

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>AFC Supporter Forum Meeting #1</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2018</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Sir Alex Ferguson Lounge, Pittodrie</b>
<b>Present:</b>	<p><b>Forum members</b> – Gordon Duncan (Dons Supporters Together), Matt Coull (Red Army Displays), Iain Ramsey, Keith Sinclair, Neil MacKenzie, Ciaran McLachlan, Steve Holt, Euan Duthie</p> <p><b>Club representatives</b> – Lynn Fiske (SLO), Rob Wicks (Commercial Director), Jamie Howell (Acting Ticket Office Manager), Scott Gormal (Marketing Manager)</p> <p><b>Apologies</b> – Lesley Ross, Andy Forbes, Scott Rennie</p>
<b>Summary:</b>	<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p>Lynn Fiske welcome all members to the forum with introductions around the table before Rob Wicks delivered a brief update on Supporter Engagement and where it sits within the club.</p> <p>Lynn Fiske then outlined the main objective of the forum, ‘Take the club forward together’, and the role that everyone around the table could play towards that.</p> <p><b>SUPPORTERS CLUB ALLOCATIONS</b></p> <p>The club were asked to address concerns regarding the way that tickets have been allocated for away matches for supporters clubs.</p> <p><b>RESPONSE:</b> Jamie Howell &amp; Lynn Fiske confirmed that the feedback from supporters had been received and sparked discussion at the club which resulted in the following amendments being made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supporters Club area to be highlighted on the ticketing site for each away match to allow likeminded supporters to sit together</li> <li>- Supporters Clubs to be allocated tickets based on their average order for high demand matches</li> </ul> <p><b>AFC’S POSITION ON REFEREEING &amp; DISCIPLINARY PANEL HEARINGS</b></p> <p>Following on from the Michael Devlin appeal process and result a number of supporters expressed their concerns and asked for clarification on the club’s position. There was also desire around the table for the club to take a stronger approach.</p> <p><b>RESPONSE:</b> Rob Wicks reiterated the club’s disappointment with the decision and indicated that a further statement would be issued following the publication of the reasons behind the appeal being rejected. Rob stated that a new Communications Strategy is in the early stages of being implemented with a desire to become a challenger brand and that the stronger approach supporters are looking for will form part of that.</p> <p><b>IMPROVING THE MATCHDAY EXPERIENCE</b></p>



Several supporters asked if any plans are in place to improve the experience at Pittodrie, particularly around what can be done to improve the atmosphere on a matchday.

**RESPONSE:** Scott Gormal responded by saying that the club are actively working to add some colour to areas of the stadium (the first part of that being the introduction of the large flags which are used pre-match) and that there should be some more progress on that side in the next couple of months.

The club are also in the early stages of planning to utilise the concourse area outside the Richard Donald Stand on matchday with a view to trialing things before moving to the new stadium. For the next home match supporters will also see Supporter Engagement Members in a new matchday role welcoming people to the stadium and acting as an additional point of contact to enhance the experience of supporters.

Matt (Red Army Displays) then spoke about the work that is being done with flags being issued ahead of each match to be waved as teams emerge from the tunnel. The idea was brought forward by the display team and has been used successfully at Watford.

At this point discussion around the table moved onto the type of music played on a matchday, how atmosphere could be generated in certain areas of the stadium and what could be done to make Pittodrie a fortress again. It was agreed that this topic had to be explored in greater detail at the next meeting.

**ACTION:** Matchday Experience to be raised as the main agenda/discussion point for the next meeting with AFC to research and present options to the forum.

#### **LOYALTY POINTS**

**The main topic for discussion at the meeting was Loyalty Points and how they have been allocated for 2018/19.**

**RESPONSE:** Jamie Howell talked through the reasons for implementing a Loyalty Points system back in 2014/15 after the League Cup Semi Final v St Johnstone at Tynecastle in early 2014.

The progression of Loyalty Points was then highlighted over the past few seasons from the Black & Gold priority period in 2014/15 to the system we have in place now. Jamie also highlighted a case study between the match against Hibernian at Easter Road last October and the match this September and the reasons behind phasing of tickets for matches.

At this point members around the table discussed the merits of Loyalty Points being included as part of the AberDNA membership and who should get priority for away matches. Several members of the group then asked if AberDNA points could be drip-fed over the term of the membership but Jamie confirmed that the ticketing system we used could not accommodate this at the moment.



	<p>Scott Gormal then presented some of the reasons behind points being included, specifically the feedback from the survey which over 6,000 supporters responded to and the precedent of points being included in the Black &amp; Gold Membership.</p> <p>The club will also be surveying supporters next month for feedback on AberDNA with members and non-members encouraged to share their views. This feedback will help shape the future of the membership.</p> <p>Analysis is now being done into the type of supporters who are attending away matches and some data on this was shared with the group. Will be monitored across the season to see if the Loyalty Point changes affect the supporters who are attending matches.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Survey to be issued to all supporters in October requesting feedback on AberDNA.</b></p> <p><b>A.O.B</b></p> <p><b>What can the club do for away supporters faced with an early kick-off at Kilmarnock?</b></p> <p>Club will explore options in this area including viability of subsidising buses or working with other clubs on mutual ticketing agreements for away supporters.</p> <p><b>Why have cash gates been removed? Would there be an option to restore this option?</b></p> <p>Jamie Howell explained reasons behind phasing cash gates out and said that a mobile ticketing trial would take place which should help last minute ticket buyers. AFC to provide data on the use of cash turnstiles and matchday sales ahead of the next meeting.</p> <p><b>Could the club approach a local venue to create a pre-match fan event for supporters in the absence of an area at Pittodrie?</b></p> <p>Scott Gormal to pick this up over the next couple of weeks with some local venues and share findings with the group.</p> <p><b>Why have the TVs not been working in the RDS?</b></p> <p>Lynn Fiske to report back with the aim of getting them up and running for the next match.</p> <p><b>AGENDA POINTS NEXT MEETING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stadium Aberdeen Update</li> <li>- Response: Club input to TV selections</li> <li>- Matchday Experience (Improving the atmosphere)</li> <li>- A.O.B</li> </ul>
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