

SARACENS SUPPORTERS' FORUM

SATURDAY 2ND MARCH 10H30 - 12H00

MEETING MINUTES



ATTENDEES

Tim Hunt – CEO, Premier Team Promotions
Mitesh Velani – CEO, Saracens Ltd
Gordon Banks - Chief Community Officer, Saracens Ltd
Alex Gummer – Marketing Director, Saracens Ltd
Clare Ludlow – Marketing Manager, Saracens Ltd
Alice Spicer – Head of Ticketing, Saracens Ltd

Debbie Knight – West Upper Season Ticket Holders
Jasmine Farrant – West Lower Season Ticket Holders
Gavin Jones – Hospitality Season Ticket Holders
Denis Collen – BAME Supporters
Helen Ellis – Disabled Supporters
Steve Cracknell – Local Supporters
Lesley Mayo – Over 65s Supporters Representative
Luke Saint – Sarries On Tour Representative
Katherine Engler – Women's Representative

APOLOGIES

Brian Levin – North Stand Season Ticket Holders
Steve Cummins – East Stand Season Ticket Holders
Alun Morgan – Saracens Supporters Association Representative
James Degiorgio – Partner Clubs
Dean Harris – South Stand
Emma Southam – U25s Supporters
Richard Gregg - Operations Director, Saracens Ltd

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Follow ups from December meeting

AG reflected on feedback from the meeting on 20th November 2018.

GJ raised the topic of club communications to hospitality members in relation to club offers and promotions. GJ felt that while the club had improved the hospitality products this season that in doing so, some of the 'fan' feeling around hospitality had been lost. He requested the return of team sheets to hospitality members and more of an informal feel to communications

Action: CL to pick up with hospitality team

DC suggested introducing early bird drink deals to incentivise fans to watch the second game of the double header. GB voiced general concern over post-match drink deals in

relation with anti-social behaviour. TH suggested a Tiki Tonga coffee promotion for hot drinks. KE further suggested a food deal.

DC also commented on the double header with regards to families. He suggested planning onsite activities for children as the pitch won't be available due to preparation. GB suggested using the rear field for activities.

Action: TH and GB to follow up with Operations Team

TH touched on recent frustration over poor Wi-Fi in the stadium. He stated that a 'next generation' Wi-Fi source was being looked into to rectify the current network issues. GJ suggested tying this into the Saracens app.

Action: TH to follow up with Operations Team

AG confirmed that he is in communication with the catering department regarding an increase in variety and healthier options. KE added that this would minimise the lengthy ques during half time. LM shared her frustration around being interrupted as fans are leaving their seats during play to avoid lengthy lines. HE suggested drinks and food to be handed out during the match to rectify the issue.

Action: TH and AG to pick up with the Catering Team

DC suggested selling metal water bottles to ensure we are keeping up with environmental standards. KE suggested using bins near the bars for the reusable cups to be stowed as a charity incentive. MV shared that a recycling incentive could be intertwined with Middlesex University.

Action: MV to pick up with MU around recycling on match days

2. An update on 2019/20 ticketing and membership strategy

AG presented the 2019/20 Ticketing and Membership strategy.

AG discussed the new category of ticketing. GJ suggested identifying categories where matches are cheaper to incentivise STH to invite family and friends. DC shared his experience with Leicester Tigers and other clubs whom send out emails to fans inviting them along to category B games.

Action: AG and TH to look into communication around Category B Games

KE and HE queried Europe tickets which are priced as Cat A matches and felt that it's overpriced for a Sunday fixture. AS justified the price increase due to this being considered a premium fixture and added that they have no control over which day as they receive information very late. DC added that Sunday games have fewer catering options. GJ suggested using category B games as double headers to incentivise fans to attend.

Action: TH to speak to catering around consistency on Sunday fixtures

TH confirmed that the central messaging needs to be improved around changed concession prices which have returned and will minimize any frustration amongst fans. DC commented it is a 'much bigger win' for majority of audience who may not voice their frustration.

KE pointed out that she does not benefit from any new rewards after being a fan for 33 years. She put forth the suggestion of keeping a record of season ticket holders and their commitment to the club.

TH touched on the relocation of a minority of STH once the West Stand renovation is complete. He added that it will be a 'pain point' as the minority will be moved or will need to upgrade. DC suggested ensuring the transition is as smooth as possible and MV suggested giving them a choice of a direct debit to supplement the hard cost of upgrade.

3. Club Website

AG presented to the group a brief outlook on the current work which the website has been undergoing.

KE issues around viewing live statistics and suggested that this be looked into. AG mentioned integration of Opta stats into new website.

DC suggested including more fan content on the website, including Instagram stories and videos. He added utilizing non-playing players more i.e., video interviews on the website. TH agreed and stated that academy players are great to use from a storytelling perspective.

GJ suggested including more content around the foundation and in particular volunteering. DC further supported this showing a keen interest in all aspects of Saracens and would like to be updated on all fronts.

4. Other Points from Representatives

GJ highlighted the PA system needs to be improved. DK further touched on this that she and friends are unable to hear anything in the West Stand. HE however stressed that she appreciates a 'quieter space'. TH confirmed that this is being looked into and accounted for in the West Stand.

HE touched on safety concerns regarding the East Stand with no hand rails. She shared recent incidents where kids were running up and down the stairs constantly, contributing to a risky environment especially amongst disabled and elderly fans. KE added that general communication between Pioneers and Staff seemed poor, especially when needed to address an issue quickly. HE suggested installing a widget and monitoring those who

purchase seats in the East Stand to be briefed of the high positioning and number of stairs. A SMS service for fans to report issues without leaving their seats was also raised.

Action: CL to pick up with Pioneers/Match Day operations

LS queried whether there would be transport depending on success within making the European Final. TH stated that there will be packages to help.

LS also suggested featuring fans within the Match Day programme, to show what they do and why they support Saracens. He feels that this would be a good way to give back to fans.

Action: TH and AG to set up a mechanism for fans to submit stories

DC suggested improving communication around post-match fans traveling home who come to Saracens for the first time. HE further suggested arranging a bus for the double header game to ensure fans are able to get home easily and safely.

LM queried the protocols in place for any fans acting poorly behaved due to alcohol. DC commented that although these are isolated incidents, they seem to be more prevalent. He suggested adding this onto EC's script. HE further commented the need to address this for the London Stadium game, providing an anonymous text service for fans who experience bad behaviour from others.

NEXT MEETING

All agreed to hold the next meeting in May before the end of the season. CL to circulate dates shortly, meeting likely to be on a week night to allow representatives who struggle to attend on match days the chance to be present. Representatives were in agreement that alternating dates between week nights and match days was a good approach as long as plenty of notice was given.