

Preston North End And Preston Supporters Collective



Minutes of scheduled meeting held on Monday 13th February 2023 at 6pm in the Boardroom at Deepdale

Attendees: Peter Ridsdale, Ben Rhodes, Hannah Broadley (PNE), Ben Astley, John Billington, Bill Whisker, Chris Pope, Kim Ramshead and Charlie Winyard (PSC).

Apologies: None.

1. Permanent Fanzone

BR confirmed that the new fanzone would be called 'The Gentry Bar', having had double the votes of the second-placed name. He confirmed that a major overhaul of the space had started, working with external companies to put in a new door for heartbeat, that opened the space up for the new fanzone to have a new bar put in, with major refurbishment of seated areas and a design concept to fit the new name. He also said there would be a 'Gentry Wall' allowing fans to add names to it. PR added that conversations were already underway with the council over the licence and what would be allowed in the outside space near the Dick, Kerr Ladies memorial, confirming that's what had been applied for. JB asked if it would open during the week, who would operate it and whether it could be used as a seven day hub. PR said it would depend on the licencing authorities' reaction, but he would like it to be open as much as possible and operation would be covered under section 2 in terms of catering contracts. BR added there was a plan for smaller, different types of catering vans outside. JB asked whether old memorabilia, such as the old Pavilion gate could be incorporated. PR confirmed the whole area, including the stand would be cleaned and painted. BA asked whether the tent could also be kept as an overflow. PR said another meeting would be arranged to show some of the designs and plans before it opened on 10th April. BA asked about utilising ex-players as well as music in there to add to the experience.

2. Merchandising And Catering Contract Updates

BR said that an announcement about the new kit supplier would be imminent, with Castore confirmed as agreeing deal to supply the kit and run the shop. He said a lot of development work had gone in with them to create bespoke kits that explore the heritage of the club and the city. He also said that the contract allows for the relationship with The Terrace to continue and talks on this would get underway once the legal agreement was finalised with Castore. PR said on catering that a statement had been made just after the new year confirming the club had to inform the current caterers by 31st March if they were to continue in place. He added that the club had been through a full process to look at what else is available and that the club had not communicated a final decision to either the existing partners or any external tenders, but will have by 31st March.

3. BSK Stewarding And Ticketing Arrangements

BR said that there had been a number of issues in this area with a small section of youthful supporters, who had made it tough to steward and this had been raised by the licensing authorities at the most recent SAG (Safety Advisory Group). PR said the more in there, the less anti-social behaviour there had been, but said that the current set up was not ideal, but

before any decision was taken in the summer whether to continue with the option or not, the club would engage with PSC and supporters before making any decision. JB shared his experiences of being in there and the stewarding.

4. Safe Standing

PR explained this was still on the agenda and that the SAG was still asking the club to continue to keep their mind open to it. However, he explained there were some significant capital expenditure projects that needed to be looked at – pitch, roof, big screen, fanzone and the safe standing and the club needed to know what was available to spend and what the priorities were.

5. Season Cards 2023/24

BR confirmed that conversations had started, but that nothing was ready for sale yet. PR added that last year's pricing clearly worked; whether it would again, time would tell, but he believes the club can be sufficiently innovative enough to lock people in at a price, rather than to increase it. How that is done, time would tell, but no one at the moment is expecting them to go up at this stage. BA asked about those using the finance scheme and whether direct debit might be an option. It was explained that the current ticketing system had some challenges that made this difficult at this time, but another reasons that the club has a fixed cost base and giving fans the ability to cancel their direct debit when the income has been budgeted for, without an easy way to block the tickets, was not one that would work at this time.

6. Pre-Season Tour Dates 2023

BR said that this should be confirmed soon; with the plan to go back to Campamaor again in July, with the exact dates to be confirmed around other fixtures that were planned, including the previously committed to testimonial for Paul Huntington. He also said that a fixture would likely be played in a stadium, rather than at the training ground – ideally in an evening.

7. Media Coverage Of Youth Team And Women's Team

BA asked about using the FA Youth Cup QF to raise the profile of the youth team further. HB confirmed that the extensive coverage would continue, with the chance to utilise the Weekend Warm Up and social media to further enhance that. She also confirmed that a new media lead for PNECET had started and that they should continue to cover the women's team, but explained they had been experiencing problems with their Twitter handle, which the women's team hoped to resolve as soon as possible. JB shared social media numbers and HB discussed the growth of the channels, but also explained why some clubs figures were disproportionate because of their Premier League exposure.

8. Fans' Forum Events And Future Fan Engagement

PR explained that the club's fan engagement was evolving. PSC are a relatively new group that the club meets, but there was the 11 fan group meeting in November, which the chairman attended. Craig Hemmings feels that the club are yet to find the right solution to fan engagement. PR continued to say that there would be fans' forums when appropriate. PR said that these events would happen. In response to the club's position on fans' forums and the club stating that they were still going to happen, PSC stated that the amended

Customer Charter did not reflect that position whatsoever and there were people who would prefer to ask their questions in that environment and the feedback from them was they felt disenfranchised and were angry about it. It was put to the club that members of PSC steering group had received personal abuse as a result of this approach. PSC re-stated their position, that there was no evidence that these fans' forums would happen. There was a discussion around the government white paper on football governance and the possibility of shadow boards, which the club welcomed. PSC followed on from the meeting of fans' groups in November and asked PR whether the structure within the club was viable in terms of meeting day to day requirements. It was stated that there was a perception from supporters stated to PSC, that this structure isn't working and that a fresh approach and ideas were required. PR defended his and the club's position. PR indicated that running the club was challenging with a reduced budget and ground maintenance challenges which had built up over years, all coming to head all at once.

9. Commercial Update

BA asked about opportunities to increase commercial revenues and a discussed was had about deals and opportunities available, including retail, catering, stadium advertising, including, but not limited to, roof advertising, stadium naming rights and big screen.

10. Volunteering

It was agreed that PSC would put together a list of names and send them through to Jonathan Counce and PNECET to move this forward.

11. Topics Raised By PSC Members And Any Other Business

BA asked about commercial upgrades for season ticket holders. HB confirmed there were opportunities for this and more would be done to publicise it. BA asked about support for Nick Anderton. HB said that promotion of his fundraising had already been happening, but it was the media team's plan to also have him on the Weekend Warm Up soon and to have more coverage of his efforts. BA asked about the Gentry Day selection. It was confirmed that there was approx. 50 votes between the two top games and that Middlesbrough had been selected. It was also said the other games were not included after conversations with the clubs and police. Praise was given to the open training day, but KR said that the Tyrers coach had left without a number of those who travelled in on the shuttle. The club were not aware of this, but would look into it.

12. Date And Time Of Next Meeting

The next meeting date is yet to be scheduled.

The meeting closed at 7.25pm.