



Fan Advisory Board / RFC Leadership meeting

Minutes – Part 1

Ibrox Stadium

Tuesday 6th May 2025

Attendees

Rangers F.C.

Patrick Stewart, Chief Executive Officer
Greig Mailer, Chief Communications & Marketing Officer
Greg Marshall, Head of Supporter Engagement
Susan Hannah, Head of Ticketing Operations
Darren Faulds, Head of Safety, Security & Resilience
Natalie Nairn, Business Growth Director
Calvin Stroyan, Fan Engagement Executive

Rangers F.C. Fan Advisory Board

Fahd Bari
Matt Boyd
Craig Hannah
Kelly Johnstone
Stuart Langan

Part 1 – Tifo Display & Statement

In the initial part of the meeting, the Fan Advisory Board expressed the anger felt amongst the support regarding the tifo display and the club's subsequent statement on it. A robust discussion took place during which the following initial points were raised by the FAB:

- The strength of feeling among the fanbase on this issue is very strong in terms of the club's handling of the situation and this was echoed by the FAB and firmly conveyed.

- The club's statement was perceived as being issued too quickly and in a reactionary manner.
- There is a recurring frustration that while the club acts quickly to condemn its own fans, it does not consistently defend our own supporters when they are the target of provocative or offensive actions by others. Fans are frustrated that far worse banners and actions from rival supporters, including effigies, banners and offensive chants, have gone unpunished or unremarked by the club, media commentators, politicians or authorities.
- Fans feel that the atmosphere, passion, and intensity of an Old Firm match naturally create tension, and that the club has overreacted.
- There is a perceived lack of clarity over where 'the line' was crossed in terms of this display and acceptable fan displays in general. Many felt the tifo in question was edgy but not offensive.
- It was felt that the statement created an opportunity for critics to target the club unnecessarily. It was expressed that the feeling amongst the support is that we are largely disliked by others which leads to frustration when the perception is that of the club continuously calling out our own fans.
- The Fan Advisory Board called for a more balanced handling of similar issues in future, particularly given some of the behaviour of opposition fans witnessed on Sunday, including the mocking of the Ibrox Disaster.
- Clarification was requested on whether the motivation was regulatory compliance, optics or external factors (like the ongoing investment discussions).
- The Fan Advisory Board expressed the concerns of many fans that the heritage of the club is in danger of being diluted, particularly with the potential takeover on the horizon, and encouraged the club to be very mindful of this going forward.
- There has been a high volume of fan correspondence and engagement on the issue, indicating the depth and breadth of dissatisfaction which the FAB had relayed throughout the conversation.

During the meeting, club representatives outlined the rationale behind the recent statement and the principles guiding the club's approach. The following points were made:

- The club noted its position on fan activity that it must comply with competition regulations, uphold the club's reputation, and maintain fan safety. The recent tifo has raised concerns in relation to SPFL rules on unacceptable conduct, in relation to threatening, abusive, or insulting displays.
- While recognising the strong views conveyed during the meeting, the club acknowledged that it had received criticism of the tifo display.
- Police Scotland initiated an investigation during the match and seized the banner at half-time. The club is in contact with the relevant authorities regarding the police investigation which the club confirmed is ongoing (as at the time of the meeting).
- The tifo was organised by supporter groups, who received logistical support from the club for it. However, the content was not subject to formal prior approval by the club.
- As the club facilitates these displays by providing space and support, it was crucial to clarify to all stakeholders, including authorities, police, sponsors, that the club did not approve or condone the tifo's content.
- The club questioned the notion that the statement alone caused the fall-out, noting that police seizure of the banner at half-time during the match meant the matter was already highly visible and contentious. Issuing a statement quickly was viewed as a necessary step to mitigate potential legal, regulatory and reputational risks.
- Looking ahead, the club recognises it stands at a crossroads. To reach its full potential, it will be crucial to protect the identity and traditions that define Rangers, while ensuring the club is positioned to thrive on and off the pitch. Our ambition is to grow and succeed, not by diluting who we are, but by building on our strengths and reputation.
- The club noted that a statement was issued to media outlets in relation to the incident, and subsequent police investigation, of a fan mocking the Ibrox Disaster.
- The club's decision to allow fan groups full discretion over tifo content without prior approval has now been recognised as placing both the club and fan groups in a challenging situation. The club acknowledged that it is

not right to abdicate judgement on matters of regulatory compliance and reputation management to fan groups. The club suggested a formal approval process for future club-facilitated fan displays will be required to safeguard both fans and the club. However, the FAB as a group could not agree to this as it would require collaboration and discussion with the fan groups who create the tifos. The club acknowledged this and will follow up with those groups separately.

- The club stated that they will not base their standards on the levels exhibited by other clubs. The club understands the concerns raised by supporters and is committed to upholding the values that have made Rangers what it is today while also ensuring it is positioned for sustainable growth and success in the future.

A wide-ranging discussion took place covering lessons learned and next steps. The following points from the club were noted:

- As one of Scotland's most prominent clubs, it was highlighted that Rangers is no stranger to heightened scrutiny, often being asked to justify actions that might go unnoticed elsewhere in Scottish football.
- The atmosphere and fierceness of the derby is a key selling point for the club and Scottish football, and there is a shared concern that over-sanitisation of the matchday experience risks undermining that.
- It was suggested that future tifo displays should be discussed with the club in advance to avoid issues, and that formalising an approval process would help balance creativity with compliance. The FAB reiterated this would require collaboration and discussion between the club and the fan groups who create the tifos.
- A strong view was expressed that the club should avoid returning to a stance of 'dignified silence' when others may not be held to the same standard. The club clarified that we are in constant dialogue with the authorities to raise issues of concern and lobby the club's interests. While raising issues publicly will always be an option, the club's approach is focussed on the club's best long-term interests.
- The club reaffirmed that if a charge from the SPFL arises, it would defend the club's position and act in its best interests.
- The club clarified that the decision to issue the statement was not knee-jerk but considered. Discussion started immediately upon the unfurling of

the tifo and continued at half time when the police investigation became known. The decision to issue a statement was finalised after the match following discussion among appropriate club management and board members.

- It was agreed that this dialogue demonstrated the value of the group as a channel to convey the fanbase's views clearly to the club, and that continued engagement will be vital.

In summary, the meeting provided an opportunity to listen to the strong concerns raised by our fans regarding recent events and provide context. The club recognises the importance of fan feedback and understand the need for a balanced approach in the future. In outlining the club position, it reaffirmed its commitment to upholding competition regulations and safeguarding the club's reputation. With the need to strengthen the club on and off the pitch, it is crucial to manage related incidents carefully moving forward. The club remain focused on working closely with the Fan Advisory Board, and the broader support to strengthen the unity and long-term success of Rangers FC.

Part 2 to follow