Minutes of OUSP Meeting Thursday 9th March 2023 Held Online



2	Attendees: Paul Scaysbrook (Chair) (PS); Janine Bailey (Secretary) (JB); Grace Bailey (GB); Henry Lane (HL); Pete Chilton(PC); Simon Hathaway (OxVox) (SH) By invitation: Adam Benson (AB); Lee Barton (LB) Niall McWilliams (NMcW) (item 3 only); Andy Taylor (AT) Apologies: Dean Worrall (DW) Minutes of last meeting Had been agreed online and are available on OUFC website	Action
3	New Stadium	
	NMcW provided an update on progress. The engagement strategy will be published shortly.	
4	Matters arising from minutes of last meeting (30 th January):	
	(This item was taken at the end of the meeting following item 5) 4 Cherwell Collective: AT contacted CC to suggest an Easter Egg collection, but they could not fit it into their schedule. OUFC remains committed to supporting CC, however its proving difficult to find a suitable date for matchday activity.	АТ
	5 Fan Engagement Matchdays: TW spent half an hour meeting fans in SSL before BRFC match. Fans raised a range of points from disability provision to manager. TW agreed to do this a few times a season, and suggested would be useful for AB too. JB suggested East Stand next time. Fans' Forum: JB is in regular contact with CW to ensure this stays on the agenda. GF's visit this last two weeks has inevitably focused on management recruitment. A Five Minute Forum with the new manager will likely take place next week, and a full panel, in-person Forum will be arranged subsequently, with GF joining online if necessary.	JB/CW
5	Retail and Commercial	
5a	Season Ticket/Membership Benefits 2022-23	
	OUSP felt that the ST holder benefits this season have been poor, provide little incentive or reward to the ST holders, and do not meet the expectations promised. LB accepted that the ST retail and benefit provision has been impacted this season due to the transition to the new CRM. A major drive on improving this is being progressed. AB added that the new CRM is a good platform; the implementation has not been smooth. The club is well aware of the issues, and work is being done to get this right now, and for the future. OUSP asked for a summary of the promotions to date for STs and YMs, which LB will circulate post meeting. LB agreed that the volume of promotions have not achieved expectations.	LB

OUSP raised concern over the recent promotion, whereby ST holders were offered 15% off, immediately followed by bigger reductions on replica kit for all fans the following week. ST holders who bought kit in the first promotion paid more than if they had taken the generic promotion the following week.

LB explained that the 15% offer was exclusive to STH and applied to everything in store. The 40% off replica kits sale was decided upon to clear stock due to the disappointing uptake of the 15% offer, and applied to certain lines only.

AB reiterated that retail is still suffering from ongoing problems dating back to Covid and Brexit, which have affected many clubs. This should hopefully be smoothed out next season.

OUSP remains concerned that a number of ST holders/members do not receive the emails with details of the promotions, which is due to them opting out of retail promotions. The club is continuing to look into this, establishing the legal position under GDPR as to whether all ST holders can be contacted if it is a ST holder communication.

AB stressed that the club's aim is to deliver a much better and comprehensive benefit structure going forward for next season, which OUSP look forward to receiving more information on in due course.

5b Other Promotions

OUSP asked where the Jack FM half price promotion fits in –several times this season they have offered 2 half price tickets, which is then cheaper than ST prices.

LB explained that no promotion undercuts the price per game for ST holders over the course of the season, although there are promos that encourage different groups to different matches. Jack FM has a longstanding relationship with the club, they buy the tickets for certain matches and they chose how to distribute them. They are not available for every match. The club gets full revenue.

5c Junior membership

LB confirmed that Junior membership will continue to be a separate package from STs next season. The different packages create options for different families, as not everyone can attend all matches so this gives another way of being part of the club. Junior ST holders will be getting new additional ST benefits next year.

OUSP suggested more clarity in communications was needed regarding this not being an automatic part of Junior ST, to allay confusion for fans, which LB and AB agreed.

AB committed to ensuring good value in both STs and memberships.

5d Season Tickets 2023-24

Physical Cards

The club confirmed that the charge for physical cards will continue. They are encouraged by the uptake of digital tickets this year, and many who bought cards in practice use their digital ticket. The cost to the club of using physical cards is increasing as ticket providers offer incentives for going digital. OUSP felt that there had been an assumption within the fanbase that the charge was a way for the club to make some money, and not that it was partly due to ticketing providers. AB committed to ensuring that communications will be clearer. He also pointed out that people who think club is just trying to maximise what they get from fans are way off the mark.

LB

AB LB

5e **Quality of Communications**

OUSP made a number of points regarding the quality of ST communications last season, and expressed the view that it needs to be significantly improved. For example, many ST holders received a mailed renewal pack *after* they had renewed online. This led to confusion, and looked like the club did not know what it was doing (as well as costing money). The letter sent out with physical cards was poor — a standard photocopied letter, with the footer half cropped, which gave no indication of valuing renewing supporters.

LB explained that the mailers were sent out by a 3rd party who had missed deadlines so they arrived after the email communications. Content of packs was noted and is being worked on. OUSP's points were taken on board and will be improved for next campaign.

AB added that rates of renewal on direct mailers is low, and he would rather invest in good quality renewal confirmation, and do renewal messaging at matches and online.

AB is committed to professionalising what is sent out.

5f **Kit 2023-24**

In the light of replica kit delays and stock levels this season, PC queried likelihood of earlier release next season. AB confirmed that all decisions were made much earlier this season, and that the latest update is that delivery is on course for the club's planned release date

5g | Ticket Purchasing

OUSP raised the issue of some ST holders being unable to book guest tickets for the Arsenal match when they were released, whereas Yellow Members were not affected by the system glitch and were able therefore to make seat selections for guests ahead of ST holders. This compromised the hierarchy that ST holders were promised.

OUSP had discussed it with LB at the time. LB reiterated that the club was able to monitor sales and were fully confident that all ST holders who wanted to purchase guest tickets would be able to do so, and did so. Whilst it is true that there would have been some reduction in seat choice, in practice this was minimal.

OUSP asked what was being done regarding the generally cumbersome process to buy tickets. LB acknowledged that some aspects are frustrating, as with all ticket sites, but that TM are industry leaders, and sometimes issues are not down to TM. The club has a good relationship with TM, and recent known issues are in hand, with a new process of escalation in place.

LB asked that any issues be sent over to him as soon as they arise so that they can be looked into. JB agreed to send over screen records of some clumsy features, and will forward any examples from fans who raise specific issues.

JB /All

5h Away fans in home end

With a number of games coming up at which the away end is likely to sell out, OUSP asked what is being done to eliminate the issue of away fans in the home end.

For all fixtures the ticketing team carry out a number of checks on purchases, including a postcode check; review of previous booking history; an assessment of all newly created accounts. Any flagged account is discussed with the visiting club to see if there is

booking history with them. Several tickets for the Derby match were cancelled based on these checks.

Whilst this works reasonably well, no system is foolproof and inevitably some get through. If home fans see away fans in the home end behaving inappropriately or outwardly wearing away colours they should report it to a steward or via the "Report" line.

Historically embargoes were put in place for high profile matches, such as insisting on a ticket purchase history. Analysis shows this approach deters new home supporters more than it deters away fans. The club does not want to prevent new people coming to the games.

In response to the question of what happens if a home ST holder buys tickets for away fan friends, LB explained that this would be looked into if a problem arose, with reference to Ts and Cs.

5i Wheelchair space allocation

A fan who is PA to a wheelchair user had raised the point that wheelchair users in SSL and East stand are allocated one seat on their ticket, but in practice wheelchairs take up 1.5 seats. Whilst it is not generally a problem to spread along in those areas, it could become difficult in a sell-out or near sell-out situation. PS noted this is not unique to us, and is something he has experienced at away matches. OUSP suggested that wheelchairs be allocated two seats plus PA. LB is sure that this can be resolved, and will look into it.

5j **Singing section**

A few young fans have asked if the club would considering having a singing section with unallocated seating. The ensuing discussion considered a number of points, including: the current number of singers and how many would want this type of section; the importance of it being fan-led and organic; the impact on existing ST holders for that section; the current lack of leadership/organisation of a singing fan group.

AT has always tried to engage with the newer group of young supporters, and has supported their suggestions. All felt the new stadium will be key for really developing this. In the meantime any fans wanting to do this need to be well organised and communicate effectively with the club, which OUSP is happy to facilitate if necessary.

HL and PC agreed to consider how East Stand fans can actually make this happen.

AB suggested HL reach out to other clubs who have done this to find out how it has worked, suggesting as an example the club 1871 at Reading, which grew from a small base. HL will contact.

5k Family open day

OUSP has been advocating a family open day as part of pre-season. AT agrees that the ideal venue would be stadium (parking and capacity), but waiting for the pitch restoration timetable to establish venue and timing. Hopefully will have update in next week.

AB thanked OUSP for inviting him.

He expressed his aim and challenge to us all to be the best "non matchday " club for supporter benefits and engagement. He also challenged both the club and OUSP to

LB

HL PC

HL

ΑT

Αll

	To be confirmed	
9	Date and Invitees for Next Meeting	
	HerGameToo Derby match will be the re-arranged #HGT men's match, with next Tuesday the women's feature game. Gemma and Grace will be giving out tickets on Saturday to the women's match. There will be LED displays, Olivia the Ox and all-female playlist chosen by fans and lots on social media including a competition to win a signed T shirt.	
	"Order from seat" technology should certainly be considered for new stadium.	
	SH Asked if something could be done regarding condiments being placed on the low level service counters in the concourses, making it difficult to handover orders to wheelchair users. AT will raise with Bailey. It was noted that at some clubs wheelchair users can have their orders taken and delivered to them at half-time (e.g. Shrewsbury, MK). All felt this was a standard to aim for, with the North Stand as an obvious location to trial it in due to the main wheelchair platform being in that location. AT will discuss with Bailey.	AT AT
8	Any Other Business	
	Toilets out of action: The disabled toilet in the SSL concourse (west end) was mended last Saturday. Parts awaited for other toilet blocks. OUSP encourage fans to report all stadium issues to feedback@oufc.co.uk .	АТ
	Club is in discussion with StadCo over the ongoing issues of parking spaces out of action due to overgrowth, potholes and lighting. Re-marking of all parking spaces will take place over next few months with blue badge parking bays prioritised to take place as soon as the contractor has availability.	
	Steps from the stadium to the footpath leading to Blackbird Leys and the muddy area to the side has now been brought to the attention of the SAG.	
	The email address for reporting facilities issues is to be feedback@oufc.co.uk . OUSP suggested the address needs to be more widely publicised, especially in concourses.	AT
7	SLO Items	
	Potential for an LGBTQ+ supporter group is being explored following the Football v Homophobia 5-a-side competition, for which we were unable to field a team of fans. One of the organisers is willing to help, and has set up @ProudYellows on twitter. OUSP has offered to support in any way possible.	
O	AT had planned to set up an online meeting for Disabled fans and their families, with the possibility of setting up a Disabled Supporters Group. Details should have gone out this week, AT will follow up.	AT / CW
	AT has not yet received feedback from LPF visit (Bristol Rovers match) feedback, and has not heard back with a meeting date from AccessCard.	АТ
6	EDI	
	ensure as much inclusivity as possible, and that we become the best possible supporter group for fans, with good diversity.	