

Fan Advisory Board

Date of Meeting: 20th October 2023

Attendees

Gill Martin – FAB Member (Prepared Minutes), Nigel Summers – FAB Member, Jo Davis – FAB Member, Gerry Brown – FAB Member, Lee Cooper – BHAFC, Paul Mullen - BHAFC, Jenny Gower - BHAFC and Sarah Gould – BHAFC.

Location: AMEX Stadium

The meeting started at 3.00pm. Jenny welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that it had been several months since the Travel Review had been announced. The FAB had expressed interest in being more involved and therefore a review meeting had been set up to discuss progress to date.

The following items were discussed:

1. Paul Mullen explained that the Travel Review covered all aspects of travel to the Amex Stadium including trains, buses, Park and Ride schemes, driving, car sharing, walking and cycling.
2. Paul told the meeting that the club is not responsible for transport. This responsibility remains with the transport specialists such as the train and bus companies. He explained that Brighton is the only club to get so involved in travel which is due to historical planning consent issues. He felt that the current costs to the club are not sustainable and that the current travel subsidy from the club cannot stay in place forever. He also told the meeting that the club cannot commit to new schemes that increase our costs further.
3. Paul explained that discussions have been held with local train providers and the Department of Transport. These have proved time-consuming, but it was felt that progress was now being made. There were several complex issues to be discussed including travel subsidy levels, ticketing, and safety/operational concerns. Additional revenue to be derived from any future contacts was a discussion point.
4. Nigel asked whether given this situation, it is reasonable to expect an increase in the cost of the rail contract. He asked what options are being considered to cover any potential increase. Paul Mullen replied that they are considering different options in this area.
5. Discussions with bus companies will also take place when contracts with them are being renewed in future years.

6. Sustainability was discussed. The FAB were pleased to hear that additional bike racks are planned.
7. Nigel asked about the status of the Fanzone plans. We were told that the plans were currently going through the Planning process. It was generally discussed that more facilities at the AMEX stadium would encourage people to come earlier and leave later which could help congestion at the station and on park and ride buses. The FAB mentioned that some of the current catering issues would need to be resolved to encourage people to stay on at the stadium.
8. Jenny explained that there had been a comprehensive study carried out of where Season Ticket Holders live, how many people could walk/cycle to the stadium, etc.
9. Gill asked whether any covenants or restrictions still apply from the original planning application for the stadium. It was explained that all plans or recommendations will be passed through the Travel Management Group to ensure that the local community are also considered.
10. Jo asked for the options for travel to the women's game at Crawley are considered as part of any overall travel review.
11. The FAB were assured that the FAB would be contacted again for their input once the negotiations with the train companies were concluded. Paul Mullen confirmed that the FAB would be involved in communicating any decisions to the wider fan base.

The meeting finished at 4.20pm. The FAB thanked everyone for setting up the meeting and keeping the FAB informed.