



## **Introduction**

This meeting is part of a series scheduled for 2013 and 2014 that will take place on a quarterly basis between Everton FC, represented by the Chief Executive Robert Elstone and supported by selected colleagues. The Association is to be represented by the Chairman, John Blain, and representatives of the Shareholders' Association Executive Committee.

For this meeting Mr Elstone was supported by Alan Myers, the Everton FC Communications Director. John Blain attended with Executive Committee Members Michael Owen and John Vanderwerff.

## **Summary**

The meeting took place in Mr Elstone's office at Goodison Park and lasted for 60 minutes.

## **Update on progress towards 2014 General Meeting**

Mr Elstone informed the meeting progress had been made towards changing the Articles of Association and these would be placed before the Board for approval at the Board Meeting on December 19<sup>th</sup>. However, no discussions had yet taken place at Board level concerning the timing of the 2014 Annual General Meeting.

Mr Elstone further noted, in response to a query from Mr Owen, that Robert Earl would be attending the Board Meeting by telephone conference.

## **Timing of the publication of Company Accounts**

Publication of the Company Accounts has been delayed by the Club's auditors seeking further clarity on a particular matter.

Mr Elstone explained that the 'look and feel' of the document had been updated to improve readability and he was now expecting publication to occur in January 2014. He confirmed that it would be unlikely for the Club to host an AGM in line with historical timing, immediately after the publishing of the Annual Report and Accounts.

## **Effectiveness of Fans Forum and Supporters Liaison Officer**

Mr Elstone felt that the Fans' Forum worked well and continued to make a contribution to many areas of the Club. The group fulfilled many roles but served two key functions, firstly, a sounding board for ideas and policies proposed by the Club and secondly, providing feedback from fans on existing activities and new ideas and opportunities.

He added that the Club is reviewing how the Forum might be further improved – which it naturally does across all areas of the Club, and identified a need for the group to be a little less bureaucratic (spending less time on the Forum 'rules') and be less cautious in making decisions (and suggested that this was understandable given the unfair scrutiny levied on the group, earlier in the year). On the whole, Mr Elstone was pleased with the Forum's contribution. He concluded by noting that as part of the search for improvements, the Club was looking at other Clubs' Forums and communication vehicles to see if Everton could learn from others.

Following a brief discussion of potential improvements, Mr Vanderwerff suggested the Forum could publish an annual statement of contribution, matters discussed and decision made. Mr Elstone agreed. He also agreed that the Club would consider disallowing the option of anonymity such that all Forum members should be identifiable to the wider fan base. All agreed that work needed to be done raising the profile of the work of the Group and the general awareness of its accessibility.

On a final matter, we discussed the selection and composition of Fans' Forum members. John Blain expressed the view that the debate should have been made public by the Club.

## **Club position on proposals for safe standing at Premier League games**

Mr Elstone explained that this is a delicate subject and the Club formally doesn't have a view one way or another at this time.

The Club will continue to monitor closely any developments.

## **Update on proposed new stadium.**

Mr Elstone explained that discussions and high level planning continues with up to one and a half days per week of his time being spent on this. Operating to a high-level brief to create a stadium that would provide for the "most atmospheric home-end in world football" he explained that consultation with the Council and finding a preferred site means this is an evolving project. Nonetheless the work is sufficiently progressed that if funding was available the Club could move very quickly.

Mr Elstone described the current work as a 'phenomenally exciting scheme' with council buy-in and providing a significant amount of regeneration in Liverpool. He also explained that this was on the agenda for the forthcoming Board Meeting.

## **Update on Away Fans' Initiative, Everton and Overall**

We spoke for a while about this initiative and the different approaches that clubs had taken to investing the £200k per year that has been set aside by the clubs to enhance the away match experience. Mr Elstone reiterated what he had said in previous meetings that this is supposed to be about filling the away ends of grounds. He noted that the ticket price subsidy the Club had announced for our own fans accounted for about 25% of the total spend.

Additionally the Club would soon announce a new role of 'Away Fan Ambassador' who would be available 8am through 8pm on match days to support the needs of away fans including providing live updates (presumably through social media platforms) of things such as traffic and weather updates.

He is though really frustrated by the actions of what he called the 'less proactive clubs' who'd used the whole £200k to simply knock a few pounds off tickets for their own fans, especially those clubs who have a 100% away following anyway and so their actions are very unlikely to increase attendances.

He has (or will) asked the Premier League to be more specific about their expectation for the use of these funds as the scheme continues in 2014/15 and 2015/16.

## **AOB**

As our meeting had started a little late and Mr Elstone was already late for an important conference call we ended the meeting without really addressing AOB from either party.

## **Next Meeting and Actions**

The next meeting is scheduled to take place at Goodison Park at 10am on March 4th 2014