



Fan Advisory Board / RFC Leadership meeting

Ibrox Stadium

Wednesday 5th February 2025

Attendees:

Rangers FC

Patrick Stewart, Chief Executive Officer

James Taylor, Chief Financial Officer

Nils Koppen, Technical Director

Peter Dallas, Operations Director

Natalie Nairn, Fan Experience & Business Growth Director

Greg Marshall, Head of Fan Engagement & Supporter Liaison Officer

Rangers FC Fan Advisory Board

Fahd Bari

Matt Boyd

Jamie Cook

Craig Hannah

Kelly Johnstone

Stuart Langan

1. CEO Update

Patrick Stewart opened the meeting by sharing his initial impressions since joining the club. He acknowledged there were a lot of good people working at the club who have been operating in trying circumstances. He highlighted the strength of the club's infrastructure but recognised that much of it was jaded. PS described the club's heritage as truly extraordinary – something that makes the club uniquely special and confirmed that he has asked for a record of the club's traditions to be maintained to ensure they continue to be passed to future generations.

PS went on to affirm that the supporters are and will remain the lifeblood of the club. He acknowledged the significant support which the fans provide, both to the teams on the pitch and the club's revenues. He recognised the importance of supporter engagement and that leadership transition throughout 2024 had impacted on the club's progress in this area.

Long-term financing was also discussed, with an emphasis on financial self-sustainability to reduce reliance on shareholder funding while maintaining competitiveness on and off the pitch.

In terms of challenges, PS acknowledged that whilst we have high revenues relative to other Scottish football clubs, the reality is that we have not spent it wisely in recent years. He further acknowledged that the leadership vacuum in which the club has operated in recent times has placed a burden on many staff. It is a priority for him and the leadership team to set a clear strategy for the club before the end of the season.

The FAB asked PS about the external review he had initiated. PS started by clarifying that the review was being led by him but with external support – from Sportsology who are leading experts in this field – and is focused on the footballing side of the club. While the club's football operations are being prioritised, Patrick and the leadership team are also reviewing other areas of the club's operations. In terms of the football review, it is all encompassing with the objective of ensuring that the department is befitting of an elite club. Key outputs from the review will be shared with fans in due course.

The FAB asked PS what his perspective was on current fan sentiment. PS accepted that some criticisms of the club have been tough but fair. He also accepted that our fan communications have been patchy, and he is committed to improving that aspect. SL expressed the FAB and fan's dismay with domestic performances so far this season and pressed PS as to why the club were seemingly accepting of this. CH also questioned previous management changes and the statements attached to those citing "results haven't met expectations", whereas we are in a worse position currently. PS reiterated that the decision to retain Philippe Clement as manager was not a financially driven decision, rather it was recognition there was so much else to fix in the football department.

The FAB asked PS what his short-term and long-term objectives were for the club. PS described his short-term objectives as concluding the review of the footballing department, readiness for the summer transfer window, closing the financial gap towards a break-even position and the planning for the season ticket renewal process. In terms of long-term objectives, these will be specifically informed by the current strategic reviews inside the club and will be shared with all stakeholders, including fans, in due course.

The FAB asked PS for his perspective on future inward investment into the club. PS confirmed that Chairman Fraser Thornton is currently engaging with our existing shareholders. PS said there could be appetite for future investment, but only if it was the right investor(s) for the long-term interests of the club.

SL outlined fans' increasing anger at the standard of refereeing decisions impacting the club, citing the Diomande red card and Jo Potter's red card as examples. He asked if the club had any further discussions with the SFA after the League Cup Final debacle. PS confirmed that the club have maintained an ongoing dialogue with the SFA, including meeting with SFA officials to discuss matters of concern. The club will continue to push for better standards of refereeing and greater consistency, not only for Rangers FC but for all of Scottish football.

2. Football Update

Nils Koppen provided an update on the football season so far. The discussion covered the team's performance, player recruitment strategy, and ongoing European campaign. NK confirmed the club aims to strike a balance between short-term success and long-term squad development while ensuring financial sustainability. To support this, a review (mentioned above) is underway to assess and improve the club's football operations.

A key priority remains improving player trading efficiency. Patrick Stewart acknowledged that recent transfer windows have been challenging, with squad balance affected by the timing of player departures and incoming signings. The club is focused on implementing a more structured approach to recruitment and ensuring that future windows are aligned with long-term strategic goals. NK clarified that this would mean we recruit towards a club blueprint of player and playing style, and not towards the style of any given coach or manager.

Youth development remains a key focus, with discussions around the club's Academy and B Team structure being a central part of the external football review. The club is assessing whether the current setup provides an optimal pathway for young players or if

adjustments are needed. The aim is to create a more holistic player development system, ensuring that youth prospects have a clear progression route into the first team.

The FAB asked for an update on squad performance and transfers. NK highlighted that progress has been made within the existing football structure, with increased integration of younger players into the first team. The recruitment strategy will continue to focus on a balance of core, investment, and impact players, ensuring long-term squad sustainability and winning trophies.

Asked by the FAB about the importance of European football, NK confirmed it remains a vital revenue stream for the club. Although missing out on the Champions League playoff round was a major setback, securing qualification for the Europa League last 16 has provided financial and competitive benefits.

3. FAB Update & Fan Engagement

JC provided an update on the FAB's first year. In summary, it was acknowledged both whilst the FAB started off with positive momentum, the reality has been that the significant leadership disruption inside the club had impacted momentum.

Patrick Stewart reiterated that the FAB will be an important channel for engagement with supporters. He committed towards working with the FAB and consulting with them on appropriate issues.

The FAB encouraged the RFC Leadership Team to put fan engagement in its broadest sense at the heart of its future strategy. Initiatives such as the CEO Fans Forum were cited as a vehicle which would work well to improve transparency and engagement with fans. Patrick Stewart agreed to the FAB's request to reintroduce the Fans Forum events.

In terms of priority areas, the FAB would continue to focus on the following broad themes:

1. Club governance, leadership & strategy
2. MyGers & Ticketing
3. Stadium & Matchday Experience
4. Club History & Heritage
5. Fan inclusion – to include Women's team, International Supporters etc.

The importance of clear, structured feedback channels between the club and the supporter base was reinforced, with a focus on timely and proactive communication. The FAB stressed that this needed to include early engagement on key club initiatives to ensure fan considerations were at the heart of decision-making, rather than a late addition to any process.

4. Copland Road Stand & Matchday Experience

Several issues related to matchday experience were raised by the FAB, with particular focus on access, egress, and facilities. CH highlighted concerns regarding congestion, particularly in high-attendance matches. PD said the club is actively reviewing potential improvements, including enhancements to the concourse, turnstiles, and stadium infrastructure.

- **Access & Egress Issues:** CH raised concerns about congestion and long exit times from the Copland Rear, particularly on high-attendance matchdays. CH also gave the example of the situation being similar with the turnstiles for the Govan East Corner of the stadium. The club committed to explore potential solutions. Additionally, ticket scanning issues on European matchdays were highlighted, with supporters experiencing delays due to QR code scanning. The club is exploring technology improvements, including potential upgrades to digital ticketing systems to streamline entry.
- **Facilities & Comfort:** Issues such as reduced toilet availability, unfinished concourse areas, and the overall matchday experience were acknowledged. Plans are in place to address these, with further improvements expected before the start of next season.
- **Singing Section:** The implementation of the new singing section has presented challenges, particularly for surrounding supporters. The club committed to ongoing reviews and consultation with fans to refine the setup.

SL highlighted that all of the above issues are examples of where the club had committed to ongoing consultation with the FAB, but this had failed to materialise. PS committed that as part of the actions coming out of this meeting, this would be addressed.

5. Future Planning & Next Steps

Looking ahead, the club reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening fan engagement, with the FAB expected to play a pivotal role in shaping decisions that affect supporters. Patrick Stewart emphasised that the FAB will be his primary route for direct supporter engagement and acknowledged his desire to develop a strong working relationship with the FAB.

Quarterly Meetings & Proactive Planning: Meetings will be scheduled in advance with agreed agendas, ensuring that discussions are productive and aligned with the club's strategic priorities and fan issues and challenges.

CEO Fan Forums: The club will reinstate CEO fan forums, recognising their value in providing direct communication with supporters.

Closing Remarks:

The meeting concluded with a strong reaffirmation from both Rangers FC and the FAB of their shared commitment to enhancing communication, consultation, and engagement. Patrick Stewart reiterated the club's dedication to ensuring that the FAB plays a meaningful role in shaping key decisions and strengthening supporter representation and committed to specific follow-up discussions with the FAB on the following matters:

1. Copland Road stand issues
2. MyGers Membership
3. Season Ticket Renewals