**Coventry City Supporters Forum**

**Minutes of the meeting on the 21st August 2024 at 6pm**

**Attendees:**

CCFC: Doug King (DK), John Taylor (JT), Jodie Jones (JJ), Tynan Scope (TS), Mark Hornby (MH)

Colin Henderson (Chair), Pete Griffiths (Secretary/ Vice chair/ Sky Blues Talk), Dave Eyles (Sky Blues Trust), Mark Silvester (Rugby Supporters), Steve Maloney (South Wales Supporters) Paul Armstrong (Coundon Supporters), Lewis Wale (Proud Sky Blues)

1. **Apologies for absence**

Pat Raybould, Steve Harding, Daren Cowley, Mike Garlick, Alan Ludford.

1. **Matters Arising from last meeting**

2.1- Streets named after former players. CH reports no progress as yet but will chase the council. Also notes that a replacement is needed for the Former Players Association after Jim Brown has announced he is leaving.

2.2- Permanent home for large supporter flags. JT agrees that we would all like a long term strategy for these and will work with the arena on how/ where these are displayed. Suggestions includes under the control room or around the top of the bowl in front of the corregated plastic.

2.3- Smokers Area review. JJ gave a review on the changes to smoking areas at the start of last season. 1 single complaint regarding the closure of the north stand smoking corral, but lots of positive feedback. Not feasible to have this reopened currently. JT discusses challenges we now face with home and away smoking areas being next to each other in the south stand, this needs reviewing.

2.4- Stadium wifi and PA improvements. JT states there have been no changes to wifi but the PA has been significantly improved. The club have received some feedback to say it is too loud, this is still a work in progress. A PA expert has been in to work on maintaining the current system until a long term solution is in place.

2.5- Match day reporting number being reduced to 5 digits. JT explains that this has been investigated but had no traction. The club has worked on promoting the current number with a new match day video on the big screen and social media channels. This did see an increase in usage at the Oxford game which we hope will continue. LW wants to give thanks on record for the video highlighting match day issues after getting good feedback through the Proud Sky Blues group.

2.6- Digital Ticketing for 2025-26. JT explains that the stadium infrastructure (turnstiles and entry system) is aged and the technology has issues. For the Oxford league game, paper tickets were issued due to a technical issue with the turnstile ticket readers at the pre-season friendly games. We are working hard to resolve so we can re-introduce print at home tickets as soon as possible. We also need to consider being accessible and inclusive to all supporters.

1. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EFL Mandate).**

JT gives update on the club’s recent equality code of conduct audit. Club received the bronze, entry level award; a good start but we want to quickly move to silver and then gold. Details given on the new Audio Descriptive commentary system that was introduced last game; went down well with visually impaired fans and received all positive feedback. The club needs to focus on more consultation if wanting to continue to improve.

1. **Club update by Doug King.**

DK briefly discusses the incoming players in the transfer window so far. The window is not yet finished but he is happy with the progress made so far.

On coaching, there has been many changes at Ryton with regards to the infrastructure and new supersized gym which have made a big difference. There are now 4 coaches working alongside Mark Robins enabling us to focus on recovery and personal development. DK very encouraged by the work done so far since Dr Claire-Marie Roberts has come in.

Monzo are the new front of shirt sponsor who we hope to have a long-term partnership with.

Just under 22,000 season tickets sold for the 2024-25 season, DK very pleased given the increased TV coverage and noted an incredible atmosphere for the first home league game against Oxford.

The new ticket exchange has been working well so far, fans have been able to use easily and the family zone area is full as intended.

The main focus going forward is for a fantastic matchday experience, DK wants games to be great days out for families and is excited for the season ahead.

1. **Submitted Questions.**

The majority of responses were given by the club ahead of the meeting, see separate Question and Answers document. Additional answers to follow.

Question 4: What is the latest on extending the current 5 year ground sharing agreement. DK says the relationship with the Arena is as good as it has ever been. There is no update at present regarding a new deal but is aware of the situation and timeframe.

Question 6. Are there any plans for more work at Ryton? Is buying the connexion a consideration? Linked – Any plans for any changes to the academy? DK explains the upgrades and changes that have been made to Ryton with all non-football staff being moved out. The Under 21’s team now have the space to train with the first team regularly with the aim to narrow the gap between the 2 teams. There are no current plans to want or need the Sports Connexion. The academy is about to sign a new 5 year deal at their current location and progression/ improvement across the club is being prioritised accordingly.

PG questions the longevity of the Monzo deal, DK is positive on the relationship and hopes to keep them on board. Explains Monzo are an exciting company, they are a disruptive/ creative brand and aligned with our ethos.

1. **Family Zone update.**

LS explains there is not much to update currently. JT/JJ explain that the club want something in place for younger fans for all games going forward to improve the match day experience. JJ and JT eluded to having a plan for the future of the family zone; a more permanent solution which was being worked on with further information being released when finalised. A (smaller) family zone may be back in the concourse in the interim, LS voices health and safety concerns due to lack of space. JJ agrees to discuss with PR what could be utilised, how the family zone can have a presence, whether it be to hand out items and/or advertise.

LS emphasised the need for more volunteers. The club will push the ‘vacancy’ online.

1. **Dates for Future Meetings.**

JJ pencils the following dates for the remaining Forums in the 2024-25 season, pending fixture changes/ cup runs. Will confirm in due course.

* November 28th
* February 25th
* May 15th

1. **Any Other Business.**

PG raises a number of questions from supporters:

* Regarding us having posters in the concourse toilets to raise the awareness of Prostate Cancer, JT agrees he is happy to support and will liaise with the Arena on this.
* Are there any plans for any better/ wider range of non-alcoholic beers in the concourse. JT will liaise with the Arena.
* Can anything be done about upgrading the lights in the underpass? JT confirms that this will be done by the Council. They will also be cleaning and fixing the pump failure in the underpass as well as the lights along the canal.

LS asks whether the club has an official away travel partner for the season. JT says this will be confirmed shortly.

LW asks if there is an official EDI calendar for the new season from the EFL, JT confirms he will send a copy over.