

Minutes of the meeting on 14/01/2021 between Mariners Trust and Grimsby Town Fans Online (GTFO)

Present:

GTFO - James Howes, Kelly Billings, Dan Humphrey,

Mariners Trust - Kristine Green, Dave Roberts, Ian Keightley

Start time 19:00 Finish Time 21:32

1. Benefits of Trust Membership.

Discussion took place about what do members get for being a member. There's 5% discount on season tickets, discount days in club shop. Trust don't do membership cards but new system gives facility for e-card. The vast majority of local Trust members are also season ticket holders. We need a drive on membership which should include what members get out of it. We will update the website.

Article in matchday programme was discussed and that individuals could also do it as well. Most of these things the Trust already do. Better use of the website pulling in articles from other sources although some may be negative.

Exiles were also discussed including a point scoring scheme or loyalty scheme. This got linked in with the new ticketing system and understanding what it can do. Motivation for exiles is the priority for tickets and needs looking at for exiles.

Trust members get priority after STH's for away games match tickets – proves popular with exile members that can't commit to a ST.

2. Fanzone

Discussion about the Fan Zone which is underway and has funding. It has not started due to COVID but will hopefully be in place for the start of the 21-22 season. Design and artist impression have been commissioned. The area is in the Constitutional Avenue corner. Supporters do not have to enter the ground to access it. There will be local food, bar hopefully including Docks Beers. Kids area and entertainment area. Will be calling on volunteers for help and people with skills such as joinery for help. We want people to get involved. It will also be for away fans. We maybe will need a fundraiser, but we have funds. It's about family's and parents having fun.

3. Overhaul of Matchday Catering

The trust will be able to do what we please in relation to catering within the Fan Zone only. In the ground there is another season on the catering contract. Discussions are ongoing with the caterer. Fish and chips are not logistically easy to do in the ground, but all ideas would be welcome. Lincoln do fish and chips, but it is done in a restaurant. KB mentioned the sort of food that Gainsborough do. All agreed that pie, peas and chips would be easier to cater for or maybe a fishcake bar.

4. Better Communication

The Trust need to do better. The website will be reviewed and needs a tidy up. Really need someone with WordPress skills to help us out. Twitter and Facebook discussed in relation to how we communicate and that we try and get the message out in one tweet but sometimes it is easier to cover possible questions by other methods.

Radio and podcasts were discussed. We have not had many requests from Radio Humberside and the ones we have had are usually short notice requests. We have never been asked to take part in DN35 podcasts or others but would be willing to do so. Trust communication on Social Media has been better in the last couple of weeks.

5. Exclusive Trust Interview Podcast/ Events

Discussed and reported it's a big thing to do and would need some help. Comes down to having the right equipment. GTFO surprised at how much of the stuff discussed that the Trust is actually on with. Word of mouth is very important at the moment which we have missed because of COVID. Quizzes and speaker evenings were discussed, and they have never got to a point of popularity where it's trust members only. Any new ideas for events would be welcome. Even though McMenemy's has been used for events they should still be Trust events.

6. Part Season Ticket & Electronic Ticketing.

Part Season Ticket - It's worthwhile if people want to buy it as long as it doesn't take anything away from the season ticket. It was pointed out that some season ticket holders only get to half the games. Discussed the possibility of introducing a loyalty scheme and points system. The new ticketing system opens up a lot of possibilities. Every ten games get one free was suggested. Cambridge, Stevenage, Burton Albion all have the same ticketing system. Fans could buy a card and get into games cheaper. You could build points into it and also include points for club shop purchases. COVID has actually helped a lot in getting the ticketing system up and running particularly with the scanning for entry into the ground. Need to make the most of it.

7. Offer an Incentive to the 1000+ Season ticket holders this season.

This has been talked about for next season possibly giving a pro rata price reduction on next year's season tickets, taking into account the IFollow home games that have been available. This seems to be a fair way of doing it and the new consortium has ideas.

8. Junior Supporters Club.

This ties in with Fanzone funding. It will cost £200 to re-launch Junior Supporters Club. This is on hold due to COVID as members would need to collect items. It's ready to go but just when? The trust has a dedicated board member to do this. It includes things that take a lot of organizing and there is a lot of work involved. KB stated she was happy to be involved. Junior takeover days agreed for last game of 19-20 season put postponed for obvious reasons. Will be revisited.

9. Make Junior Season Tickets very cheap or free.

This is one to look at with the new regime. We are at the top end of pricing with Juniors compared to other clubs. Ticket price does need looking at. We have had schemes before where people buy a junior ticket to block the seat next to them which club want to avoid. Discussed the possibility of a family ST which would see a tiered reduction of junior tickets attached.

10. Free Tickets to a different school for every game.

Around 400 – 500 free tickets are already given out to each game by GTSET, which is probably too many. We invite anyone to put ideas forward. We do not want to overlap with GTSET. It was discussed about junior club members being drawn at random to be a mascot and it was stated it was going to happen. Also have an away mascot. Play on the pitch and penalties on the pitch is already sorted. Any ideas around schools are welcome and the consortium may have their own ideas.

11. Trust Mini Work Experience Scheme.

Decided it was a good idea and suggested bringing it in to help the club out. There are also opportunities for people who are furloughed that could maybe help with things around the ground. We did get volunteers to help around the ground.

12. Myth Busters

Change of ownership should solve a lot of these. In particular the £30K the trust paid the club. This has been explained previously and has been well documented. Q and A section now on the trust website for other questions, which will be updated as necessary.

13. Pin Badges

Trust Pin badges is a good idea and relatively low risk. Suggested have 4 designs and a poll to decide the best. This is for season 21/22. Cost about £1.75 and sell at £2.50 to £3.00.

ACTION – GTFO to create 4 designs for new pin badges. Once received KG will create twitter poll for voting, winning design will be the first pin badge to go on sale.

14. Birthday Messages on Social Media During Half Time at games.

This is something we can do while games are behind closed doors and can be scheduled on twitter.

ACTION – KG to request birthdays and schedule tweets accordingly

15. Disabled Supporters.

Disabled points were discussed including access to the ground is ok, no drop kerbs on Harrington Street. Blue Badge spaces need to be increased. Supporters have to get there when the gates open. It would be nice to have the option of sitting in another part of the ground. Substitutes warming up in front of them. The subs have to warm up that side so they are not behind the assistant referee. Supporters get wet and the guttering leaks. In case of Emergency there are ramps so they can easily get onto the pitch. Level Playing Field have had a look at parts of the ground a couple of seasons ago.

There is a disability group that covers this but hasn't met since Covid. Will contact Club to resurrect.

Discussions also need to take place with disabled fans to get an understanding of what they want. It was discussed that carers get in free to any area of the stadium with high-rate DLA/Enhanced PIP but this was not commonly known.

ACTION – DR/KG to look at resurrection of disability group and gain opinion on current disabled section

16. Matchday SLO's

This is unlikely to happen this season as we are unlikely to get crowds back into the ground. It is a good idea beyond COVID. They are not stewards, but more of a meet and greet diverting people to

the ground and a point of call for any questions. Would need about 8 – 10 per game. Their training is on hold because of COVID restrictions.