

STAR Operations Committee Meeting with Reading FC – 26 October 2022

STAR (Sarah Turner, Martin Brailli and Matthew Batten) met with Reading FC on discuss a number of the most recent and pressing issues brought to us by members and non members alike –

This was a wide-ranging discussion that included the women's team, kits and Fanatics, the cashless stadium and golden gamble, ticketing, catering, cycling and transport among other issues.

PARTICIPANTS

Reading FC

Brooke Chaplen, General Manager, Reading FC Women
Rob Coleman, Supporter Services Manager
Dave Evans, Community Trust Manager
Jackie Evans Director of Operations & Head of Human Resources
Tim Kilpatrick, Head of Commercial
Dave Parker, Safety Officer
Mitch Parris, Marketing Manager, Reading FC Women
Shelly McLean, General Manager Levy UK + Ireland

Supporters Trust at Reading

Sarah Turner
Martin Brailli
Matthew Batten

AGENDA

1. Update on STAR board
2. Updates from last meeting
3. What's going well from our point of view
4. Issues raised by fans:
 - Flares
 - Vaping
 - Catering
 - Fanatics
 - Cashless stadium
 - Golden Gamble
 - Tannoy
 - Tickets
 - Cycles / transport
 - Programmes
 - Loyalty Points
 - Women's Team
5. AOB

ACTIONS

ACTION 1: Reading FC to send to STAR a list of possible 'day of action' tasks for suitability consideration.

ACTION 2: Reading FC will revisit the idea of a 'media day' with all podcasts with the Chief Communications Officer.

ACTION 3: Reading FC to check whether Ground regulations on website are 2022/2023

ACTION 4: Reading FC to consider how to further publicise the text message reporting line.

ACTION 5: STAR to consider whether to arrange a meeting between fans and Reading FC/Levy to discuss catering.

ACTION 6: Reading FC to provide a full update on the main website on catering, difficulties and steps taken, including openness to receiving feedback, later in the year.

ACTION 7: Reading FC Community Trust to provide an example of how money raised through Golden Gamble is used to benefit the local community.

ACTION 8: Reading FC to review the video screen template to ensure text is more visible for fans.

ACTION 9: Reading FC to trial reading out away team news at men's games at 14:30.

ACTION 10: STAR to meet with Reading FC to discuss loyalty points proposal paper.

ACTION 11: STAR to set up a meeting with Reading FC on Museum exhibition artwork.

ACTION 12: Reading FC to consider through the Community Trust how to make a sensory provision in the absence of a sensory viewing area.

ACTION 13: Reading FC to consider options for signage at Reading Station directing towards football buses.

ACTION 14: STAR to identify options for signage outside the megastore pointing towards STAR Base.

ACTION 15: Reading FC to consider options for signage outside the megastore pointing towards the fanzone.

ACTION 16: Reading FC to commence consultation on matchday music.

ACTION 17: STAR to ensure due consideration is given to amplifying womens messaging on social media.

ACTION 18: STAR to consider trialling opening STAR base on Reading FC women's match days.

NOTE OF MEETING

Introductions and overview

1. STAR opened the meeting by thanking attendees from Reading FC for taking the time to meet with STAR and all attendees introduced themselves.
2. STAR provided an overview of recent changes to the STAR board with new board members elected at the September AGM. STAR noted that the new members bring a diverse range of skills and club experience, including further exiles joining the board. STAR noted that they are in a period of reflection having recently undertaken a fan survey and are currently undertaking interviews with former board members to understand how they can continue to evolve as an organisation.
3. STAR noted that they are aware of the importance of visibility and engagement, recognise there is more that can be done with members and the wider fanbase, further engagement to be undertaken with fan Groups and noted this as an opportunity to further build the relationship with the club to be more visible and helpful.

Positive feedback

4. STAR noted there has been a lot of positive actions and engagements from the club recently. STAR highlighted examples including: 1) season ticket pricing, including for children, 2) tickets for kids (grassroots and youngsters); 3) positive reaction to the owner's attendance at the Wigan game and engagement with fans; 4) proactive messaging on issues relating to club merchandise (kits); 5) recent Head of Football Operations appearance on local podcasts; and 6) players and coaching staff meet and greet at the Oracle (25 October).

5. STAR asked Reading FC whether they have further initiatives planned and how they will continue to build on recent positive developments.

6. Reading FC noted that there are further activities in the pipeline, the club plan to do 4 tickets for kids matches at men's game per year, with the next game scheduled for December 2022. Reading FC also noted plans for a Boxing Day promotion where Season Ticket holders can bring a friend. Reading FC also noted they are developing initiatives for the Women's matches also with the first school and grassroots game this season planned for Reading FC Women v Leicester on Sunday 30 October.

Outstanding actions from previous board meetings

7. STAR queried whether there were updates on a community 'day of action' ([Ops Strategic meeting 14 June 2022](#)). Reading FC noted that this has not yet moved forward. The club noted the Stadium Manager will hold a list of items that fans could assist with, however, this would need to be carefully considered against what is viable depending on the members of the public available (generic or specialist skills) and the need for risk assessments.

8. Reading FC noted the outside area of the East Stand requires maintenance and this could be an area for assistance. STAR and Reading FC discussed whether it could be possible for a community event to be developed during an 'off peak' point of the season (possibly the World Cup) and whether it would be possible for a player to attend for part of the event. Reading FC were open to the idea.

ACTION 1: Reading FC to send to STAR a list of possible 'day of action' tasks for suitability consideration.

9. STAR noted that in March 2022 the club agreed to do a day with all podcasts invited to Bearwood to meet with the club as part of a media day in pre season ([Operations Committee meeting 31 March 2022](#)). Reading FC noted that a media day with main broadcasters and local media/freelancers was held ahead of the season which contained local bloggers, but was not a day as per the above.

10. Reading FC also noted that The Tilehurst End do attend at Reading FC Women press conferences, which commenced during the second half of last season and continued through pre-season and so far this season. Reading FC also referenced the recent podcasts

with Mark Bowen (Head of Football Operations) which were well received by fans. The recent podcast was discussed and noted that Elm Park Royals had arranged this directly with the Head of Football Operations, Reading FC noted that they are open to similar forums with other fan groups if the club receive a request detailing asks through the social media lead.

ACTION 2: Reading FC will revisit the idea of a 'media day' with all podcasts with the Chief Communications Officer.

Profile of community activity

11. STAR noted the role of Reading FC as a community club and commended the club on its activities within the community. STAR noted that post-COVID the volume of community activity visible from the club through its main engagement fora (website/main twitter account/facebook account) appears to have reduced. Reading FC noted a new Community Engagement Manager has recently been recruited and will engage with the new Social Media manager to help amplify community activity.

Pyrotechnics at football

12. STAR noted there have been a small number of isolated incidents involving pyrotechnics including flares and asked Reading FC whether there is anything STAR can do to assist, noting concern that due to GDPR STAR do not have the names of individuals with football banning orders so could unwittingly transit someone who cannot attend games to a match.

13. Reading FC noted there have been a low number of issues and were keen to stress that there have been isolated incidents unlike persistent issues at other clubs. Reading FC updated STAR on their current considerations including whether to publish an article or provide leaflets containing information with away tickets.

14. Reading FC noted that while they recognise there have been a small number of incidents and they do investigate and respond in each individual case, the club must strike a balance on how to respond. Reading FC noted concern that drawing attention to the issue could provide a false perception that this is a large and ongoing issue, a perception which in itself could put supporters off attending matches.

15. STAR thanked Reading FC for the update and offered to amplify any comms the club were to publish on this matter.

Vaping at football

16. STAR noted in recent engagement with fans several (double figures) had come forward to express concerns about fans using vapes within the stands. STAR noted that the Ground regulations only covers smoking and does not explicitly reference vapes.

17. Reading FC noted that vaping is not acceptable within the concourse or stands and signage is available within the ground referencing this. Reading FC noted Ground regulations are a template provided directly by the EFL, but will review and confirm that these are the latest version.

ACTION 3: Reading FC to check whether Ground regulations on website are 2022/2023

18. Reading FC noted that there have been instances of vapes being used as projectiles and any under 18s found with vapes will have them confiscated (UK law denotes that under 18s cannot purchase or have vapes).

19. Reading FC noted that at home games if stewards are aware of individuals vaping in the stands this will be handled by the club and incidents (including use of vapes) can also be anonymously reported through text message (this number can be used for issues ranging from low level security items through to hate crime or homophobia).

Anonymous reporting

20. STAR noted awareness of the incident reporting line although reflected that it has not been widely publicised. Reading FC updated STAR on the process when texts are received and flagged that the number is provided on the screen at matches. STAR noted that the screen is not available from all places within the stadium and general awareness of the line is low. Reading FC noted low usage and will consider how to raise awareness of the text message function.

ACTION 4: Reading FC to consider how to further publicise the text message reporting line.

Catering

21. STAR noted that upon requesting from members and the wider fanbase items to raise with the club, catering was the key item. STAR noted requests for the return of Blue Collar Food continue to be a key feature and raised a range of issues including:

- a. cost,
- b. quality; and
- c. range and availability of food and drinks across the stadium and fanzone.

22. Reading FC noted that generally the fanzone is working very well and feedback has been positive and referred to previous Ops Board meetings where issues have been discussed including prices and quality of products in comparison to other clubs.

23. Reading FC noted contracts are commercially sensitive and provided an overview to STAR of how catering is operated for internal (concourse) and external vendors and each were discussed in isolation.

External

24. Reading FC noted that vendors and availability of products will vary depending on anticipated crowd sizes for matches, Reading FC noted that vendors involved are local vendors from within the community and there is limited opportunity to influence products, but discussions with the contractors are positive when suggestions are made. Reading FC noted an example is pizza being provided, however as pizza is made fresh there will be delay in provision - here a balance between quality and time has to be struck.

Internal - drinks

25. Reading FC noted availability of drinks is limited due to space. Specific questions were asked regarding Guinness which was previously available. Reading FC noted that Guinness is no longer available, while this was provided due to London Irish, the time taken to pour Guinness correctly had negative impacts on queue sizes and wait times so a decision was taken that this would not be provided going forward. Reading FC noted that in rugby matches drinking is permitted within the stands which did limit queue congestion.

26. STAR noted feedback on beer quality, the club confirmed that pipe cleaning was undertaken on 25 October and will continue to be .

Internal - food

27. Reading FC noted there are severe limitations on products that can be provided within the stadium due to space available, due to the requirement for items to be cooked in an oven. Due to this, the current available options are: 1) pies (3 options), 2) hotdogs 3) sausage rolls.

28. Reading FC noted that where feedback is provided the club are willing to listen and provided an example that hotdogs were receiving negative feedback. Reading FC noted that they have now changed how hotdogs are provided so they are cooked fresh and no longer provided within a foil bag which has received positive feedback.

29. Reading FC noted that they do annually review their offering but operate under constraints including commitments to: 1) look at providing local items where possible. 2) ensure that items provided are through sustainable models, including tracking where food comes from. Reading FC noted that nothing provided at the stadium is air-freighted and in line with climate sustainability initiatives are aiming to be net zero in catering by 2027. Reading also noted in line with local offerings, they are currently working with a brewery located 14.6 miles from the stadium.

Consultation

30. STAR asked Reading FC how they consult with fans on the catering offer, the club noted one example of a meeting with young ambassadors on 25 October to review the Kingsley bag offering. Reading FC noted that they are happy to speak to fans directly, either for feedback to be provided directly to the club by fans or through a meeting/meetings

facilitated by STAR attended by fans with the Shelley McLean General Manager of Levy UK + Ireland.

ACTION 5: STAR to consider whether to arrange a meeting between fans and Reading FC/Levy to discuss catering.

31. STAR noted that Blue Collar will continue to persist as an item raised by fans but noted positively the steps Reading FC are actively taken to improve the offering inside of the concourse and outside of the ground. STAR requested Reading FC to provide a formal update through the website/social media later in the year to build upon the lines raised in this fora.

ACTION 6: Reading FC to provide a full update on the main website on catering, difficulties and steps taken, including openness to receiving feedback, later in the year.

Fanatics/merchandise/kits

32. STAR noted issues regarding kit availability, adverts advertising kit which is not available, issues with printing coming off of shirts and asked Reading FC to explain the relationship with Fanatics.

33. Reading FC explained to STAR that Reading have entered into a 5 year relationship with Fanatics, who are now responsible for online merchandise and the club shop. Reading noted that Fanatics have for this season taken over Reading's current stock order and further merchandise has been ordered by Fanatics to increase availability of kits. Reading FC noted they are aware of the date stock is due to arrive but are aware that supply chain issues globally persist but are recovering post-COVID and so are not willing to disclose dates that are at risk of moving at this stage.

34. Reading FC noted that Fanatics are a global supplier and appeal in working with them is due to their data analytical perspective, as the world's leading sports retailer. Reading FC noted that this is a transition year, but for future years Fanatics will be producing increased numbers of stock which should run to a more accurate forecast of demand than Reading FC have been able to meet in recent seasons.

35. STAR asked whether the additional kits ordered include the womens kit. Reading FC confirmed that the further order covers both mens and womens team kits, ranges of sizes and for male and female and are anticipated to fully cover demand.

36. Reading FC noted that throughout this relationship kit design will continue to be made by the club in conjunction with shirt supplier.

37. Reading FC noted that Fanatics are responsible for all merchandise, beyond kits, and the range of items has been reviewed. At the inception of this relationship Fanatics

considered the current club offering and have adopted many, although not all, previously existing items, and will continue to take advice from the club.

38. Reading FC also updated on the phone line being installed in the club shop. Reading FC noted that this will be for queries (e.g. stock availability) rather than being a line to purchase stock.

Cashless stadium

39. STAR noted feedback that some fans are finding the club moving to a cashless stadium difficult and asked whether issues have been reported directly to the club and what benefits this provides.

40. Reading FC noted that there have been no concerns provided directly and requested that any received by STAR are provided to the club. Reading FC noted that moving to cashless was borne out from the pandemic and is necessary due to a lack of local banking facilities available for the club to use when handling cash.

Golden Gamble

41. STAR queried what impact having a cashless stadium has had on Golden Gamble sales, whether the club intended to continue Golden Gamble in its current form and how moving to cashless has impacted on funds raised for the Community Trust.

42. Reading FC noted that since the stadium has moved to cashless the amount of revenue raised for the Community Trust through Golden Gamble has reduced slightly.

43. Reading FC updated that they are considering whether to adopt card-readers, although noted there are issues with both security and WiFi/data which could limit the ability to be able to operate effectively. Reading FC have spoken to food vendors on how they are able to operate card reader devices and are expecting to trial card-readers in hospitality shortly which will be expanded wider if trials were successful.

44. STAR noted that awareness that revenue from Golden Gamble goes to the Community Trust is low and would be keen to help clarify and amplify that message. STAR requested Reading FC provide an example of the journey from Golden Gamble purchase to funds raised from this being used to benefit the community.

ACTION 7: Reading FC Community Trust to provide an example of how money raised through Golden Gamble is used to benefit the local community.

Tannoy

45. STAR noted that issues regarding the tannoy persist. Reading FC noted they are aware and do continue to tweak to try to improve performance. Reading FC flagged that

there are wider issues regarding the tannoy that would require an overhaul of the system which would be expensive while the club continues in a period where it needs to ensure use of money is prioritised effectively.

Screen

46. STAR noted that the video screen for mens games is more difficult to read this season due to the writing on the screen being smaller - meaning that it is now not possible for many fans to read team names from the Eamonn Dolan stand.

47. Reading FC noted that the video screen is set to a smaller size for mens games than womens due to sponsors and recognise that there were font changes to enable the climate stripes to be visible. The club is keen to ensure that the climate stripes remain prominent but will consider options on how to ensure the video screen is more visible at the far end of the stadium.

ACTION 8: Reading FC to review the video screen template to ensure text is more visible for fans.

Reading out of away team

48. STAR noted there has been feedback from fans disappointed that away team names are no longer read out before games or provided on the video screen. Reading FC noted that the away team is read out when it is announced one hour before the game, although not many fans are at seats at this stage. Reading FC are not keen to read away team news out immediately before the game to enable the atmosphere to continue to grow from the home fans. In parallel, Reading FC have been considering limiting the announcer speaking in the build up to the match to enable atmosphere to build up organically before the match.

49. Reading FC noted that at Reading Women's games they do read out team news for both teams at 14:00, 14:30 and at walkout before kickoff without inhibiting the atmosphere.

ACTION 9: Reading FC to trial reading out away team news at men's games at 14:30.

50. Reading FC noted that team news is available through other means, including social media and on the Reading FC website, although recognise that mobile data coverage in the ground is not great.

Mobile data coverage

51. Reading FC updated STAR that they have held discussions with mobile phone companies to review options on how to improve data connectivity around the stadium however no viable solutions have been identified and it is likely this will persist until 5G rollout is more widely available.

Ticketing issues

52. STAR noted that there have been recent social media posts regarding queues outside the stadium after kickoff and recently flagged issues regarding QR codes. STAR requested update on these issues and whether the club still intend on rolling out QR code season tickets.

53. Reading FC updated that the queues outside of the stadium have related to mobile tickets and while Apple users are generally working with few issues, Android phones do tend to have more problems. Reading FC noted that other clubs are having issues with this and are working in conjunction with others to fix the issue before looking to roll out QR code season tickets. Reading FC noted that key issues are there are a large range of Android phones available meaning there are more diverse issues faced, alongside fans with broken phone screens trying to use QR codes when their screen does not provide a clear QR image.

Twenty's plenty

54. STAR asked whether there have been further progress on clubs matching our offer of Twenty's plenty. Reading FC updated that there have been no further updates beyond the 6 or 7 that took up the offer at the start of the season. Reading FC noted disappointment that the initiative has not had a larger takeup and noted that they will continue to lead offering this.

Cycle parking

55. STAR noted they had received queries from fans regarding cycle parking facilities being reduced. Reading FC noted that there has been an increase in takeup of the on-site cycle facilities, but that has meant there is insufficient availability for all fans that wish to cycle. Reading FC reiterated that no facilities have been removed and the club intends on expanding availability but there are further requirements that solely adding more facilities, including traffic management etc. Reading FC are continuing to work towards increasing cycle parking provisions.

Programmes

56. STAR mentioned that while the issue of programmes has been repeatedly raised, the lack of the club providing a programme does continue to be raised as disappointing. Reading FC noted that it is not financially viable for them to provide this service and there are no plans to reinstate this, while recognising that this is disappointing for fans who may wish to collect them the club cannot financially sustain it.

57. STAR raised comparisons to non-league teams who provide programmes, Reading FC noted that for a league club a large proportion of space that could be used for sponsorship to offset costs is required to be used on EFL advertising.

58. Reading FC also noted that all information that would be provided in a programme is currently available through other means, but if there were items that fans would expect to see in a programme that aren't provided elsewhere the club would be keen to know to consider if they could provide through other media routes.

59. Reading FC further noted that printing large numbers of paper booklets is contrary to our climate initiative and when programmes were provided this was a large loss maker with a considerable amount of stock left unsold which leads to numerous wider issues.

Loyalty points

60. STAR noted a paper has been developed with proposals for updating the Loyalty points system. Reading FC noted and provided points of contact to share the paper with.

ACTION 10: STAR to meet with Reading FC to discuss loyalty points proposal paper.

Museum exhibition artwork

61. STAR noted that following the success of the recent exhibition at Reading Museum, STAR has been gifted material produced. STAR requested a meeting with Reading FC to investigate ways content could be used at the stadium on an ongoing basis. Reading FC noted that they would be amenable to items being gifted to the club but were less keen on items being loaned. Additionally Reading FC noted that items must be appropriate and look right in a wider stadium context.

ACTION 11: STAR to set up a meeting with Reading FC on Museum exhibition artwork

Sensory viewing area

62. STAR noted previous discussions on a sensory viewing area, last discussed at the [Operations Committee on 31 March 2022](#) and asked whether there were further updates. Reading FC noted that they have now exhausted options of providing a box as it would not be possible to do this properly but are open to other ideas on how to provide solutions to improve the environment for fans that may have autism or other reasonable adjustments required.

63. STAR raised to Reading FC that alternative solutions have been seen elsewhere where family stands have had a number of sensory kits available which include items such as ear defenders and a fidget item. While not as ideal as a viewing area, STAR asked Reading FC whether they would consider whether kits could be made available. Reading FC discussed sponsorship options, whether branded ear defenders could be made available and where to encourage fans with adjustments to be accommodated - possibly the North Stand.

64. Discussion moved to the recent gesture of Danny Ings wearing noise cancelling headphones alongside a mascot with autism at the walkout of Aston Villa v Brentford.

65. Reading FC were amenable and through the Community Trust will consider options to make sensory items available for fans that may require them in the absence of a sensory viewing area.

ACTION 12: Reading FC to consider through the Community Trust how to make a sensory provision in the absence of a sensory viewing area.

Recycling

66. STAR queried given in the context of our climate initiative why Reading FC do not have recycling provisions available. Reading FC noted that work is underway to make this available although there are further considerations than simply providing bins. Reading are working with Select Environmental and are reviewing the whole wider process which will require some upfront investment from the club.

Half time entertainment

67. STAR and Reading FC discussed recent halftime entertainment at men's games, with particular positive feedback provided for the Bristol City game when Andy Carroll got involved.

68. STAR queried whether Reading FC would be willing to do children's training sessions on the pitch at half time again. Reading FC noted that the club is gradually returning to normality following the disease the pitch has faced, children as mascots are returning and the club are considering bringing back penalty shootouts. The club are looking at options to provide a wider range of options, but stressed they do not want to arrange things that risk disappointing young fans who would be involved if there is a risk items may need to be cancelled at short notice to preserve and protect the pitch.

69. STAR and Reading FC discussed the women's game offer. Reading FC updated that they currently have both Queensley and mascots and now post-COVID having moved to using the Select Car Leasing Stadium are looking to do more. Reading FC noted they are keen to have good halftime entertainment at women's games, now have the fanzone outside and recently had the Salvation Army involved. Reading FC were keen to emphasise that they are continuing to work on their revamped womens matchday offer through from catering to entertainment and remain keen to do even more. Reading FC noted that there are opportunities to do things differently at women's matches to the mens, for instance at women's games players are able to go into the crowd to take photos at full time, which is not possible in the men's game.

STAR Flag

70. STAR updated Reading FC on progress towards a new flag, which is currently at the design phase.

Signage

71. STAR asked whether Reading FC can provide a sign at Reading Station that says "football buses" directing towards Station Hill. Reading FC noted this as a good idea and will look into options, either of a permanent sign or if the bus provider could put a sign in the area on matchdays.

ACTION 13: Reading FC to consider options for signage at Reading Station directing towards football buses.

72. STAR asked whether Reading FC would be open to a sign being provided on a post outside the megastore pointing towards STAR Base. Reading FC were receptive.

ACTION 14: STAR to identify options for signage outside the megastore pointing towards STAR Base.

73. STAR noted there is signage when driving to the car park pointing towards the fanzone, but there is no signage outside the megastore, which is often the first point of arrival at the stadium.

ACTION 15: Reading FC to consider options for signage outside the megastore pointing towards the fanzone.

Roadworks and traffic issues

74. STAR noted disappointment at recent transportation issues around the club in recent weeks, including travel from the M4 and trying to leave Green Park. Reading FC voiced frustration at recent transport issues, noting they are acutely aware of these and are raising with the Council and other organisations involved. Reading FC that there were issues relating to closures on the M4, traffic light setup on Northern Way, the recent availability of petrol at Costco which created a surge around one matchday and the closure of Green Park Road. Reading FC noted that they were successful in delaying the M4 closure ahead of one game recently and the ability to influence is stronger when there are larger crowds expected but this is a multitude of issues coming together where the club has limited ability to influence but recognise them and will continue trying to seek improvements for fans.

75. STAR noted a query was raised by a fan on whether away fans can be kept in the stadium at the end for a period of time to enable home fans to walk around the stadium before away fans can depart. Reading FC noted that they are not able to do this under regulations and would not consider it on safety grounds if they could.

76. Reading FC thanked STAR for their recent engagement with Reading Buses alongside Reading FC in July when travel for early fixtures were affected by staffing issues.

Permanent fixture outside Club 1871

77. STAR were asked whether the club would be willing to engage with Club 1871 regarding a permanent fixture (flag) being provided. Reading FC were receptive and very happy subject to working through technical details on the weight of the flag and suitable fixings.

TIFO

78. STAR asked whether Reading FC would be receptive to the club working with them and other fan groups to arrange a Tifo at a home game. Reading FC were receptive but noted consideration will be needed on options for crowd sizes. Reading FC noted there are some existing items in stock and fan groups have had similar ideas which they would be willing to work with Groups on.

Music

79. STAR noted that there had been strong sentiment recently that Sweet Caroline now feels overplayed and would welcome the club reconsidering different music. STAR also noted there had been a recent offer from the Amazons to write a song for the club.

80. Reading FC noted that the current musical offering was as a result of consultation with fans and are keen to ensure that engagement is at sensible intervals, but recognised that it may be time to revisit Sweet Caroline. Reading FC also noted they hold a relationship with the Amazons and will continue to engage with them privately.

ACTION 16: Reading FC to commence consultation on matchday music.

81. Reading FC noted that the current musical offering was as a result of consultation with fans and are keen to ensure that engagement is at sensible intervals, but recognised that it may be time to revisit Sweet Caroline. Reading FC also noted they hold a relationship with the Amazons and will continue to engage with them privately.

Concourses

82. STAR noted that the insides of the concourses are mostly bare and do not give a feel of 'our' Ground. Reading FC and STAR discussed whether anything could be done as part of this, although Reading FC flagged that painting the concourses is at a high fee (six figures) and needs to be done properly so may not be an option for the day of action.

83. STAR asked whether heating will be installed on concourses. The club confirmed there are no plans to do this and it is not deemed viable.

84. STAR asked whether the club are receptive to blocking in the gaps at the top of the stadium to help keep sound contained and enhance the atmosphere. Reading FC confirmed that some of this has been done, but there are limitations to how many can be blocked - for

every three panels blocked one must be kept free. Reading FC also noted that due to wind levels items must be strongly secured. Reading FC were receptive to ideas to block panelling but noted that viable ideas must be provided including costs being covered elsewhere.

Social media error - players birthday

85. STAR noted recently an issue was raised where an error was made regarding a players birthday for the second year in a row. Reading FC noted this was a genuine error and has been handled internally including with the player involved.

Women's team

86. STAR were pleased to see both Mitch Parris and Brooke Chaplen in attendance as representatives of Reading FC Women. STAR noted that the remit of STAR covers both the mens and womens clubs and so it is important that Reading FC Women are in attendance. STAR asked Reading FC Women how they would be able to ensure that they represent both sides of the club effectively. STAR noted that they had tried to provide transport to women's games recently but there had not yet been sufficient takeup to be able to run a coach. STAR mentioned that they will continue looking for suitable options to test whether a coach can be run in future.

87. Reading FC Women noted that STAR's engagement on social media has been growing, but as of this meeting had not covered anything on Reading FC Women since retweeting the full time score of Reading v Tottenham on 26 September. STAR noted that it is currently reviewing how its social media operates but accepted this was not good enough and will ensure that due consideration is given to the women's team. STAR asked Reading FC Women to flag any items that would be particularly beneficial to amplify beyond general social media items from the Reading FC Women account.

ACTION 17: STAR to ensure due consideration is given to amplifying womens messaging on social media.

88. Reading FC Women provided an overview of attendance increases this season and work being undertaken to do more on school and grassroots as well as building on relationships with sister clubs and putting more of this around the matchday.

89. Reading FC Women also noted that merchandise sales this season are increasing and reiterated matchday activities to increase inclusivity and engagement between players and fans. Reading FC noted that they are also starting to provide hospitality at women's matches.

90. Reading FC Women noted that STAR base is not open on women's matchday's and so does not provide the same availability or make it feel like membership applies to them. Reading FC Women queried whether STAR would consider opening the base for some if not more games. STAR noted that the fanbase does tend to be more used for travel but would consider whether this could be possible to trial.

ACTION 18: STAR to consider trialling opening STAR base on Reading FC Women's match days.

91. STAR queried whether there is much crossover between fans that attend Reading FC Mens and Womens matches. Reading FC Women noted that data was not to hand but they would imagine there is a small amount of crossover and most fans are unique to each team.

92. Reading FC Women noted that there is a younger demographic at Reading FC women's games and for STAR to increase engagement with womens fans should consider a route through engagement with parents.

93. Reading FC Women updated on engagement with Ben Thomas from STAR on the Reading FC Women halftime offer.

94. Reading FC Women encouraged the STAR board members in attendance to consider attending a Reading FC Women game in the near future.

The meeting drew to a close. STAR thanked Reading FC for hosting them and taking the time to discuss such a wide range of topics in such an open and detailed manner.