

Notes of meeting of PTFC Trust
1pm on 2 December in the Chairman's Room, Colin Weir Stand

Trustees in attendance:

Foster Evans –chair (FE), Pauline Graham (PG), Jacqui Low (JL), Ian Maxwell (IM)

The first official Trust meeting of the season was a much smaller affair than the two previous meetings.

It started with a presentation from trustee & Club Managing Director, Ian Maxwell, providing an update on issues raised and discussed in previous meetings. He went on to discuss trends in attendance at home games.

First, Ian provided a facilities update, much of which had been suggested by fans at previous meetings:

- Disabled platform has been installed – was opening that day with 10 season ticket holders booked to use it. As noted previously, the platform lift is now operational on match days and for events
- JHS car park – additional disabled spaces have been added by redesigning the use of the area and to accommodate wheelchair users
- Family changing/feeding room will be open in JHS adjacent to existing disabled facilities
- Female toilets now have mirrors
- Signage renewed on JHS

A regular item discussed at previous meetings has been the catering provided from kiosks on match day. The Club was now looking at whether tastes had changed from traditional match day favourites - pies, Bovril, etc. Indications were that not all home supporters and visitors wanted these options so a more imaginative and modern choice of catering is being considered, in addition to the staples.

The Club has also been looking at installing a scoreboard and is currently investigating options and prices, which are substantial.

Mr Maxwell then provided some detail on season ticket sales in the last four years, and attendances at home league games this year. While season tickets overall had increased, sales of the important full price season ticket category had dropped by more than 13%. The average match day attendances for the first seven home league games this year is 2,440, compared with 2,566 last year (a drop of 5%). However, current attendances are in line with last year's overall average of 2,437.

The big issue for the club and supporters alike remains the need to get larger match day attendances by home fans.

Having considered the presentation, one supporter raised a question about the games against Rangers and Celtic. The attendance of home fans was lower at these games and Mr Maxwell gave a number of factors as to why this might be the case. The problem of Celtic and Rangers fans buying home tickets was discussed and it was felt the situation wasn't as bad as it had been a few years ago due to the new arrangement to host away fans in the Jackie Husband Stand. Furthermore, efforts are made at every game to ensure fans are where they should be.

Issues of particular fans' behaviour – letting off flares, invading the park, sectarian singing and making the game feel like an “away” match - were all discussed, along with levels of stewarding and opinions of the Board, and Fire, Police and Ambulance staff.

It was accepted that being based in Glasgow, there was always likely to be difficulties surrounding these fixtures. But there was no complacency around any of this on the Club's part where every effort was being made to increase home support at all games.

Beth Adamson, Supporters Engagement Officer, was then introduced to the meeting, having been appointed to her new role in October 2017. She made a presentation on what she has been doing in her first six weeks and shared early plans for the near future. This included:

- **Female Supporters Survey**
The first proper survey of female Jags fans had been launched and would be open until 31 December 2017. Already more than 300 surveys had been completed in the first 10 days. Beth confirmed that women make up 8% of season ticket holders, which is more than the Scottish average of 6%, but that it is a growing potential audience which the Club needed to understand and engage with better.
- **Proud Jags**
On Rainbow Laces day at the Club, the LGBT supporters group, Proud Jags, was being launched. The Proud Jags flag had already been placed beside other fans flags in the North Stand.
- **Review match day experience**
Beth is part way through reviewing the match day experience but was already testing out bringing in some new activities, including the cross bar challenge. That day, it was 100 kids from the grassroots teams who would be playing at half time.
- **Prioritised promotion of U16's Go Free**
 - Implementation of a six week Partick Thistle programme in after school clubs. This included players, Thistle Weir Academy coaches, fitness and sports science sessions.

- Assembly talks in schools including where possible first team players and staff to promote both U16s Go Free and the club in general.
- There are already 22 schools in the north of the city taking part in this programme of activity. Kids were being encouraged to come along with their free ticket and bring an adult on a discounted ticket.
- Earlier that week Kingsley and players had helped with the official opening of new facilities, a primary school seven-a-side pitch in Bearsden. There would be more organised events of this nature.

Pauline Graham, Supporters' Trustee, went on to outline the discussions that had taken place at the meeting on 28 October, when the supporters' increased involvement in the Trust was explored. She confirmed that the Trust had accepted her and Foster Evans' recommendations to increase the supporters' representation on the Trust to six.

Four new Supporters' Trustees have now been selected after a competitive recruitment process and the formalities would be put in place in the next few weeks.

There was then an opportunity for any additional questions.

In response to a question about an update on the training ground, Ian Maxwell reported that progress was being made slowly but options for land had been identified and he hoped that would move forward in the near future. The Club was keen that the pitches could be used as soon as possible - even without the changing facilities - but there was a number of crucial issues to be resolved by the development company over the next few months.

The South Stand was no further forward towards redevelopment and use but the property market appeared to be improving.

Foster Evans thanked everyone for attending and for their contributions.

Foster Evans
Chair, PTFC Trust