



Fan Advisory Board / Executive Board Meeting

Ibrox Stadium

Monday 17 June 2024 – 3.30pm

Attendees

Rangers FC

Graham Horsman, Football Legal Counsel

Nils Koppen, Director of Football Recruitment

Greg Marshall, Head of Supporter Engagement

Natalie Nairn, Business Growth Director

Creag Robertson, Director of Football Operations

Karim Virani, Chief Commercial Officer

Rangers FC Fan Advisory Board

Fahd Bari (via Zoom)

Matt Boyd

Craig Hannah

Kelly Johnstone

Stuart Langan

Gary Ralston

Introductions

KV welcomed everyone and referred to the recent meeting which the FAB had with the Chairman, following the announcement of James Bisgrove's departure.

KV said James had been the driver for many things at the club, the FAB being one, and he wanted to reassure everyone that this initiative remains of paramount importance.

The FAB have seen the current Rangers Executive Strategy – there is a clear plan in place, and nothing changes with James leaving and there will be no deviation from the plan.

SL said the FAB appreciated the opportunity to speak to the Chairman and would like to get another FAB meeting diarised before the start of the new season.

Review of season 23/24

SL said the most important topic for discussion today was addressing fan sentiment about how the season finished.

KV said we are all disappointed at how the season ended and the Board & Executive Team are well aware of the general sentiment.

MB commented that after the Cup Final was the lowest, he personally had ever felt about the team performance and the message needs to be that this can't happen again.

SL said it was not just that we came so close in one season and didn't win, looking back since 2011 the performance has been poor, even after the reset in 2017. This is the context of the fans' thinking. The club must stop going from rebuild to rebuild.

KJ said there is a need to reinvigorate the fans and project the positivity which the FAB get to witness at these meetings. We need to acknowledge that the last few years have not been successful and highlight things such as player recruitment and stadium enhancements as well as the restructuring of the team.

MB Discussed communication from the top of the club to supporters and indicated there is a demand for clear communication.

GR indicated that despite mixed success last season, its clear the manager is astute and knows what changes need made. He suggested that we need to bring in a different type of leader to the playing squad.

MB stated that if we continue with the same core team, we will get the same outcome we have in previous seasons. GM said this view is widely representative of conversations he has had with supporters.

CH said we need leadership off the pitch and the right winning mentality on the pitch. There is trepidation amongst the fans at the prospect of another rebuild.

FB spoke about accountability. As a fan there seems to have been a lack of accountability over the last couple of years for the playing squad. And he hopes we will see a proper turnover in players with leadership this time.

KV said the Board & Executive Team are acutely aware of the sentiment. Rangers are about winning. The previous management team didn't work, and PC came in and drove us forward. Today we'll give you insight into some of the work that's taking place for recruiting players which will hopefully give you some more confidence with regard to where we are headed. For all the good we try to do with things off the pitch, it all comes down to results on the pitch.

A year ago, we had a significant rebuild at Executive level and new roles were formed. We believe in our plan and hopefully the new structure will propel us forward and deliver more benefits and commercial revenue and the strategy for PC and the Football Department.

A detailed discussion took place regarding the timing, content, and format of senior club communications to supporters. It was emphasised that this is crucial, and the FAB will be consulted to refine the plans.

Football

NK presented slides to the FAB giving an insight into the strategy, process, and general philosophy for recruiting players.

Some key points:

- Strong & efficient process with manager involved
- Data & video as a big part of recruitment process
- Balanced squad (age, positions, nationalities, personalities, value,...).
- A dynamic squad to be successful domestically and in Europe
- We prioritise high technical quality and athleticism
- Players need to need robust, reliable and focused
- Determined key markets where we can be successful, more active in untapped markets (still competitive)
- Eye for Scottish market and talents
- Retain our best Academy talents
- Use our “platform” more to give opportunities to young players and develop them.
- Buy at the right price, sell at the right moment
- Recruit players with ability to make a next step to Big 5 league
- Stronger contract management
- The club demands winners

Robust players that can cope with high amount of games & intensity Scottish game.

GM said we will see the product of the new Executive Team in the next few years.

Despite many supporters thinking the board has been in place for a number of years, the Exec board all started their roles last season. It is the Exec Board’s first chance.

KV said when you come in it goes with the territory, there is pressure. We are all trying to do our best across our individual areas. We do not have the luxury of time. We are doing the best we can, and we do have a plan that fits into the 2030 strategy.

GR asked who our biggest competitor for players is. NK said we have a lot of competition for players. We have to be realistic.

In relation to the 2030 targets, MB asked if losing the CEO affects the plan.

KV answered that we have done the work across our own areas and have a clear plan. The one thing that has united us is the club vision and we have the momentum to continue.

SL said businesses change, but we have an underlying strategy for a winning football team. What freedom will a new CEO have to tweak the strategy? KV confirmed the Board and Executive Team are aligned on the plan. A new CEO will obviously have a view but will be aware we are working to a vision and plan.

SL said some of the messages on the plan are really important. We need to get the message out that there is a plan.

KV confirmed planning is underway on this. The Execs can come out and speak about specific areas. NK at the right time can explain to the broader audience. We have a plan, there has been a lot of thought behind it, we have to help rebuild faith with the fans.

SFA / SPFL

We have a new Head of Referee Department at the SFA, it is the start of a new process, and we must engage and challenge to push standards and improvement all aspects of refereeing.

GR asked if there is anything coming from the Euros that we will see next season, e.g. VAR.

CR – we have requested greater transparency and communication when decisions are made.

GM said what has been good at the Euros is the brief on screen description of VAR decisions. CR said the CWG is looking to improve VAR in terms of clearer communication and how messages are communicated in game.

SL asked about the new SPFL sponsorship deal with William Hill. KV provided an overview and indicated that Rangers are satisfied.

A discussion was had on the new Premier Sports contract with The Scottish Premiership.

Stadium Upgrades

The club shared that The Director of Operations and Venue is working with the Facilities team and the main contractor. Elements of the project are out with our control, and we are working to make sure we have contingencies in place. Everything is going according to plan, at the minute.

The FAB asked about the WhatsApp rumours (i.e. Ibrox unlikely to be ready for the start of the new season) and if there are contingencies in place to play elsewhere if something goes wrong.

The club responded regarding several options including other Scottish Stadia were being explored. Everything is on the table and being considered. The club finished by stating that the project was a piece that was ever moving but the club are on top of that.

The club have since released a public statement updating supporters on the project, linked below:

Link to Rangers Statement: [Supporter Update 20/06/24](#)

Prior to the statement's release, the club reached out to the FAB to inform them of the planned communication. The club has committed to arranging a meeting with the FAB to maintain open dialogue and consider any concerns regarding the project's impact.

New kit

The FAB discussed the launch of the away kit and sales channels including third-party kit retailers.

KV said we have a strong marketing plan for kit launch. It is almost inevitable for big clubs that kits will leak and we are not the only ones to suffer this. With sales of strong kit sales around the world, logistics demand they go to places where regrettably these things happen.

CH said the home strip is usually out by now. NN answered we are remarkably close.

CH mentioned the WWE 'Clash at the Castle' top being dropped due to its resemblance to the Rangers strip and asked if there was any chance of expanding the link with WWE.

NN advised that this is scope to look at a collaboration and are in contact with WWE.

The meeting ended.