



Minutes

Title of Meeting:	MK Dons Supporters' Board – Meeting 08	
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday 13 th September 2023 at 6.35pm – 8.20pm	
Attendees		
Name	Attended	Organisation
Pete Winkelman (PW)	A	Chairman at MK Dons FC
Antoni Fruncillo (AF)	A	Head of Communications at MK Dons FC
Simon Crampton (SC)	A	Performance Director at MK Dons FC
John Cove (JC)	A	Director, MK Dons / Chairman, MK Dons SET
Maralyn Smith (MS)	A	CEO at MK Dons SET
Bobby Winkelman (RW)	A	Director at MK Dons
Jim Mann (JM)	A	Supporters' Board - Chair
John Brockwell (JB)	A	Supporters' Board - Secretary
John Samuel (JS)	A	Supporters' Board (MKDSA)
Bailey Bedborough (BB)	A	Supporters' Board
David Wright (DW)	A	Supporters' Board
Carol Head (CH)	A	Supporters' Board
Tom Gidley (TG)	A	Supporters' Board
Antony Yates (AY)	A	Supporters' Board
Tina Kenny (TK)	A	Supporters' Board
Ciaran Flanagan (CF)	A	Secretary at MKDSA
Apologies:		
Alexander Jovic (AJ) - Supporters' Board		

1	Standing Items	Action
A	All members confirmed that they no Conflicts of Interest related to matters being discussed. Apologies were received from AJ.	N/A
B	Minutes of Meeting held on 12 th July 2023 were unanimously approved subject to a change in wording of 5D from “There are 12 wheelchair spaces available for MK Dons disabled supporters” to “There are 12 wheelchair spaces available for MK Dons supporters”.	JB
2	Guests	
A	JM introduced Maralyn Smith (MK Dons SET CEO) and Ciaran Flanagan who attended as an MKDSA representative whilst the MKDSA finalise who will replace Louise Walsh on the SB.	
3	Matters Arising	
A	SB Chair Interview (3B) JM and AF agreed to arrange the filming of the interview. JM to suggest dates bearing in mind the need to leave time for supporters to pose questions.	JM
B	Hygiene Products for Females (3E) CH and TK have met with MS to discuss the best way to implement this. The chosen route is via “ Girl Pack ” an MK based charity. The club announced the tie up in August which will ensure emergency period products are available both in the female toilets and the First Aid stations at Stadium MK on matchdays. The SB thanked the club and in particular MS for the speed at which this initiative has been implemented.	N/A
C	Seat Oiling (3F) JC will provide the contact details of the Maintenance Team to JB.	JB
D	Men’s “Man Cave” Mental Health Group (3N) Currently waiting for the Charity Number to be issued. Ways of working with MK Dons SET being explored.	N/A
E	Programmes (7A) CH has fed back a detailed response to the supporter raising the query. JB has forwarded information on other clubs’ stance on programmes to AF and CF. It is clear that an increasing number of clubs are now dispensing with programmes as the content is available online using smart phones which reduces the demand for printed media.	



	<p>MK Dons programme pagination has now increased by four pages which include content from the Women’s Team, MK Dons SET, Young Dons and the Academy.</p> <p>JC advised that the club were looking at increasing the places where programmes can be purchased including outside the ground. JC noted that Crewe no longer produce programmes but publishes a magazine once a month that has details of all the matches in the month.</p> <p>The club is open to ideas on programmes or alternatives. Any suggestions to be forwarded to JC and AF.</p> <p>AF indicated that the main markets for programmes are programme collectors, supporters who are less inclined to use the internet for club articles and younger supporters. TG advised that younger supporters liked to have programmes to get the signatures of players.</p> <p>CF asked if it is possible for signage to be put up in Lewington’s pointing out that programmes are available in the MKDSA area.</p>	<p>CH to advise supporter.</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>JC</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Club Points for Discussion</p>	
<p>A</p>	<p>Parking</p> <p>JC acknowledged that the new parking system had got off to a rocky” start for which the club apologises. It was compounded by the fact that the Arena was hosting a Darts tournament at the same time which hadn’t been fully taken into account.</p> <p>The club received eight complaints after the first match but there have been no complaints received for the last two home games.</p> <p>There are some issues with the parking staff being different each week and although being briefed are not fully conversant with the system. The club are now recruiting their own staff who will permanently man the car parks.</p> <p>CF advised that he’d had a supporter inform him that they’d raised a complaint to the club about parking and not received a response. They had then contacted MK1 who responded a little while later.</p> <p>JS asked for clarification of the process to notify the club of an alternative car registration number. JC advised that supporters should email enquiries@mk1parking.com in line with the process outlined in the FAQ’s.</p> <p>JS discussed concerns raised by a disabled supporter regarding attendance at Women’s matches at the stadium. Due to the time taken to exit their vehicle to enter the stadium and to exit after the match via a lift, that at times has been out of action, they feel that they are disproportionately impacted by paying by the hour as they have to factor in the extra time</p>	<p>CF to pass details of supporter to JC.</p>

	<p>required and therefore feel pressured to pay for additional parking time. JC advised that the average payment selected for a women’s Sunday match is three hours and that would allow more than enough time either side of the match to enter and exit the stadium. JC also noted that despite the previous Sunday’s match kick off being delayed by 15 minutes due to the weather no PCN notices had been issued.</p> <p>JS queried why the match day charging was different to the by the hour charges. JC advised that “Events” are defined by attendance and the increased infrastructure / staffing needed and are charged differently.</p> <p>AY pointed out that the emailed “Fan Guide” for the Notts County match contained an error regarding Disabled Parking. It stated that all seasonal disabled parking would be E1 and E2 for the match. AY pointed out that his parking space is in S1. This isn’t a normal statement but was inserted due to the car park being sold out. PW confirmed that all seasonal parking is protected, and this was an error.</p> <p>AY pointed out the difficulties experienced by disabled supporters when the lift at Gate 7 is out of action as it was for the women’s match on Sunday. The alternative lift at Gate 6 can only accommodate one wheelchair.</p>	<p>AF to investigate how this error occurred.</p> <p>JC investigating possibility of using the Hotel exit if there are further issues.</p>
<p>B</p>	<p>Safety and Security</p> <p>The annual Safety & Advisory Group (SAG) meeting has just taken place. The clubs P&S Rating has remained at 1 which is good news as this rating affects the maximum number of supporters allow in the ground.</p> <p>Discussions have taken place between the Council and JB regarding supporters’ interface with the SAG. There are two ways to engage with the SAG. Supporters can communicate directly, or the SB can discuss and record items/concerns that need to be fed to the SAG. The club would present the item at the SAG and if appropriate could take a member of the SB with them for that item.</p> <p>The Sports Ground Safety Authority (SGSA) are currently having a consultation on charging for their services. The current fee is £100 but the suggestion is that charging may change to around £1 a seat. If that is the case that will be a huge increase for our club and therefore the club would welcome feedback to the SGSA when the consultation calls for public response.</p> <p>Currently the SGSA are contacting clubs to ensure that structural surveys have been carried out. JC confirmed that the club carry out an annual survey. It’s thought that the increased focus is due to the recent highlighting of issues around RAAC. Our stadium was built at a time when RAAC wasn’t generally used and happily it’s not present at our ground.</p> <p>Away supporters are now allocated to the upper tier which has reduced to zero flares being thrown and pitch encroachment from that area of the ground.</p> <p>Persistent standing is now becoming a major focus for the SGSA. Due to this there will be a more active initiative by stewards encouraging supporters to</p>	



	<p>sit in their seats. The club need to be proactive with regards to this for both home and away supporters as sanctions can be levied by the SGSA.</p>	
C	<p>Events Planner A copy of this was circulated prior to the meeting. JC explained that the purpose of the planner was so that the club was aware of events Internationally, Nationally and locally. It doesn't mean to say that the club will actively do something on the various events/celebrations but it can focus on things that tie in with the club. As an example, the recent Ukraine National day.</p> <p>It was noted that the MKDSA 20th anniversary event wasn't included on the Clubs event planner. JS to contact Dan Cahill to ensure this is added.</p>	JS
5	MKDSA ITEMS	
A	<p>Lewington's JS asked what could be done to make Lewington's a better experience for supporters over the cold winter months.</p> <p>JC pointed out that at the last meeting (12th July 2023 – point 3A) it was agreed that the club would be concentrating its investment in the playing squad and after months of discussions with various parties it had come to the conclusion that altering Lewington's would reduce the capacity and divert funds from the squad.</p> <p>PW commented that it needs to be viewed as an under cover outdoor bar. The only way to improve it is to enclose it which will cut the capacity.</p>	N/A
B	<p>Food Discount JS raised a query from a supporter asking why the 10% discount is withdrawn after kick off.</p> <p>JC advised that the reason that it is for a limited period of time is because it is used to encourage supporters to arrive early for the game. Typically the main bulk of supporters were arriving around 10 minutes before kick-off.</p> <p>AF commented that if it was allowed at half time it would increase the time taken to serve and therefore would mean longer queues.</p> <p>PW pointed out that the club had listen to previous feedback from the SB and ensured that disabled supporters who order from their seats could benefit from the 10% discount during the first half. The reasoning being they have to wait for their orders to be taken until after kick off hence it was seen as unfair to not allow them to benefit from the discount.</p>	N/A

	JC further advised that the 10% is now applied in Club Red as well.	
C	<p>Comfort Room</p> <p>A presentation from the MKDSA Disability Officers was circulated prior to the meeting. The idea behind a Comfort Room is to give elderly/disabled fans easy access to a room where they can be warm and have some time out from the public parts of the stadium.</p> <p>The area suggested was the MK Dons SET study centre on the concourse. MS highlighted that the room is used for the Mascots and their families pre match and the ball retrievers at half time therefore it isn't available for other uses. She also pointed out that from experience the room isn't a quiet room.</p> <p>JS asked if there is anywhere else in the stadium where the room could be located. JC advised that all the spaces on the concourse are taken for catering or First Aid purposes. Lewington's could be used for this purpose during the match but at times it might not be warm enough.</p> <p>AF pointed out that finding a permanent space would be an issue. At some matches there will be the possibility of a room being available but that doesn't mean that it will be available at the next mach. As an example there is sometimes a room that used for the Press that is available. Having a facility one match and not at the next match would confuse both supporters and stewards.</p>	JC to brief the stewards regarding this
D	<p>Supporter Behaviour (JS)</p> <p>JS briefed the SB on an incident reported by the Chair of the MKDSA that happened at the last home match. A supporter had become loudly abusive at the MKDSA counter in Lewington's after finding out that away travel to Oxford was sold out. The MKDSA enquired about how this type of incident should be handled.</p> <p>JC advised that if this had happened in the club shop and the person continued to misbehave then the Response Team would be called who would deal with the individual. If the situation deescalated and apologies were offered then the matter would usually end. If this didn't happen or the incident was more serious the individual would be removed and invited into the club for a discussion. An ABC (Acceptable Behaviour Contract) would then normally be issued which they would have to agree and sign before being allowed into the club in future.</p> <p>With regards to the specific incident no one from the club was informed of the incident. JS pointed out that there are no stewards in Lewington's. JC advised that the bar has a "red phone" that they can use to call the Response Team.</p> <p>JC queried if the MKDSA have a recourse under their disciplinary procedures and offered assistance if they required help revising these.</p>	



6	Dons Action	
A	Nothing to present	N/A
7	Items raised by Supporters	
A	<p>Women's 3rd kit availability</p> <p>The blue third kit has proved extremely popular and CH has been in correspondence with one of our female supporters who was concerned that the kit sold out in the club shop and wasn't being replenished. It was available online but the season ticket discount is not available for online purchases.</p> <p>SC has ensured that this item will be back in stock at the shop this week and Castore have given the supporter a gesture "of good will".</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>N/A</p>
B	<p>Pricing Query</p> <p>SC provided an update on the pricing query in the last minutes (8C). Castore are reviewing the pricing structure across all the teams to ensure that these are consistent for next season.</p>	N/A
8	TERMS OF REFERENCE	
A	<p>JB thanked JC,TK,CH and JM for their assistance in reviewing our current Terms of Reference (ToR). Changes proposed were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selecting applicants. Selection body agreed to be two members of club staff, one member of affiliate group, two members of the SB. • Term of office. Amended to three years. At the end of three years the outgoing SB member can stand for re-election if they so wish. The maximum term of office is three terms (nine years), after which the SB member cannot stand for re-election. <p>JC pointed out that we may wish to draw lots or have a ballot at some point before the end of the season to avert all members three year term ending at the same time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair and Secretary selection and, if required, removal plus term of office has been defined in the revised ToR. • The job titles of club staff have been amended to reflect the current structure. <p>All those present were in favour of the changes.</p>	<p>JB to add to agenda before the end of season 2023/4</p> <p>JB to update and issue revised ToR</p>

	<p>TK asked if we should increase the age band for the SB members representing the younger fan base from U21 to U25. After discussion it was agreed to keep with the current U21 arrangement.</p> <p>It was agreed that the club select the Affiliate Supporter Groups who are given a seat on the SB. Any new groups would be considered as part of the annual review of the ToR. The seat would be made available whether or not they decide to take the offer of the seat up.</p>	
B	<p>JC thanked all members of the SB for a successful first year. He highlighted the fact that the members of the SB do not hold onto issues or queries but raise these straight away for resolution instead of waiting until the next meeting.</p>	

9	MK Dons SET presentation	
A	<p>JM welcomed MS to the meeting.</p> <p>MS explained that currently the SET are involved in 37 different programmes. The SET covers everything from Community based work, work in schools and match day activities. MS used a presentation that included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last year 51,713 participants. The youngest was 3 years old and the oldest was 92. • Football pathways are mainly linked to youth football. Currently catering for players aged up to 25 but this is now broadening to accommodate older players. • MK Dons SET National Project Winners for Knife Angel 2022/23 and South-East Community Club of the Year 2021/22. 3,500 young people were engaged with this project. • Over 1100 participants attending sessions weekly with MK Dons SET. • Holiday Camps delivered to over 1000 Youth across Milton Keynes during the summer. • 2 Holiday Activity Fund programmes including a SEND specific one. • Schools Programme 52 schools provided with Maths, English and physical education programmes and competitions. • Boys Pathway seeing 450+ participants per week and the Girls pathway has 250+ per week. • Christmas hamper distribution 2022 – 350 hampers distributed feeding over 1000 people for a week this year • Christmas Party for Young Dons – 450 young fans. This years will be held on 17th December. • Womens UEFA Euros 2022 supported fan parties and set up new provision for women, over 15k participants across the parties and activities. • 5 intervention programmes currently being run targeting vulnerable young people giving them a safe place to express and play football. 150+ currently in this programme. 	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls football pathway from Grassroots all the way up to and including the Women’s first team. • Inclusion programme now has over 2,400 players. • Work with the Prisons and TVP. <p>New project for this year is the Cowshed art project which has been funded by Marshalls. Looking at ways to build the noise on Saturday afternoons. Collaborating with local performance groups to make some noise on matchdays. Creating new opportunities for individuals and groups to learn music in informal fun ways.</p> <p>The MK Dons SET now run three facilities: Brooklands, Woughton and Fairfields. Total pitches for all sites – 15 grass pitches 1 outdoor 3G, 1 indoor 3G, 2 sand based pitches and 1 sports hall.</p> <p>The MK Dons SET have recently obtained funding to employ a Fan Engagement Officer. MS is keen to find out how the role could work alongside the SB and with supporters in general to maximise the impact of the role.</p> <p>JC acknowledged that the club has not publicised the fantastic work that the SET do enough. AF now has a member of staff whose role includes getting two of three stories from the SET each week.</p> <p>PW suggested adding attendance of the SB meetings to the new Fan Engagement Officers remit.</p> <p>CF requested that the presentation be played on a continuous basis on one of the screens in Lewington’s.</p>	<p>ALL to feedback</p> <p>MS</p> <p>JC</p>
B	CH requested that the club present a regular update on the activities of MK Dons SET as part of their standing items on the agenda.	JC
C	<p>PW announced that AF would be leaving the club to take up a role in a Premiership club. He joins a long list of former MK Dons Press Officers that have moved on to Premiership clubs.</p> <p>The SB congratulated AF on the move and thanked him for his excellent work on all the areas of his role especially the rapidly evolving Social Media element.</p>	

10	Any Other Business	
A	<p>Family Fun Day (JB)</p> <p>The SB discussed what the focus of the SB's stall at Saturday's Family Fun Day would be. In view of the MK Dons SET recent advert for a Fan Engagement Officer it was decided that would be the main theme. Volunteers to host the stand: 12:30 – 1:00 AY, 1:00 – 1:30 JM, 1:30 – 2:00 DW, 2:00 – 2:30 CH.</p>	
B	<p>MK Dons HR (BB)</p> <p>BB raised a query on how the club respond to applicants for roles. JC explained that the club's website contains the following statement: "Due to the high level of applicants we receive, if you have not been contacted within 7 days of the job advert closing, you have been unsuccessful on this occasion. We would like to thank you for your interest in our company." If an interview takes place the clubs process is that the individual will get feedback on whether they have been successful or not.</p>	
C	<p>Away Travel (JS)</p> <p>Four successful trips so far with good feedback from supporters.</p>	
D	<p>MKDSA 20th Anniversary (JS)</p> <p>This will be held on Monday 23rd October in the Players Lounge. There will be live music, guests and food.</p>	
E	<p>Ukraine (JS)</p> <p>The signed shirt has been sent to Max in Ukraine. It's not arrived yet, but he is tracking it via an app and thanks everyone for the support that they have shown.</p>	
F	<p>Data Protection & Social Media (CF)</p> <p>The MKDSA are currently reviewing these. CF is keen to closely align these with the club's policies.</p>	JC to assist
G	<p>EFL Together Video (AY)</p> <p>AY queried if the "EFL Together" video would be used by the club. JC confirmed that the club had received a copy today. AF to look at putting this on the screen and website.</p>	AF
H	<p>Ticket Pricing (BB)</p> <p>BB has had feedback that ticket prices for a L2 match at MK Dons were perceived to be expensive for an adult bringing a child. PW pointed out that Family Fun Day is coming up with cheap tickets available. There have also been various offers for families including via MK FM.</p>	
I	<p>Training Ground (JB)</p> <p>PW confirmed that the pitches will not be put in place until after next year's concerts. It's possible that enabling works will start earlier, things like the aggregate subbase of the pitches and drainage. The project is ongoing with meetings taking place between various parties on a weekly basis.</p>	
J	<p>Box Office (CH)</p> <p>CH informed that a new fan had contacted her wanting to bring her autistic son to a match. The box office were extremely helpful and advised on where</p>	



	best to sit. After a follow up CH was delighted to hear that they'd had a great day and were looking forward to attending again.	
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11	DATE FOR NEXT MEETING	
	Wednesday 6th December 6:30pm	DC to book room
12	AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING	
	JB to work on the agenda and circulate with all Board members ahead of the next meeting.	JB to write agenda