

Meeting Minutes of the All Together Town (ATT) Panel – 10.11.2022

Thursday, 10th November, 2022 – 19:30-21:00

Hosted at the John Smith's Stadium

Note: These minutes were taken by the Huddersfield Town Supporters' Association (HTSA), not Huddersfield Town Association Football Club.

Present

Club representatives: David Baldwin (Managing Director – DB); Ian Birtley (Commercial Director – IB); Andy Booth (Supporter Services); Gina Buckley (Head of Ticketing – GB); Luke Cowan (Retail – LC); Rachel Taylor (Supporter Services – RT); David Threlfall-Sykes (Director – DTS); Jonathan Wilkinson (Marketing – JW)

Fan Groups: HTSA (3); Huddersfield Town Disabled Supporters' Club (1)

+ Multiple panel members

Agenda

1. North Stand Upper Sound System (Panel Member)
2. Disabled Car Parking/Stewarding on St. Andrews Road (HTDSC)
3. Change of Ownership and Future Vision for the Club (HTSA)
4. Sustainability (HTSA)
5. Gambling Policy (HTSA)
6. Egress from St. Andrews Road Car Park (PM)
7. EV Charging Points for Electric Vehicles (Club)
8. AOB

North Stand Upper Sound System (Panel Member)

A panel member reported that the sound system in the North Stand Upper is difficult to hear. Several other attendees agreed with this observation, pointing out that it could present a problem in the case of an emergency announcement.

David Threlfall-Sykes (DTS) replied that there was an issue with the speakers at the beginning of the season. As a result, the sound system was replaced during the first international break (September 2022). DTS said that he would follow up on more recent complaints, adding that the emergency announcement system is entirely separate from the primary sound system.

Disabled Car Parking/Stewarding on St. Andrews Road (HTDSC)

A representative from the Huddersfield Town Disabled Supporters Club (HTDSC) indicated that the disabled car parking scheme on St. Andrews Road has worked well when stewards have been present. However, during recent games, stewards have been absent, leading to non-badge holders parking in the disabled bays. HTDSC therefore asked the club to ensure that stewards are always present on matchdays to protect the interests of disabled supporters.

Gina Buckley (GB) stated that the club intends to employ extra stewards and brief them on the situation with disabled parking. DTS added that Michelle McQueen had recently taken on the role of Disability Liaison Officer (DLO).

Change of Ownership and Future Vision for the Club (HTSA)

The Huddersfield Town Supporters' Association (HTSA) asked for an update on the sale of the Club and details relating to the Millers Oil High Performance Training Ground and the Stadium shares.

Dave Baldwin (DB) provided an update

David Baldwin (DB) said that there were several interested parties, but that commercial sensitivities prevented him from going into further detail.

A panel member questioned what the club was doing to avoid relegation. DB responded that the club has several points of focus where it can make a tangible difference, including the World Cup break and the January transfer window.

Sustainability (HTSA)

HTSA asked for an update on the club's application to become EFL Green Code accredited. They also enquired as to why the club had failed to send a representative to the last two meetings of the Stadium Sustainability Working Group and whether sustainability will be a key consideration if the club invests heavily in stadium infrastructure in the coming years.

DB confirmed that the club has signed up to the EFL Green Code because sustainability is an important priority for the club.

Gambling Policy (HTSA)

HTSA informed the panel that they had launched a survey to establish the view of supporters on the club's relationship with gambling and cryptocurrency companies. They then asked whether the club intends to reduce its reliance on sponsorship from this sector.

Ian Birtley (IB) responded that it provides an important revenue stream for the club. He agreed that awareness about the risks associated with gambling and volatile assets such as cryptocurrencies was important, pointing to the club's work with GAMSTOP and BK8.

HTSA queried whether working with an industry backed body (i.e., GAMSTOP) and a white label betting firm (i.e., BK8) was the best way to raise awareness. In view of this, HTSA further asked whether the club would consider working with an independent gambling awareness charity such as The Big Step.

IB said the club would liaise with the Huddersfield Town Foundation on the issue.

Egress from St. Andrews Road Car Park

A panel member noted that home supporters who parked in the St. Andrews car park were having to wait up to 15 minutes to leave, with away supporters seemingly given priority.

GB said she would notify Ann Hough (Operations Director) and the Safety Advisory Group (SAG).

HTSA argued that if supporters had representation on the SAG, as recommended by the Sports Ground Safety Authority (SGSA), issues such as this would be less likely to arise. DB said that, in principle, he is in favour of supporter representation on the SAG.

Charging Points for Electric Vehicles

IB told the panel that the club had proposed two options to KSDL for electrical vehicle (EV) charging points at the stadium, both of which were refused on the basis that the council has a project that supersedes other arrangements. The club is still examining potential commercial solutions, however.

AOB

HTDSC reported that the new radio system for partially sighted supporters is poor.

DTS promised that the club will retune all the radios to the correct frequency.