

SAB Meeting – Thursday 23rd January 2025

Venue: Boardroom

In attendance: Jane Dowson (Chair), Angus Kinnear (Chief Executive, AK), Jordan Owens (Head of Communications, JO), Luke Irwin (LUFC Foundation, LI), Andy Ireland (Prohibition PR, AI), Paul McManus, Katie Watkin, Lliam Brocksom, Josh Cawthorne, Ken McCarthur, Nikki Allan, Anders Palm, Maz Ferguson, John Callard, Rachael Grimes, Jack Douglas (minute taker).

Online attendees: Jay Bhatt.

Apologies: Umair Meer

1. Welcome, introduction and apologies

Chair welcomed John Callard and Rachael Grimes give brief introduction to their background and reason for applying to join the SAB. The chair explained that their selection followed an application process advertised by the club after SAB members identified the need for members with their experience set. They were formally welcomed and accepted by all to join the SAB. Chair confirmed that all members are now voted on for a term of two years to January 2027.

2. Minutes from the previous meeting

Accepted.

3. Matters arising

JO confirmed that trophy issue raised by Anders at a previous meeting regarding a LUSCOS plaque will be sorted by the club.

4. Feedback from Foundation film

Funding from Premier League enabled the Leeds United Foundation to make a film about fan behaviour at Elland Road. Andy Ireland from Prohibition PR in attendance. Foundation has had the chance to apply for further funding, which will highlight positive behaviour. Luke Irwin from Foundation explains the thoughts behind the video and the future case studies that will follow.

The film was shown.

Andy says other themes to come from the video include sexism, disability, racism, homophobia, elderly supporters, and discusses initial thoughts for each case study, asking for feedback.

Filming process hopefully to begin at start of February with March international break aimed for release. Andy asks for suggested names of those to be involved in filming to be fed back by Monday 27th January.

Andy explains thought process is that the whole concept is “hard hitting”, to intentionally get the point across that certain behaviours are NOT acceptable.

Katie suggests highlighting hidden disabilities would be beneficial.

Chair asks where the video will be used. Main video to be used on matchdays on big screen. Main video and case studies to be used on social media/website/ LUTV.

5. Angus Kinnear

AK says no real updates from what Daniel Farke has said to the media regarding the transfer window. Hard work going on behind the scenes and recruitment team is in constant dialogue. The strength and depth of the current squad is highlighted, for instance on the wings.

Pre-season next summer will be in Europe, with matches that fans will be able to attend. A first fixture to be announced in due course, with additional Elland Road fixtures also to be revealed down the line.

On Manor Solomon, says club pick players to represent Leeds United on ability. Regarding the chant, the police do not class this chant as a hate crime, but AK outlines procedure for reporting of the chant, which has been condemned by the club. The club relies on people to report things via the matchday incident text number or to nearest steward, in order to be able to take swift action. Without CCTV/video evidence it can make it difficult to prove.

Anders says supporters have a responsibility to help stop unacceptable chants, by having a conversation with the person sat next to them, should they be participating.

Maz praises the quick condemnation of the chant from the club through comment in media outlets and JO explains the strategy behind this.

JO says a new Solomon chant (Solomon again Olé Olé) was heard against Norwich City and hopes this will help eradicate the previous one.

SAB condemns all inappropriate and offensive chanting. Club would like to be proactive through education.

JO says Joel Piroe went to a Foundation event this week celebrating religion and discussed Islamic faith. AK says Hannukah event was very positive at Elland Road, welcoming over 200 Jewish supporters.

Maz says on behalf of Marching out Together, congratulations on the club being nominated for the Professional Game Award at this year's Football v Homophobia Awards.

The Community Iftar will be hosted this year by the Leeds Rhinos and LUFC will be supporting. It will return to Elland Road next year. Katie added that player appearances there would be beneficial.

6. Equality & Diversity

The club is part of the Premier League EDI standard. JO outlines the work the club are doing regarding EDI can be now found on the club's website. Helen Evans (Head of Safeguarding & EDI) to attend a future meeting.

Video showcasing club's EDI work in the community shown was shown to the SAB.

The 2023/24 season report, when finished, will also be published.

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

Nikki says a Turkish flag was waved at Hull City, which she complained about and action is being taken.

Josh says some lids on coffee cups in South Stand were the incorrect size, leading to some fans spilling hot drinks on themselves.

Katie raises issue about leaking roof in Kop. Email has been sent to SLO.

Josh asks for progress on the issue of the visibility of the clock on scoreboard being moved, previously raised by the SAB. JO to look into.

JO says the club are expecting next round of TV fixtures to be announced soon, which has now reverted to a five-week notice period.

8. Chair's business

Chair explained to the new members that the agenda is solely decided on by the SAB members, so they can put forward any item they want to discuss at meetings. There is a general SAB WhatsApp group with club representatives and a member only SAB group to discuss issues between meetings, which can be added to the agenda. They can always email or phone her directly if preferred.

SAB members then discussed future agenda items. Suggestions made included ticketing, merchandise, sustainability, EDI, football ops, commercial and retail and heritage.

Regarding retail, 'Fanatics' to take over all the club's retail department and have confirmed that no jobs have been lost.

Chair says LUSN have again decided not to take up an offer to join the SAB. She confirmed that the door is always open for them to join in the future.

JO to also chase regarding sustainability report.

9. AOB

Stadium cleanliness issue raised, including with regard to toilets, flooding, litter and turnstiles. JO to raise with relevant parties at the club.

Jay Bhatt mentions club used to have a discount partnership with LNER & hotels. Says it was beneficial for travelling fans. JO to raise with partnerships/ ticketing.

Anders says there is no LUFC related welcome to Leeds train station. Discusses the idea of having a club presence there. Josh Cawthorne to look into the possibility of a mural close by.

Paul says one fan he knows is 'digitally excluded' and the club have not been helpful regarding printing off a paper ticket for the Cardiff match. JO is in an email chain and hopefully the issue can be resolved.

Podcast to be hosted by LUTV after discussions for a new host fell through. Will relaunch next season.

Katie wants club to promote Josuha Guilavogui Foundation more. JO to pass on feedback to him and to speak with Foundation.

10: Time and date of next meeting

Thursday 13th February, 6pm.