



Meeting between Gillingham FC and the GFCSC – Wednesday 28th February 2024, at 6.00PM
Venue: Priestfield Stadium

Present: PC, JC, BR – GFC
NK, MA, LW, SC, DG, DS - GFCSC

RESUME

1. Funds available to 'spend'. Any update from the club please?

Joe Comper revealed that the club had been drawing up plans for summer work at the club. He hopes this can be jointly funded by GFC and GFCSC.

2. Smoking / vaping inside Priestfield

LW stated that currently smoking/vaping is not challenged by the Club Stewards. Joe Comper said that there should be no vaping in seats but agreed that the message did not seem to be getting through to Stewards as required. He went on to say that the whole issue did create a lot of problems within the ground that need to be fully addressed and while he wants to keep getting the message across, he did feel that more could be done once the season was over in readiness for next season. The club would also investigate a designated smoking area in more depth.

3. Catering issues

DS started the discussion by pointing out that perhaps the problem here was often down to the quality of staff available to The Club. He added that he fully understood the issue as the position is only part-time and for a few hours, but it did not help. Joe Comper explained that The Club only retained THREE catering staff following the return to normal matchdays post-COVID but was pleased to go on to say that the level is now up to the required level – but conceded that the QUALITY of staff was still lower than needed. He went on to say that he does have several strong and experienced Supervisors and they are currently working together to train up the staff to give fans queuing a better experience. This is a work very much in progress and still has some way to go. As for food, Joe said that introducing chips was not really viable as this would greatly increase the cost of insurance and were largely impractical. However, he did go on to say that next on their agenda would be to introduce burgers! Both LW and DS did make Joe aware that on many occasions they had noticed that food had run out BEFORE kick-off in both the Rainham End and the Medway Stand. Joe was very surprised and disappointed to hear this but thanked both for this input and went on to ask any of the GFCSC Committee to report to him any catering issues going forward.

FOOTNOTE: I have since found out that away supporters for both the Stockport and Wrexham games also said that the food kiosk at the Town End also ran out prior to kick-off and I have reported this back to Joe.

4. **History / Trophy 'Museum' / Supporters' Shop**

Joe said that he had already been contacted direct by a supporters on this subject and the Club had already given this some thought. He said that the original Megastore remained empty as it was not needed for the Gills' School after all so the plan would be to potentially give this space over to fans.

He suggested that a special meeting should be arranged to include all interested parties. Any cost to kit out the new 'shop' would need to be met by the parties involved but could be used as a sales point, memorabilia, trophy display and trivia/club history.

5. **Sensory Room**

Joe said that he was very much in favour of this idea, but the issue was one of finding a suitable room for this within Priestfield. At this time there is nothing readily available, but he would like to revisit this idea in time.

6. **Disability access to Priestfield**

In a similar way, both Joe and Ben explained that The Club's desire to improve access for the disabled. A couple of potential areas were discussed, but Health & Safety Regulations make these unviable.

7. **Fans' questions**

A lot of the fans' questions related to many of the matters raised in previous agenda items, but Joe did address a few as follows:

- In response to several complaints about customer toilets, Joe said that the cleaning team had recently had their hours extended by 4 hours each week, which would allow for more deep cleaning of toilet facilities
- Improvements to seat numbering is one for the future as fixing temporary numbers to seats is not cost effective
- The choice of brewery is something that may change in the future. Heineken hold the current contract due to a better range of lagers, but Shepheard Neame may be offered a deal as their own lager range has considerably improved
- Signage is to be improved around the ground for the new ticket office and Megastore
- The 'temporary goal nets' claim will be investigated
- The 'Domus Clamantium' strap on the badge could be looked at for possible reintroduction

8. **Any other business**

- The LED boards do not seem as bright during matches. This is a positive following complaints from some supporters.
- Half time entertainment will continue to be improved into next season.