

Senior Management Meeting – 11 December 2019

Present from RFC:

Nigel Howe, Bryan Stabler, Ray Booth, Mark Bradley, Dave Evans, Jackie Evans, Michael Gilkes, Sue Hewett, Stephanie Smith

Present from STAR: Paula Martin, Roger Titford, Kevin Lenton

1. Away ticket pricing in Championship

STAR reported that there was an interest at a divisional level, and through the FSA, on focussing on away ticket pricing. RFC had been praised in FSA publicity for their consistent stance of £20 tickets and STAR asked if more could be done to promote this.

MB to consider the following:

- A three or four year pre versus post comparison of away attendances at Reading
- Communicating the notion that reduced ticket pricing has been revenue neutral
- Making this case sufficiently early so other Championship clubs don't come back with the answer that their prices are already set for the season and they cannot reciprocate

2. Facial Recognition testing

The FSA had asked STAR to enquire if RFC was testing facial recognition techniques on supporters. RFC confirmed that it was not and had no plans to do so.

3. Date for Structured Dialogue meeting

SS to propose a date in late Jan / early Feb 2020 for the first of the Structured Dialogue meetings between RFC and STAR, as per the MOU signed in July.

4. Fan Engagement / FSA awards

STAR / RFC have been shortlisted for the national FSA Award on best supporter engagement. The winner will be announced on 16 December and STAR will provide MB with copy whether win or lose.

NH asked RT to provide a summary of the quantitative achievements that has led to the shortlisting.

It was also positive to note that a separate survey placed RFC 8th nationally on fan engagement – and the highest of the clubs in the top two divisions.

5. Leeds fans in home areas

STAR reported concerns from member about Leeds fans present in home areas and consequent disruption at the recent home match.

RFC were aware of the likelihood of Leeds fans in home stands and were **proactive (setting point restrictions in the most sensitive areas**, refunding tickets prices to as many as were obviously Leeds fans before the game) but many Leeds fans have local addresses and a purchase history of other

games as well as home season ticket holders lending their ticket to Leeds supporting friends so even a points based risk assessment is by-passed.

However there is no justification for any violence to Leeds fans in home areas by home fans, some of which was reported and is being acted upon.

The control room tried to deal with the outbursts from Leeds fans in home areas **when the late goal was scored** but the timing was particularly difficult so close to the end of the game as at that time stewards are being redeployed to outside for the final whistle.

6. Update on free away travel

STAR reported a significant increase (more than double the number of coaches) for the free away travel offer. PM to provide MB/ JE with precise numbers. The offer correlated with a 50% increase in STAR membership so far in 2019-20.

7. Delay in adding Royalty Points

All 2019-20 STAR members should have 20 points added to their ticketing account. The surge in early membership applications has forestalled these points being added. RFC would endeavour to have these added by the end of the year.

JE said if any member felt they might be disadvantaged by this delay (eg. applying for Fulham away tickets) then they should contact the Ticket Office and their situation would be rectified.

8. STAR's Reading FC Hall of Fame date

STAR asked whether attendance by RFC staff would be boosted by having the event on Sunday 22 March or Monday 23 March. RFC said Monday would be preferable but recognised there are other factors in deciding on the date.

9. Boxing Day travel

RB described the efforts being made to put on town buses and provide extra parking for this evening fixture. Will be communicated to supporters in due course. RFC asked STAR to enquire whether it was possible to put on coaches from the outlying west (eg Didcot / Newbury) and east (Maidenhead) directions to in part cover the lack of rail service on Boxing Day. PM to follow up with Horsemans and report back.