional campaign. He has spent some time talking to fans at recent away games, many of whom were not currently attending home games. He was considering ways of encouraging them to come back under some form of “amnesty” for a reduced ticket price.

5. Concourse Service Delays

AC reported constant problems with getting served with both food and drink at concourse kiosks at half time – the staff were unable to serve quickly enough. MH added that having to make cash payments was also a reason for delays. Delays appeared to be an issue in all stands and ND added that there had also been problems with running out of food in the Darwen End.

MC responded that there had been a project to install contactless technology around the stadium last year but this had not been funded following relegation. SW stated that this was amongst a number of proposals under consideration for capital expenditure.

6. Community Stand

TS asked whether the club felt that there would be a market for a Community Stand in the ground with no alcohol and halal food options to attract the large Asian population in Blackburn.

There was some discussion about this suggestion. JW suggested that, if the club was planning a cut price offer for a future home game, that the Blackburn End Upper could be opened up as a no alcohol area as an experiment.

MC stated that a lot of work was going on to connect with the local BAME community through internal focus groups and the work of the Community Trust.

LT added that the club were in the early stages of planning a close season multi-cultural event at the ground.

7. Supporter Consultative Meeting

SW stated that he was preparing two scenarios for spending for the next season depending on whether promotion was achieved and he hoped to have approval over the coming weeks. He was therefore planning to hold the consultative meeting towards the end of April when he could report on the outcome.

There was some discussion about the financial challenge that the club would face should they gain promotion, given that around half the teams in the league would have the advantage of Premier League parachute payments. SW stated that the club's recruitment department had been restructured, with the intention of being able to identify and secure suitable targets during the close season.

8. Any Other Business

- JW asked what the situation was with a possible postponement of the home game with Bradford if the club had players in International action two days before. SW replied that the club were aware of the potential issue and were in discussions.
- AB asked if there were any plans yet for pre-season games. SW replied that there were some issues to resolve but that they hoped to have plans agreed in the near future.
- MH stated that some parts of the ground were looking a little shoddy and could do with some refurbishment.

- SW wished to record his congratulations to the Community Trust for its recent award as EFL North West Checkatrade Community Club of the Year. The Trust were running 48 different projects and engaging 51,000 people.
LT added that the club had just submitted its application for Family Club of the Year.

9. Dates of Next Meetings

Pre -meet	Main meeting
14/5/18	22/5/18
2/7/18	9/7/18
3/9/18	10/9/18
5/1/18	12/11/18

Pre-meets are held one week before the main meetings. The pre-meet is open to all interested fans to attend, providing they request to do so in advance by contacting John Wareing by email or phone as below.

Members should contact John Wareing at roversfansforum@hotmail.com or 07984 085474 to give their apologies if they cannot attend a meeting.

Fans can also contact John regarding the Forum using the contact details above.