

## **SAB Meeting – Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December**

**Venue:** Boardroom

**In attendance:** Jane Dowson (Chair), Angus Kinnear (AK), Jordan Owens (JO), Katie Holmes (KH), Mark Pitts (MP), Jack Douglas (minute taker), Paul McManus, Katie Watkin, Lliam Brocksom, Ken McCarthur, Nikki Allan, Anders Palm, Jay Bhatt.

**Online attendees:** Umair Meer.

### **1. Attendance and Apologies**

Introductions from those in attendance and apologies from Josh Cawthorne and Maz Ferguson.

### **2. Elevate introduction**

AK introduces Ben Allen from Elevate, who the club have hired to lead a feasibility study into stadium redevelopment. The company have real expertise and are entirely independent, consulting with supporters, stakeholders and market developments etc. Lucinda Yeadon, who attended previous meeting, focuses more on the community aspect of the redevelopment.

BA discusses who the company have worked with in the USA and Europe. Consultancy will look into general admission/ hospitality seating, ticketing costs etc.

Purpose for joining meeting is to understand current matchday limitations and how they can be addressed during the redevelopment.

*BA asks the group their thoughts on what makes Elland Road (ER) currently unique and what would improve the ER experience:*

Jay Bhatt mentions the atmosphere and the characterful aesthetic. Katie Watkin says the close proximity to the pitch is a real positive at ER.

Ken McCarthur asks how new stands would be accessible, with lifts/ escalators etc. BA says new developed areas would be completely compliant with accessibility standards, which AK agrees. Group agrees more leg room is required.

Anders Palm says currently there are no incentives to get to the ground early, because UK stadia aren't the most welcoming/ exciting venues for pre-match entertainment. Suggests ER should become a place fans can go before the match and also stay afterwards, should they want to.

Anders says two screens are needed. Food and drink facilities should be improved, he adds, linking back to previous point about getting people to get to the stadium sooner.

Chair says improvement on toilet facilities necessary, especially for women and the need of 'in and out entrances' to aid flow is essential.

Jay Bhatt mentions restricted view from columns/ gantry in the North and West Stands.

Jay asks if safe standing would be an option in the development. BA says this will be evaluated.

AK says the need for allocating the premium seating is done correctly, to ensure the atmosphere is retained. Discusses need for existing fans to migrate into similar areas.

AK says premium seating will be an opportunity to keep general admission ticket prices fair. A 17k capacity increase would drastically reduce the Season Ticket Waiting List.

Ken asks whether stresses on public transport/ parking etc due to increased amount of supporters will be addressed by Elevate in the study, which BA says will be.

Umair says taxis cause issues on Elland Road. AK says club will work with Leeds City Council as part of this procedure but mentions the lack of a mass transit scheme is problematic, in comparison to other stadia in the country.

Lack of WiFi/ signal addressed and Elevate will look at in their study.

*BA asks the group about where away fans should be housed following development.*

The group differ slightly in opinions, the overriding consensus is that the current area in the West Stand is good for atmosphere and location. However, there is also a feeling that away fans should not be housed in the new stand and alternative areas such as the South East Corner and East Stand Upper suggested. Manchester City away end mentioned, which is split over three tiers, hindering away atmosphere, giving more home advantage. Ideally would like to keep behind the stands behind the goals to home supporters, but areas such as access, away coach parking, segregation issues etc also come into play.

### **3. Minutes**

All accepted.

### **4. Matters arising**

JO says two new SAB members will join from January.

### **5. Angus Kinnear**

AK says confidence in the team is strong, demonstrated in Derby County match after Blackburn Rovers defeat. January will be quiet he expects but doesn't rule anything out.

Says on stadium side, consultancy starting to take shape and positive progress continues to be made.

Email will be going out this week regarding fans position in the Season Ticket Waiting List, partly due from recent feedback from the SAB.

Anders asked about the academy's progress. AK says player retention at academy level can be difficult, but plans are in place to make further improvements on recruitment/ retention.

### **6. Feedback on last month's matches and any issues to note ahead of next month's matches**

Month saw a variety of campaigns/ tributes, including the Remembrance fixture, 11th minute tributes for Gary Speed, the Rainbow Laces campaign and a variety of different mascots. All went well. Club doing a lot of Christmas related activities through the Foundation, player visits and charity appearances across December.

## **7. Chair's business**

N/A.

## **8. AOB**

Anders mentions the FA Cup trophy on display in the East Stand reception. The money was raised by Scandinavian supporters and they were promised a plaque. The original was lost, so this is a replica funded by them. Club to look into, says MP.

Anders asked to go through feedback on overseas ticket allocation after the season which KH will look into.