

FAN ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

22nd September 2022

Attendees

Clive Steed – FAB Member (Secretary / Prepared Agenda & Minutes)

Gill Martin – FAB Member

Jenny Gower – BHAFC

Anna Easthope – BHAFC

Location: Microsoft Teams

Next meeting: TBC

The meeting opened and GM asked what the club were looking to gain from the working group. A discussion was held and the general themes were that the we should be looking to achieve

- a) Create a 12th player from the stands
- b) Enhance fans match day experience
- c) Encourage fans to arrive earlier and stay later to spread the congestion of fan travel

The FAB having sought feedback from social media and fellow fans provided the following agenda items

1. Performance on the pitch impacts the atmosphere the most

A conversation was had that recognised the atmosphere at the Amex can be excellent (Man U and West Ham, and Leicester games as recent examples) but that this was very much a case of the fans building off the pitch performance as opposed to the pitch performance rising from the fans performance. It was agreed there was little this group could do to increase on pitch performance but that they could influence the atmosphere.

2. Use of Pyro at first two matches

Nice idea, maybe first game of the season / special occasions. Not great for the east stand and those with breathing difficulties. The club acknowledged that the weather had not helped as the smoke lingered in the stadium for quite a while. It was agreed this should be carefully considered and fans warned before this was trialed again.

3. Flame throwers and light shows

The club confirmed they were looking at Flame throwers and light shows at future matches and looked forward to feedback once these had been trialed

4. The Big Shirt

Lots of fans reported not noticing the big shirt. CS asked if it could be passed over the North Stand as a crowd surfer flag. Following discussions it was suggested the size and shape were not ideal for

this. CS suggested this could be used for the WSL games behind the goal as extra branding particularly at Crawley or at the Amex when the North stand is not used,

5. Flags

The club had recently trailed the use of large flags as part of the pre match build up. The layout of the North stand does not allow for the use during games but the club agreed to keep trialing use as part of the pre match build up. Generally more flags around the ground and in the stands would help the atmosphere. This conversation and the big shirt conversation led to a chat about how do we get behind RBZ from day in a way that we never did with GP. A possible crowd surfer flag was discussed and CS agreed to get designs and suggested a crowd funded (from the fans) flag rather than a club purchased flag would be better. The club also agreed to look at a policy so all fans could get "approval" for flags and possible storage at the ground.

6. PA & Announcements

A conversation was had about the PA system and certain parts of the ground not being able to clearly hear what was being announced. The club recognised that it was a PA system for public safety that is now being asked to act more like an entertainment sound system. This is on the agenda for a review for a possible upgrade but not immediately.

7. Pre-Match Build up

Lots of fans had commented about the words to GOSBTS being put on the big screen with a mix of pros and cons. The use of Hey Jude has also been raised by a number of fans as not being "Brighton" although to date a suitable alternative has not been found. The use of a Drum seems to have an equal amount of for and against views although this could be investigated further.

8. Safe Standing

CS suggested that there are lots of people in favor of safe standing and that this should be reviewed by the club through a fan survey (although only those fans affected (North and South West) should be surveyed. The Club agreed to look at this although it had an impact on safety, sight lines and would come at a cost if implemented.

9. Away Fans behind the goal

Lots of fans had raised that away fans behind the goal was not helpful and often the concentration of away support behind the goal aided the away team. Again the club agreed that this could be reviewed although the stadium was built with away fans behind the goal and this would be costly to change.

10. Travel / Food / Beer etc / Highlights after the game on concourse

Whilst not directly related but, if the food and travel were better and highlights after the match were shown in the stands (as per pre covid) fans may be tempted to stay rather than leave early at 45mins and 90 mins. It was agreed that a food and drink group or at least a meeting with the head of Sodexo should be had.

Actions

- FAB to research and come back with suggestions for alternatives to Hey Jude.
 - Freed from Desire by Miss Caffaina
 - Rumble in Brighton by the Stray Cats
 - Praise You by Fatboy Slim
 - Just Can't Get Enough by Depeche Mode
 - Don't Stop Believing by Journey
 - Ecuador by Sash!
 - I gotta feeling by Black Eyed Peas
 - Somewhere over the Rainbow (with Albion lyrics) by Mr Albion aka Mark Brailsford)
- FAB to investigate crowd funding initiative for a large supporter banner and establish appetite for this to be carried across north stand. [CLOSED RDZ flag in use]
- BHA to come back with a mock up of a potential banner and preferred supplier, cost and lead time, that can deliver the fire safety certificate. [CLOSED crowd funded and designed and approval from Arsenal and Charlton for away use]
- BHA to look at setting out a clear process for bringing in banners and flags to the stadium. [OPEN]
- BHA to check highlights of match are being shown on concourse screens as they used to be pre covid. [CLOSED – now being shown again]
- BHA to discuss with Sodexo thoughts on a catering working group. [OPEN]