

Fans' Forum 30/01/14 - notes

Welcome, Apologies and Introductions

Richard Murray and Katrien Meire were welcomed to the meeting. Richard communicated his pleasure in returning to CAFC as Chairman and looked forward to working with Mr Duchatelet and Katrien.

Season Ticket Details for 2014/2015

The intention is to meet with a selected focus group in mid-February, to explain thinking around pricing for 2014-15 season tickets. One of the aims is to address the issue of lapsed season ticket holders. All members of the Fans Forum agreed to take part.

The Valley Pitch

SB explained the historic nature of the drainage issues on the pitch. The lateral drains under the pitch are supposed to be replaced every five years. This was last completed in 1998. The longitudinal drains appear to have silted up and could not be located when inspected by Sports Turf Research Institute. The path of rainwater into main sewer was apparently obstructed by building work, possibly in 2003. Over a period of time, pitch has degraded and there were other financial priorities in years gone by, which means that the issue will now need to be addressed in the off-season.

The Sports Turf Research Institute has inspected the pitch and produced a report, concluding that the club has taken good advice and is managing the surface as well as can be expected at this time of year and that an upgrade of the drainage system would be required in the close season.

The Football League investigated the postponement and concluded that the club made "reasonable efforts to ensure the fixture went ahead as scheduled" though recommended that the FL early warning system be made full use of.

Valley Express - those who used Valley Express for the original Barnsley fixture will be able to use the service free of charge for the re-scheduled match. The club is also committed to offering a free Valley Express service to those CAFC fans who suffered significant inconvenience at the postponed match. Fans should speak with Dhiran Jayasundera on an individual basis, should they require advice and support.

Communication regarding possible postponements

An improved protocol reflecting the early warning system of the Football League has been introduced, evolved with input from Fans' Forum and Charlton Athletic Supporters Trust, which will be triggered by ground staff. There will now be a pitch inspection for every game until more settled weather arrives and there is a new three stage communication system.

North Stand Concourse Catering

Kieran Tingle is currently assessing existing and new suppliers to achieve best value and a successful reciprocal relationship. Front line staff will now study for a national qualification.

It is possible to serve 'Real Ale' in some parts of stadium. KT would prefer it to be served in glasses but this is unlikely to be possible for health and safety reasons.

There will be a survey to understand fans' expectations and opinions concerning current levels of service.

V.I.P. Question & Answer Session

Ben Kensell will arrange a date in next month for a future meeting. There will also be a separate discussion about the future of the scheme. The Q&A could involve Chris Powell, Richard Murray and Katrien Meire.

Group Rail Travel

Syd Cheeswright reflected on the uptake of the rail travel initiative in comparison with other rail booking opportunities. He also highlighted the need to publicise the initiative in the match programme.

Valley Express and Valley Away Fans Forum Representative

John Bennett was unanimously voted onto the FF as Valley Express and Valley Away Fans Forum Representative.

Charlton Athletic Museum Update

Construction has been delayed due to various factors including contractor availability but completion is anticipated by end of the season.

Player of the Year Dinner

POY dinner is set for Sunday 4th May. It will be promoted in match programmes and CAFC website in March and tickets will go on sale on 17th March.

Any Other Business

Player's sponsors' dinner is being organised by Ravi Patel. A date will be set in the near future.

Next meeting: Wednesday 23rd April 2013