



FCC WORKING GROUPS

MEETING ONE - 20 NOVEMBER, 2024

FAB Members:

Emily Burditt
Ravi Tara
Graeme Smith
Ian Bason

Supporter Groups:

DSA,
Foxes Pride,
Foxes Trust
LCFC Women's Supporters Club
Leicester City Official Supporters Club
Union FS

Supporter Representatives:

Jenny Tasker
Tim Sutcliffe
Imran Moledina
Carl Room
Andy Kenney
Rishi Lakhani
John O'Brien
Sam Carruthers
Cllr Shyam Morjaria

LCFC Representatives:

Anthony Herlihy, Communications Director
Imogen Ward, Head of Fan Engagement
Sam Putnam, Production Manager
Dan Schofield, Director of Venue Commercial Development
Jim Donnelly, Supporter Relations & Accessibility Manager
Vishal Dayal, Ticketing Manager
Dave Stevens, Leicestershire Police Dedicated Football Officer for LCFC

GROUP 1 – MATCHDAY EXPERIENCE

FAB CHAIR – EMILY BURDITT

AGENDA ITEMS

- Safe Standing
- Matchday entertainment around the stadium
- In-bowl matchday experience

SAFE STANDING

The group reviewed the draft consultation plan designed to consult as many supporters as possible about the possible introduction of safe standing. There was agreement that the consultation plan was thorough, and supporter representatives were pleased that consultation was imminent.

The group discussed possible locations for safe standing and that it was important to consider disabled seating areas and entry ways in the planning process. View from wheelchair spaces are important and should be factored into considerations. In terms of locations, there was reference to the Union FS and Foxes Trust joint proposal that they have shared publicly and with the Club.

The Club was encouraged to consider how the areas around any safe standing areas are affected, in terms of sight lines and supporter behaviour.

There was concern raised about safe standing areas becoming overpopulated and the need to look at stewarding and policing around any safe standing areas was emphasised.

The group discussed possible locations of any safe standing areas and suggested they be located in areas where there is persistent standing already. There was acknowledgment that Premier League guidelines mean any safe standing introduction in the stadium would require the Club to look at introducing safe standing in away areas as well. There was a request to make sure the wider fan base understands this is mandated by the Premier League.

The group raised concerns about supporting people who would want to relocate if safe standing was introduced in their sections and requested a clear communications plan for consultation if safe standing is introduced. Some people suggested introducing a priority period for supporters who wish to relocate due to any safe standing introduction before Season Tickets went on sale.

There was a consensus in the group that it was vital that the process is communicated clearly to fans, and the Club was encouraged to ensure all supporters are aware of the process, beyond just using digital communications.

The group welcomes a survey for fans and the Club confirmed that the survey themes would be shared with the FAB for feedback before it's sent.

MATCHDAY ENTERTAINMENT AROUND THE STADIUM

The group spoke about matchday activations around the stadium and discussions centred around the desire for a fan zone. Discussions about what should be included in a fan zone centred around the following points:

- Seating areas and food and drink options would be key for any fan zone the Club introduced, with benches particularly important for supporters with disabilities who need to be at the ground early to access disabled parking. There is support for more seating areas on the brickweave as well as in the fan zone.
- Big screens showing highlights.
- Outdoor bars for a buzz.
- More variety of food and drink with some local options was encouraged, as well as discounts on food and drink before the game.
- It was acknowledged that there is limited space for a large fan zone, but people felt that shouldn't be a prohibiting factor and that so long as there was other entertainment on the brickweave a one-in-one-out system would be OK.
- Activities for children felt to be important for young fans.
- Service at bars needs to be quicker there was a request for self-service drinks.
- Leeds United and Birmingham City fan zones were deemed good examples of fan zones.
- People felt a fan zone would encourage earlier attendance to games – it is currently felt there is no incentive to arrive early.

There was discussion about the need to communicate what's on at the stadium on matchdays earlier to give people more time to plan their day, with a simple programme of timings encouraged that people can easily share.

IN-BOWL MATCHDAY EXPERIENCE

There was limited time to discuss this agenda point and it was suggested that it is revisited in future sessions. The general feedback from the group is set out below:

- The pre-game videos are well received, particularly the use of the fox.
- Request for more varied music selection with some local music.
- Earlier communications about pre-match entertainment were encouraged.

GROUP 2 – TICKETING AND PRODUCTS

FAB CHAIR – RAVI TARA

AGENDA ITEMS

- Premier League guidance on full digital ticketing
- Memberships

The group discussed the Premier League guidance about fully mandating digital ticketing for home and away games, as well as the Club's membership scheme, with the key feedback themes listed below:

- Digital ticketing – there was an acceptance of the need to move to full digital ticketing as per the Premier League guidance and supporters suggested it could lead to enhanced safety in stadiums.
- Supporters stressed the importance of clear and early communication about changes to digital ticketing.
- There was a suggestion that any changes to digital ticketing should be communicated before the end of this season, in a clear way. The process should be continuously reviewed across the Fan Engagement Framework.
- The need for limited exemptions for digital tickets was discussed and it was felt that even those falling within exemptions should be supported to attempt to use digital tickets.
- There was discussion about Members finding it difficult to get tickets.
- The Club was encouraged to use incentives to move to digital ticketing.
- There was a request to discuss further a possible introduction of digital memberships for LCFC Women supporters.
- Membership packages were discussed and it was recommended that packages should be better tailored to suit different needs of different supporters, with more variation across products.
- It was felt that junior memberships are a key introduction to the Club for junior supporters, and that there should be a focus on exclusive experiences for Junior Members.
- Club encouraged to look at more exclusive videos and content for Members.
- The Club was encouraged to review signing session processes.

GROUP 3 – LCFC CULTURE

FAB CHAIR – GRAEME SMITH

AGENDA ITEMS

- Supporter behaviour at away games
- Premier League and WSL matchday campaigns

The group was joined by Dave Stevens – DFO Leicestershire Police – and the discussion is summarised below:

- It was acknowledged that drugs are an ongoing concern at away games although this was not felt to be football specific and a wider societal problem.
- It was discussed that banning orders have increased from 10/15 to currently sitting at 74 - the highest-ever number.
- Support for away ticket collections to be reconsidered (similar to season 2022/23) – support agency staff to be used.
- Suggestion for away tickets to carry notes on tickets re: behaviour. The Club to highlight that all supporters should be sitting in the block, row and seat number on the ticket they have bought in their name and not move to different seats.
- Acknowledgment that there can be issues regarding congregation of supporters seated in away ends as a result of supporters purchasing single tickets and then congregating in one area.
- Suggestion for away stewards to have more control over where they are placed at away games.
- Suggestion to educate supporters around behaviour of supporters at away matches including demonstrating impacts.
- It was agreed there is a duty of care to fellow supporters to look out for each other and support with reporting.
- Request for the Club to be transparent about issues in away ends and not shy away from communicating challenges.
- Wi-Fi is a significant barrier for reporting issues.

The discussions about Premier League and WSL matchday themes are summarised below:

- It was felt that more should be done to communicate the matchday themes across all channels in the build up to the match and during the match, including ensuring there is exposure for the themes pre-match and at half-time.
- It was felt that there should be more exposure for themes on matchdays, with use of messaging on tickets, Club channels, advertising boards, big screen etc.
- It was felt that lots of supporters weren't aware of the matchday themes.
- It was suggested that the Club looked at Tifos for the themed matches and suggested that the Club enlisted the support of players and previous players to promote the themes.
- The creation of other supporter groups (like Punjabi Wolves) was suggested.
- Better communication and description of reporting tools was suggested.

