Minutes of the meeting of the Doncaster Rovers Shadow Board
Saturday 9 November 2024

Present: Derek Daniels, James Errington, Dan Pearson, Mellony Shepard, Gill Shepherd, Phil Winterman, Len South, Patrick Queens, Mark Lister, Adam Dawson, Katy Bateman, Ryan Dunphy, Dean Medcalf, Gavin Hepworth

Club Representatives: Gavin Baldwin, Shaun Lockwood, Adam Grice

Apologies: None

1. **Minutes from the last meeting held in September 2024**

   i. The members of the Shadow Board ("SB") passed the minutes from the previous meetings held in September 2024 as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

2. **Matters arising from the previous meeting held in September 2024**

   i. SL explained to the SB that Elite Pro Sport's communication is generically electronic, therefore they are still looking at setting up a telephone number for external communications.

3. **Safeguarding**

   i. The Club notified the SB that the Club had recently had multiple audits, including the PGAAC (Safe to Operate) and Banardos. Both audits went extremely well and the Club are awaiting full reports with any action points.

4. **Health & Safety**

   i. The Club referred to the most recent Health & Safety report, which showed that there was no serious incidents which had occurred at the Club either on or off a match day.

   ii. Key safety repairs which needed to be done at the Eco-Power Stadium have since been done and the safety certificate which is required in order for football to be played at the stadium has been passed.

5. **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**

i. The Club received two separate reports of a racist incident at the DRFC v Chesterfield fixture on Saturday 28 September 2024. The Club followed its policies in in respect of this incident extremely well. The reports were not received until following the conclusion of the fixture so the individual could not have been found and removed at the time. However, the culprit was identified in the Box Office prior to the Crewe Alexandra fixture two weeks later and he was subsequently arrested by the Police and banned from attending fixtures.

6. Car Parking at the Eco-Power Stadium

i. SL and GB stated that the Club has done a lot of work and invested a lot of resources in the last six months in respect of tackling irrational car parking at the stadium on non-match days and improving car parking on a match day. It was raised by MS that there are always cars driving the wrong way around the one-way system on non-match days to get to the box office/shop or to West Reception.
ii. Comments were also made about supporters driving on the inner ring immediately following the conclusion of fixtures. The Club currently prevents cars from leaving the inner ring until 10 minutes following the conclusion of the game. GB added that a lot of clubs often keep cars stationary in car parks extremely close to turnstiles at other League Two stadiums until up to 25 minutes following the conclusion of the game.

7. In Rovers We Trust

i. SL stated that he recently sat down with the Football Supporters Association (FSA) and he confirmed that the Club's strategy for Fan Engagement (In Rovers We Trust) was recently picked as one of the top three best in the country.
ii. SL went through the KPI's for IRWT and explained that very few Clubs are monitoring their KPI's for Fan Engagement like Doncaster Rovers are according to feedback from the meeting.
iii. From the KPI Update
    - SL notified the SB that it was the Club's intentions to reintroduce the IRWT survey in January 2025.
    - SL also informed the SB that while the EFL do mystery shoppers in respect of the Family Excellence Award, but DRFC also do the same to monitor their own standards on match days and there is only SL who knows who these individuals are and when they are coming to games to ensure integrity to the mystery shop.
    - DRFC has reintroduced Attendance for Attendance for the 2024/25 season and there are currently 80 schools signed up to this initiative across the city.

8. Match Day Programme

i. PW asked GB and SL how many match day programmes are sold on a regular match day for DRFC home fixtures. SL explained that it is around 400 and the number has continued to decline over the years with most supporters who purchase a programme now only doing so as a collector or because they are a first time supporter. While the programme currently operates at a loss, there is investment from third parties to keep this in production for supporters.

ii. SL explained that there are currently no plans to remove the match day programme for future seasons from the match day experience.

9. Match Day Experience

i. PW informed DD that he wishes to set up a working party in order to look at different ways that the Club could improve the match day experience for home supporters on a match day. PW stated that he would not set a deadline on how long it would take for a working party to set up recommendations as he wants this work to be done thoroughly. GB and SL suggested that Mark Hughesman should be the nominated Club representative on this working party. They further suggested that the work needed to go wider than the shadow Board and to advertise for wider participation to allow a consensus.
ii. DD suggested that a Whatsapp group was set up between members of the SB for questions and suggestions without Club representatives in.

10. Club Doncaster Foundation

i. John Davis (CEO of Club Doncaster Foundation) was invited into the meeting to present to the SB about the work that the Foundation do within the community.
ii. JD agreed to share a fact sheet with the members of the SB detailing all the activities that the Foundation offer.

11. AOB

i. JE showed the members of the SB the Google Forms which he has created where members of the SB could comment on issues or make suggestions for around the Club. Je explained he and DD would have administrators access to this form which would allow them to actions comments and allocate jobs to individual members of the SB for actioning.
ii. DD asked for an improved communication etiquette from the SB members which all members agreed to follow. The new process was that questions and comments were made directly to the Chair or Vice Chair of the SB instead of emailing club representatives multiple emails. Only private and confidential questions were agreed could be emailed directly to club representatives.
iii. LS raised his own concerns regarding a lack of acknowledgement in one recent website article that the Supporters Club funded the improved IT system which allowed the Club to introduce the point system which was now available for fans attending away fixtures. SL explained that there had been multiple acknowledgements in the past that the Supporters Club had funded this improvement while the idea was born from a past SB meeting. SL also showed LS a press release for an upcoming website article which was not live yet which also gave the Supporters Club credit for the funding. JE also backed this up by showing LS an article which was published in July 2024 which clearly acknowledged the Supporters Club's involvement in funding this change. In order to bring the meeting to a close promptly, SL agreed to amend the press release from two weeks ago to be explicit as to the Supporters Club support