

Leyton Orient Fans' Forum 8 January 2015

Present:

SLO:		Keren Harrison (KH)
LOFC:		Alessandro Angelieri (AA) Mauro Milanese (MM) Jonny Davies (JD)
Fans:	LOFT	Doug Harper (DH) James Cassidy (JC)
	LOSC	Tony Roome (TR)
	Orientear	Jim Nicholls (JN)
	Pandamonium	Matt Roper (MR)
	E10 Mess	Matt Miklaucic (MMi)
	Orient Ramble	Adam Michie (AM)

Apologies received from Paul Levy of Orient Outlook

Note: Actions in ***bold italics***.

Introductions were made around the table as three new members were present.

1. Appointment of Supporter Liaison Officer

The club had announced the appointment of KH as SLO but there were still some outstanding items to be agreed between KH and the club.

JD explained that he would be the point of contact for the SLO and that he would refer items raised to the appropriate level in the club. He noted that he and KH had agreed that it will be important to ensure that supporters understand the role of the SLO and that there would be a website page covering the role (including a contact form to get in touch with the SLO). It would also include the SLO contact details and where and when she could be found on match days. A pack of information for visiting fans would be produced, with the Doncaster Rovers pack used as a model. ***JD undertook*** to arrange a meeting in the near future to finalise the appointment.

2. Voluntary AGM

DH asked if the Voluntary AGM, which had operated under the previous owner, could be continued. After discussion of what the meeting entailed and whether it was needed in light of the Fans' Forum and the fan meetings with the CEO and Sporting Director (after the LOFT AGM) and – hopefully – the Manager after the LOSC AGM, ***JD to provide*** the documentation from the last FC AGM to AA and MM who would review and, if necessary, discuss with the President. AA noted that it was unlikely that the President would attend such a meeting as this was perceived to be the job of AA.

The discussion also covered the financial planning at the club and AA confirmed that the situation was fluid and that the President was committed to providing the finance necessary to allow the club to move forward. AA was also able to confirm that the club is currently debt-free and that finance from the President is provided as a capital injection and not as a loan. JC asked if it was possible for a couple of supporters to meet with the President either before or after a game. **AA** will see if this is possible.

3. Ticketing and related issues

AA was able to confirm that the cheques for season ticket referrals had been distributed. It was noted that various schemes were in operation to try and fill some of the unused capacity in the East Stand – there has been a noticeable increase in supporters in that area of the ground. The 50/50 scheme with community organisations had been revived – this involves a community organisation buying tickets from LOFC and then selling them on to their members. The income is then split 50/50 with Orient.

Other schemes suggested included:

- Contacting people who work in the area but do not live here (for example on Canary Wharf)
- Re-starting the Season Tickets for a Tenner scheme for under-16's

The free season ticket scheme from last year had resulted in a few hundred extra fans. Those who had attended more than 50% of games last year had continued with the offer.

It was suggested that, in light of the change in the Preston game for Sky TV, it would be a good gesture if the club were able to provide a free coach to the game for those who had already bought rail tickets which they were now unable to use. The possibility of the club providing, say, two free coaches each season was also discussed and it was noted that this would need to be announced at the start of the season to ensure supporters knew which games would be covered by the scheme. It was noted that it appears that there are still occasional problems in using the website to buy tickets. JD noted that this element was contracted out to See Tickets. AA asked that problems be reported so that the club could take them up with the contractor.

4. Stadium

Supporters have asked that the non-slip coating on the edge of steps in the stadium be renewed as it was worn and no longer effective. KH advised that the Stadium Manager had been made aware of this and had sourced the necessary materials. The steps would be re-coated in the near future.

A supporter had asked if it would be possible to leave the stadium and then re-enter during half-time for those who wished to smoke. It was noted that this would be difficult as there were no contained areas outside the stadium. **JD will investigate** and advise.

Complaints had been received regarding the state of the East Stand toilets. This is a known problem and is only likely to be addressed as part of a wider refurbishment of the East Stand undercroft. Such work is not currently planned. It was suggested that the **SLO could take this up** with the Stadium Manager as a Health and Safety issue.

Problems with Sky TV reception had now been addressed.

JD will undertake a review of the 'Chingford John' signage in the bar after comments made regarding its suitability.

The ongoing problems with the tannoy/PA system and the toilet hand driers will only be addressed when the budget allows.

A request had been received for a better range of beer in the stadium bars. This would be referred to the relevant staff. It was confirmed that the current supply agreement was with Heineken.

5. Club Shop

It was noted that the club shop was outsourced and that the request for more 'personal' items of memorabilia would be passed on.

KH noted that there was likely to be a request for a 'retro' shirt design (either 'braces' or the V shirt) for next season as a memorial of the 100th anniversary of the Somme battles in WW1. The cost and difficulty of getting designs from Nike which are different from their standard range was explained by MM. The club will investigate further and see if this is a realistic option.

6. Any Other Business

Personnel issues:

1. Information re new staff – **JD will update staff page** on website and provide pen pictures of the recent recruits.
2. In response to a question, MM stressed that Kevin Nugent's role remains the same; he is still involved in first team coaching and any rumours to the contrary are false.

Reserve team sheets – will be provided in future.

Overseas fans – better intro pack under consideration, further info when available.

TR asked where the club's Customer Charter was currently published. JD advised that it was on the website (under the Fans tab).

A scoreboard/clock will be provided when the budget allows.

Agon TV programmes re Orient had been viewed on You Tube and supporters asked if the programme could be sub-titled in English. **AA** was unsure about whether the You Tube broadcast was official and ***undertook to contact the President*** to discuss the request.

A pre-season tour is under consideration and the fans reps noted that it would be helpful if any announcement were made as soon as possible – particularly if it is likely to be in Italy.

In response to a question about the scouting system, MM explained that the new Head Scout had begun recruitment for a network of scouts and the system will continue to develop.

Asset of Community Value listing for Brisbane Road. JC explained why the application had been made by LOFT and that it had been approved by Waltham Forest Council. Unfortunately, Matchroom are choosing to appeal against the Council's decision – using their usual lawyers Mishcon de Reya. LOFT will support the Council's internal review of the decision and, if necessary, any external appeals.

KH asked if the originally-announced benefits of the Loyalty Points system (ie those in addition to ticket access) would be implemented. The club will consider the issue.

Date and time of the next meeting: to be arranged by SLO.

END