

Notes from the meeting with Cardiff Blues – Monday 30th Jan 2017

Attendees:

CBSC David Elsmere, Sarah Hopkins, Cath Smart, Chris Stork
Blues Rhys Williams, Mike Brown

Cardiff Arms Park redevelopment

RW reported that the 'long form legals' have now been issued to Cardiff Athletic Club (CAC) for their consideration. Discussions so far had been very constructive and although the process was not a quick one, everyone was pleased with the progress. RW said that the next supporters should expect to see is an EGM for Athletic Club members but that process would obviously be controlled by the CAC.

Future communications and meetings

It was agreed that the existing multi-tier communications was the best format for both parties. SH would continue to have regular one-to-one discussions with RH as necessary. There would be a formal meeting at least six times a year between the CBSC committee and Cardiff Blues Management. RW also reported that a new Fan Engagement Manager had been appointed to work with CBSC and the wider supporter organisation, specifically looking at the matchday experience and wider supporter experience. The new appointee was known to CBSC and SH extended an invitation for him to attend all CBSC meetings which was welcomed. RW said that he hoped this would see a further step change in engagement between Cardiff Blues and its supporters and that CBSC would be a key stakeholder for the new appointee. One of the first jobs would be for the outcome of the supporters survey to be reviewed. SH asked that this was shared with CBSC and RW confirmed that would be fine.

Matchday experience

CBSC said that the street food had been a great addition to the matchday experience – it was very popular. CBSC asked that this be continued and reiterated the need for advanced communications so that supporters know what to expect. RW confirmed that it was planned to continue at specific games during the season. CBSC said that the refurbishment of the Pack Bar had been well received but said that all the focus pre and post game with a lack of focus on the Jack Matthews Bar where CBSC were located. RW said that they were looking at ways to revitalise the 'fanzone' area which had not worked over previous seasons but that as a priority they would look to reintroduce the post match interviews which had worked so well in the JM Bar previously. CBSC said that they had had lots of contact from supporters who were unhappy with the wait times at the bars at CAP. RW and MB said that they had received similar feedback. One of the suggestions from members was partially pre-poured pints (although it was recognised that this would not suit everyone!) which RW said was already being considered to serve people quicker. The Blues had already increased the bar facilities in the South Stand to take pressure off the members bar, JM Bar and family lounge. Staff were now walking the bars on matchday to be able to redirect supporters to bars with less queues.

Merchandise and shop

CBSC raised a previously discussed topic which was regarding the quality of the shop and range of merchandise. CBSC felt that the shop did not offer a good customer experience and that the range of items available was completely insufficient. RW said that we remain limited for space but that the expectation was that we would be able to invest in a much improved facility in a new stadium. RW said that the drive was to push online sales and that there was a good range of items available online. CBSC said that more communication around this would have helped to explain to supporters but that having physical items in the shop for people to see, try on etc was equally important. CBSC said that the range for children was disappointing and that perusing the shop was an important part of the matchday experience and explained their experiences at other grounds which was deemed a much superior retail experience. RW asked CBSC to consult with supporters to establish their requirements for leisure and 'novelty' items and to feedback to the Blues asap.

RW explained the plan for the 2017/18 shirts which was that there would be a new home shirt and Euro shirt. The #SSFOs theme would be continued in the European shirt. CBSC thanked RW for a sneak preview of the design.

Gloucester Away Trip

CBSC shared their plans for the QF trip to Gloucester and it was agreed that CBSC/RW would arrange for all travellers with the CBSC trip or the sponsors trip organised by the Blues to gather at CAP from 2pm. The Blues would be requesting the full allocation of tickets for the game and they would be on offer to supporters asap.

Judgement Day

RW confirmed that feedback from supporters had been taken on board from last JD and that plans were currently being finalised. There was a meeting shortly with the WRU and communications with supporters would follow.

Events

- Provisional date for the CBSC PoTY would be the 4th March (post Munster game) – RW to confirm availability of an event space.
- CBSC were arranging a Lions Brunch to raise funds for SSFOs
- Plans for a joint end of season party were discussed but would depend on the location of the game.
- Cardiff Blues were arranging an event for 'Super Saturday' which was priced at £60 to include food and buckets of beer, entertainment and all three games on the big screen. Details would be released shortly.