

CUSG Briefing from 10th February 2016

Groups in attendance were the Away Travel group, the A66 Travel group, the London Branch and CUOSC. CUFC representatives were Phil King, Andy Hall, Amy Nixon and Nigel Dickinson.

Return to Brunton Park

Food and drink facilities:

- East Stand catering outlets would be the first inside the ground to get hot food back.
- Price of alcohol has been main complaint. Prices are due to the amount of alcohol bought in, prices cannot compete with chain pubs or supermarkets. Bottles of beer (330ml) are £2.50.
- The club has utilised portable draught facilities for ground floor bars. These cannot be lifted upstairs to the main Sunset Suite or Sporting Inn bars. Cellars and equipment has been reinstated by Heineken/InnServe & this work may be done before Phase Two of the restoration.

Everton Match:

- Positive feedback about the service provided by club staff. CUFC reps said the staff had performed very well but the systems behind them had not been perfect and there is a new culture of learning existed at the club and mistakes would be rectified.
- Fan's tent had been a success, including the entertainment. It will hopefully be used again this season with a promotional offer to fans.
- There were no restrictions on under 18 year olds from entering the tent. This had been miscommunication from a steward.
- No arrests had occurred during the Everton game with just one ejection for drunken behaviour. The Police are investigating the alleged racist abuse. All attendees shared their disgust at the alleged incident.
- Perceived overcrowding in the south end of the Paddock discussed. Some supporters were moved into 'A' Stand. Stewards had not moved enough fans along to the north end of the Paddock, with most people entering via the south turnstiles. The idea of allocating Paddock tickets as 'North' or 'South' would be considered for the future.

Ticketing:

- Everton and York City tickets were on sale on the same day, which had been criticised; this had been done to avoid people having to make two trips and queue twice, particularly with the limited facilities and the ground being a construction site.
- Season Ticket Holders had needed a separate ticket for cup-ties this season, the club will be looking to see if the ticketing system can include these games to be added to season tickets, therefore enabling games to be added using the website.
- Some Season Ticket Holders in the East Stand were not available due to segregation. Police advice had dictated that certain seating could not be used.
- Problems with the phone lines for purchasing tickets. Some supporters had been unable to get through or suffered long delays and some had since reported large phone bills as a result. The club could not identify the exact cost of these calls as network charges apply and these would not be known; it is advertised at 7p/min plus network charges.

- The club use Elite, a third party company to provide the service. There had been a technical issue with the phone line which had eventually been rectified. The club only takes a small percentage of the revenue generated. Supporters had been advised to use the club's own phone number and this had worked a lot better. In the future the setup of staffing and phone lines in future will be more robust.
- Nigel Dickinson will be dealing with this matter for supporters with Elite and liaising with Claire Winder.

Messageboards

Discussed about comments made about CUSAT members that were personal in nature and inaccurate. Cumbrians.net had representation in CUSG via Mike Denovellis, who was not present for this meeting and was handing this over. Agreed for Phil King and Claire to meet with messageboard representatives from Cumbrians.net and Footymad about the purpose of the CUSG.

Pin Badges

- The first 500 badges had nearly sold out and another batch of 500 had been ordered but had been delayed by holidays in China.
- Billy Atkinson was again generously covering the cost of manufacture.
- The identified cost of the audio equipment for match commentaries had been approximately £1,600.
- Once the funds were in place and the equipment ordered, we would be able to use blind supporter David Ross to help explain how it helps him follow the match.

Application to Premier League Fan Fund

- Phil reported that the application form had been completed and the £10,000 would soon be with the club. This would partially cover the cost of travel to 'home' games that had been played away from home due to the floods.
- A second application for up to £20,000 would be completed by Phil and Norman Steel. This could be used to cover the cost of upgraded viewing facilities for disabled fans inside Brunton Park. The damaged Family Zone could also qualify.

Any Other Business

- CUOSC were doing another survey of fans, whether they are a member or not.
- Claire has spoken to CUOSC about using their position on the 1921 Operational Board more.
- The caravan earmarked for use by CUOSC on match days had been flooded. In the meantime, there was a plan to give CUOSC/CUSG a more visible presence on match days. The CUFC Study Centre was identified as a potential venue and this would be progressed.
- CUSG could be given access to noticeboards around the ground to advertise away trips, events, meetings etc.

- Phil reported a meeting to take place next Thursday with the club's charity partners. Donations had been received from Everton fans' forum, Everton FC and Rod Stewart.
- Phil is looking at social events for supporters using ex-players.
- SkyBet wanted to have a meeting with Andy Hall and the Away Travel Group.

Next Meeting

23.03.2016