

Notes of Sheffield Wednesday Supporters Engagement Panel

Date: Tuesday 15 April, 2025

Time: 12:15pm, via Zoom

In Attendance

Panel Groups: Ian Bennett (SWFC Supporters Trust), Pete Eccles (SWFC Armed Forces), Paul Holmes (Wednesdayite), Chris Ledger (Rainbow Owls), Robert Metcalfe (Wise Old Owls), Amanda Nuttall (SODA), Emma Partridge (SWFC Women's Supporters Group), Martin Pryor (West Midlands Owls), Ash Rogers (The Wednesday Week), Evan Skilliter (Owls Americas), Jon Wakefield (South West Owls), Ray Windross (North Yorkshire Owls), Eve Winstanley (Hoyland Owls)

Panel Individual: Dave Buttery

From the club: Dejphon Chansiri (Chairman), Alastair Wilson (General Manager), Trevor Braithwait (Director of Communications), PE (Chairman's interpreter and lawyer)

*some panel members left and rejoined the meeting at various points due to work commitments.

Apologies: Saif Salih (panel individual) and Dave Higgins (Sheffield Wednesday Ladies)

Notes from the panel

The SWFC Supporters' Engagement Panel acknowledges that this emergency meeting was requested and called at short notice. While all members have made every effort to attend, several have prior commitments and have sent alternate representatives.

Given the time constraints, the panel has prioritised key agenda items from a comprehensive list of questions gathered from all SWFC supporters' groups. We respectfully request that the club provide written responses to the complete set of questions within 14 days of this meeting.

For transparency purposes, we request that this meeting be formally minuted. We propose the following timeline for finalising the minutes: Club to provide draft minutes within 48 hours of the meeting.

Panel to return any revisions within 24 hours thereafter.

If this timeline cannot be accommodated, we request a temporary exemption from the Terms of Reference to allow panel members to inform their respective memberships that the meeting took place, using this agenda as a reference document.

AW started the meeting by welcoming everyone, noting it was really encouraging to see so many groups present, and confirmed every panel meeting is minuted and published. AW said these minutes would be completed as soon as possible but pointed to a double-game weekend together with an extremely busy general period, so this is highly unlikely within 48 hours. He requested that all parties adhere to the agreed Terms of Reference.

PH led questions from the panel. AW said DC is here to answer all questions with no time limit but please be mindful of some sensitive information that few if any clubs would share. AW confirmed the presence of the chairman's interpreter and DC also said he is his lawyer too. He stressed all questions of any nature will be addressed so there is no need for additional questions after this meeting until the next scheduled

meeting in June. AW said that after questions, please bear in mind that the chairman will then speak to his interpreter in Thai, so there may be periods of silence.

DC welcomed everyone and said it was a positive to see the majority of fan group representatives. He will be fully transparent and straightforward and the panel should take responsibility for anything that may happen in future because you want answers to your questions. He said it is easy to ask questions with no responsibility and previously he may not have answered because he wanted to protect the interests of the Club.

PH said all questions are from a unified voice and not from an individual organisation. PH thanked the chairman for inviting us to the meeting. DC clarified this was not an invitation as the meeting was at the panel's request.

At this point DC asked the panel not to go out from the meeting and twist his words. PH emphasised that the panel had made arrangements to attend the meeting during their working day, DC stated that time constraints were not an issue as demonstrated by the majority attendance. He said regular panel meetings are now arranged in advance which are generally low attended, only two of the panel groups have attended all of the last five.

Sale of the Club

Panel notes

Sheffield Wednesday fans have grown increasingly concerned about the club's financial stability under the current ownership. With repeated instances of late payments, lack of infrastructure investment, and growing unrest, many supporters see new ownership as the only viable path to sustainability. Fans are eager to understand whether there's a genuine willingness to sell and what that process might entail.

- 1. Regarding the Chairman's stance on selling the club: a. You recently stated: "It is not just about the price, it is about the right individual or group to take our club forward." What specific characteristics constitute the "right" buyer, and what conditions must be satisfied for you to consider selling?**

DC confirmed he has no intention of selling the club at this moment but is open to considering offers from the right potential buyers with the right qualities, fit and proper to take the club forward and who would run the club as a going concern, then in the future this is something he would consider.

DC asked the panel to ensure that they are satisfied with any answers today and if not to ensure they seek clarification as we will not be answering any questions in writing - there is no time limit to this meeting.

- b. What steps have you taken to prepare the club for sale, such as obtaining an independent valuation and preparing financials? Do you have a realistic selling price in mind? Does this price include Hillsborough Stadium?**

DC said he has not taken such steps to prepare the club for sale as selling the club is not his intention. If he were to sell, it is not just about the price, he reiterated any sale has to be to the right people with sustainable plans for the club. Regarding valuation for a potential buyer, he said financial information is available publicly via the club's annual accounts that could be used for the initial valuation as a basis to offer. DC said any valuation is complicated, depending on a number of factors, such as the buyer is

prepared to buy and the seller is willing to sell, there is only one SWFC with no comparison for valuation. Owners would not publicly declare a valuation of a club.

2. Concerning the practical aspects of a potential sale: a. Have you received any approaches to purchase Sheffield Wednesday since we were last promoted to the Championship, and if so, what steps were taken in response?

DC said he has been approached by potential investors since his early days of owning the club and particularly when we reached the Championship play-off final in 2016 when he could have sold the club for a significant profit. These approaches were rejected as his intention was to take the club to the Premier League.

Right now, DC said he has received no formal offers for the club with proof of funds, there is no identity of potential investors for any further discussions, anyone can say they are in the market but without any official offer they cannot be treated as genuine. He said if a potential investor wishes to pursue interest through the right channels and follow the right procedures, he would be open to discussions regarding a sale. During the last couple of weeks when the club faced some financial difficulties which have now been resolved, it proved a good opportunity for anyone serious in buying to come forward but no one came forward to do that. He expressed frustration with public speculation on potential buyers which leads to confusion and uncertainty for supporters.

b. Would you be willing to sign an NDA if the “right” buyer with proof of funds approached for negotiations and requested one?

DC stressed that if an agreeable offer was made from any individual or group who made their identity known and there was sufficient interest to pursue, he would have no issue with signing an NDA.

Future Plans and Direction

Panel Notes

Sheffield Wednesday has been operating without a clear, publicly communicated strategic plan. Years of financial challenges, underinvestment in facilities, and reactive rather than proactive strategy/management have left fans questioning the club's direction. Especially in light of recent comments the Chairman made referencing the predicament at Reading FC, supporters want to understand how the club plans to build stability and growth rather than perpetual crisis management.

1. Regarding the club's strategic planning: a. What is your strategic plan to make the club more sustainable, addressing hierarchy, recruitment, sponsorship, and stadium improvements?

DC discussed the club's challenges of sustainability, the difficulties in the football business, but said during his time, we have achieved the highest average attendances, commercial revenue and other income streams. Costs have increased by around 10% annually while ticket prices and other revenue streams cannot keep pace with that level of outlay. DC cited complaints from fans when prices do increase, even though increases would help with sustainability. Player salaries exceed income and player sales must be balanced with ambition to succeed. There are issues with structure of the leagues, which have to change (disparity of revenues in PL and EFL) and offer more support to clubs.

DC asks if anyone has any suggestions the club can implement to aid sustainability?

PH acknowledged increased revenues and higher wages but we have never been a selling club, is there an intention to sell players as opposed to let them leave as in the past? DC said pre-Covid, on average we have sold one player per year, which has been the same before his time, and there are numerous factors to consider on player sales, not just the selling club. DC asked the panel if there is a particular player we should have sold in the past and he could explain that situation. No one answered the question in relation to who could have been sold. DC asked the question again so he could explain his reasonings but no questions were forthcoming. AR said he does not think we should reference players from the past, the question is more about long-term sustainability, what is the plan to increase income to offset against expenses?

DC said it is unfair to say we should have sold players but when asked who, no one says who should have been sold. Now is the chance to ask direct questions, no need to go out and say elsewhere, he is happy to answer anything today. The question was raised again about selling players and he would like to know who but there were no answers.

ES stated the panel is not interested in debating which players should have been sold or not, and naming names would distract from the main points of the meeting. JW reiterated that the question was about future plans and strategy and not former players. He asked about developing youngsters in the club who could be looked to sell at a profit. JW said the only form of income streams are DC and club revenues when the wider world sees player trading. JW asked why young players for development would choose SWFC over other clubs. DC said major changes are taking place at the academy, with new facilities, increased scouting structures, and a new academy manager in place (Jon Pepper) to drive the academy forward. DC said PL clubs take good young players and regulations should offer more protection to clubs in the EFL.

AR acknowledged these academy developments and asked how the club is going to be more sustainable so not relying solely on DC and regular revenue streams, for now and the future. DC said most football clubs are managed on loss even with player trading, how many clubs are self-sufficient? DC expressed openness with regards sustainability and would always be receptive to any ideas the panel could bring to the table to improve revenue streams, saying sustainability in football is a widespread challenge.

DC asked again for player names, ES said the panel would not give specifics as this was not the purpose of the question. AW said that within PH's question he specifically stated that we are not a selling club which is why the chairman is asking can you refer to who you mean?

DC said if you ask questions you have to be prepared for questions in return to clarify the statement. He said with hindsight there are players we could have sold in the past, such as Fernando Forestieri but at that time he was central to achieving promotion so there must be balance. Looking back we would sell but we cannot predict the future.

IB welcomed academy investment and respects the fact that DC has put a lot of money into the club and has nothing but praise in that regard, but there should be general sustainability to trade in the short and medium term. DC reiterated that the football business largely runs at a loss and of course he wishes to make the club more sustainable. DC said he had asked questions on this topic but no one could answer. ES said looking at potential solutions, the panel can put a working group in place to which DC agreed as we are always open to suggestions as this is the purpose of the panel. JW said there are many fans willing to help, many professionals, would you commit to publishing short and

long-term strategic plans with fans inputting strategies? DC said that would depend on his decisions as owner and anyone wanting a say in how the club is run should put in money but he would like to hear more. Previously, the former Trust board informed the club of a proposal which included cheaper tickets, when asked how the shortfall in revenue would be compensated the answer was the chairman has to subsidise. DC said suggestions can be easy with no responsibility, while he has full responsibility for the club, the Trust were invited to implement their plan but with responsibility and were unable to take this forward.

With respect, DC enquired to IB on his trade for comparison if he is on the same level, DC said he is sorry to say that, but the differences in business are vast and that it is easy to make suggestions without responsibility. IB said he 'doesn't like the slight on me, he does have a business, reasonably successful, not as big as SWFC, and I do have a lot of respect for the chairman but would like that to be minuted.' DC said he always has respect for anyone who shows respect to him.

JW said that everyone here has supported the club since childhood. It's not entertainment, it's life. It gets people together with friends every week. We don't demand money or success, we just want to be proud of our club and we are now united in that belief. DC says it's good that fans are now united. He said some fans have plenty of wealth and understands that it's more than entertainment and exemplified a supporter who had passed away and left Sheffield Wednesday money in his will, which DC said should go to his family.

IB wished to note that he did not call DC a 'liar' in a media interview and he knows who did but it was not him. DC said the journalist confirmed who it was but this matter is over as far as he is concerned. If he still had concerns he would not have said it was IB who should return to the panel on behalf of the Trust, the panel suggested a representative, but DC said it must be the chair.

IB asked how the club plans to balance these academy developments against the backdrop of the recent salaries situation and attention needed at the stadium. DC outlined the difficulties of running a profitable football club within the current industry demands and requirements. He said the salary situation was resolved as soon as it was possible and explained the 'domino effect' of money due to him/his businesses that was unpaid led to the situation at SWFC.

DC said he has received contact from fans saying we don't want your money, just leave, but that is not the answer, it should have been how can we help to prevent for example a three-window ban and protect if the club experiences cashflow concerns? DC said some think he has no money and acknowledged funding is limited compared to when he first bought the club.

b. Will you commit to publishing a comprehensive strategic and financial plan, including short-term and longer-term strategies?

IB said this was a question on behalf of Trust members and he has nothing against the chairman, if he can produce a plan then we will back him but without information it's difficult to get behind. DC said that is his decision to make but what are the recommendations? IB said he has suggestions, which could be brought to a future meeting.

2. Does the Chairman appreciate the negative impact on fans and reputational damage to the club of not paying bills, and especially wages, on time?

DC said in his recent letter to supporters, he apologised to his people and the situation was never his expectation. He acknowledged the damaging effect and said protests are also damaging. He said he is aware of some fans saying the media in Thailand need to know the situation and he will lose face, but DC said this is not true, if the criticism is merited he has no issue. He said if some fans are not happy and abuse him, can the owner not say something back? DC reiterated that he will always give respect to those who give respect to him. He said some fans say they are the owner and he is the custodian but when the club needs money etc then that is down to the owner. DC said if there is a new owner in future, some fans should have more gratitude and a different mindset or there will be no trust, some learn how to take but never learn how to give. He said fans say their money is hard-earned but his money is hard-earned too. He has heard some fans will go to the EFL to try and force him out of the club but doesn't hear how they will help protect the club because if there was a three-window embargo it would make it more difficult to find a buyer. DC stressed he does not mean anyone in this meeting and not all fans, the majority have respect but a minority do not.

Finances

AW said before this segment began, some of these issues are sensitive and will not be able to be answered.

Panel notes

Recent payment delays to staff and players have suggested serious cashflow problems at the club. With multiple EFL sanctions over the years and concerns about financial management, supporters are seeking transparency regarding how funds are being utilised (particularly given recent season ticket sales, big games, deals on corporate boxes, Megastore sale) that should have provided substantial working capital.

- 1. Regarding the recent payment issues: a. What was the total revenue received in Q1 from all sources, and how was it allocated? Were there any specific circumstances that created cash flow difficulties? Aware from last accounts (32m) that club have expenses of £2.5/3m per month in overheads and player wages, were there any specific circumstances that created cashflow difficulties when there should have been enough to cover wages. Will this situation be ongoing, particularly as the club has received its highest income for 2025?***

DC said the issue on financial difficulties has already been explained. Income has not been sufficient compared to expenses. He said the expenses exceed those numbers and that income has since been used. DC said he then has to inject money which the club relies on. He said he needs to invest cash to generate cash and support the club. If he keeps money on hand, he is not able to invest and pointed to the domino effect explained above.

ES asked if any cash has been taken from SWFC to support other businesses. DC repeated that the football business is managed by loss, so how is it possible to take money out. He said if the club was profitable, he would understand the question but the answer is no.

- b. Has the club paid the £2.5 million rent to Sheffield 3 for this season? If so, why was this payment prioritised over meeting staff payroll?***

DC confirmed that the £2.5 million rent to Sheffield 3 is offset against a loan and no money changes hands, cash remains in the club. He expressed frustration with 'experts' with an agenda who should explain the facts in detail when trying to influence others.

- 2. Concerning financial transparency: a. Within 14 days, can you share the documents submitted to the EFL to satisfy regulation 16.16 of section 6, covering profit and loss and cash flow forecasts? Can you confirm everything is in order?**

DC said it is correct that the club must submit this to the EFL and we are fully compliant. Clubs do not release this information and neither do the EFL. This is confidential information that clubs do not put into the public domain.

Governance

Panel notes

Sheffield Wednesday currently operates with minimal corporate governance structure, seemingly at odds with FA best practice. 3 as a minimum The club has a single executive director rather than a proper board structure, raising concerns about oversight, accountability, and strategic planning. With the Independent Football Regulator on the horizon, the club's governance approach appears increasingly out of step with emerging standards in football administration.

- 1. Concerning the club's governance structure: a. Do you acknowledge that Sheffield Wednesday operates without a proper board of directors, with relevant experience and expertise contrary to FA best practice and forthcoming regulatory requirements? b. Would you consider developing specific plans to reform the governance structure such that there is separation between strategic oversight and day-to-day operations? (For example appointing independent directors with relevant football and business expertise)**

The group discussed the club's governance structure, with PH questioning why SWFC operate without a 'proper' board according to FA best practices. DC said directors must have responsibility, other clubs have the same and if anyone wishes to invest, he is happy to listen. JW asked who are the chairman's advisors and in what specialist areas. DC said he has numerous advisors with a lot of experience on the football side and back office, we have consultants too, as has been the case since he came into the club. DC said as sole owner, he believes the current system at board level is appropriate as directors must have responsibility which currently lies with himself. He said appointments to the board have been made in the past and could be made in the future while he remains at the club. Regarding structure, DC said he has a vastly experienced senior management team in place with many years of football experience, some of whom pre-date his time at the club and who oversee day-to-day operations. He has regular contact with his management team as and when required and thanks his team for the revenue streams in place. He is aware some fans see him as a dictator but stressed he assigns operations to his team and said in Asia it is normal for the chairman to take the aligned role of CEO. He underlined that the club is run day-to-day by football professionals with the right and necessary experience.

- 2. Regarding future governance and supporter engagement: a. With the impending arrival of the Independent Football Regulator, what actions will you take to improve supporter engagement to comply with new requirements? (For example a fan representative on the board)**

AW said the club are conversant with the developments of the regulator, which is currently being debated in parliament. TB has previously confirmed the club will be fully compliant with the regulator regarding fan engagement. AW said previous panel meetings have seen ideas and suggestions

implemented, such as improving the Fan Zone, third kit pre-orders and extending concourse hours after games on a trial basis. ES suggested the panel should be credited for the recent introduction of EBars which have been discussed in meetings historically. AW said this concept has long been on the club's agenda and was grateful for the panel's input. He said the current trials have been successful and the club will look to extend the concept for next season and beyond. CL raised a question regarding the recent 50% Macron sale and AW/DC said this was a result of supporters requesting discounted official merchandise and emphasised there is no issue with Macron regarding outstanding payments or any other related financial issues. DC said when the club do not have a sale there are complaints and when we do, some look for ulterior motives so we cannot win. PH said it was an excellent idea to liquidate stock and DC said credit goes to AW for driving the process. DC said a fan appointed to the board would have to meet the same criteria as other potential directors.

With agenda items addressed, AW invited the panel to ask any further questions that the chairman is happy to answer face-to-face, with no subject off the table, including the football side or non-football side.

AW said that ahead of the meeting the chairman was presented with a list of various topics that could be raised so he is expecting many other questions to follow. DC said this is the opportunity to say anything to his face, there is a lot of speculation and now is the time to ask anything at all rather than put out on social media/online as he knows fans have plenty of questions, especially the Trust, which is easy to do outside but unfair on DC, so now is the time to ask direct. IB responded he has had his question answered in relation to an NDA and had no further questions.

AW and DC asked for fans to have an open mind regarding unfounded speculation, stating the panel process is the platform to put questions and receive answers where possible so please use this meeting to ask anything you want answering. AW referred to recent comments regarding academy players which he described as fabrication. It was clarified that no EFL club had made loan offers to the two players mentioned, the club offered to subsidise their salaries to non-EFL clubs but interest was not followed through. One player has since been asked and confirmed he was not aware of any EFL club interest. DC said it is untrue and not possible to ask for 1.5X a player's salary for a loan and understands families may be angry if players are released but that should not lead to personal attacks on him with no foundation. DC said a committee is in place to provide options for academy players but as the owner he will have questions and sign-off, which is normal and professional as the club must always look to protect potential assets. He said that does not mean he has more knowledge, but this is part of his responsibility as the owner.

PH said Danny Rohl was not on the panel's agenda, DC said he would address the situation if asked given ongoing speculation. On that basis, PH asked for an update and DC said the manager is under contract for a further two years and cannot leave the club without permission. DC said he is aware of the criticism he has received but were it not for the protection in place, the manager may have already left. DC said he is happy to answer any questions here because he will give straightforward answers. There were no further questions on the manager and DC said he was surprised as he thought this would be on the agenda as the panel represent the majority of fan groups. JW said managers and players come and go but the club would still be here but our concern is the club will not be there. The concern is for the club not the manager whether under the current ownership or someone else. PE said the questions we had were about the business side of the club. DC said he does not want to give certain people value with agendas and this is the chance to offer explanations but if there are no

questions, so be it. DC said on all matters he will give his best, owning SWFC is causing him bad health and asks fans not to worry or protest – if the right buyer comes along he will be open to discussions and a potential sale but they must follow the simple steps – ie an offer in writing, proof of funds from appropriate lawyers and the buyer/s identity.

PH asked for further information on the academy facilities which were discussed previously, AW explained the plans for academy development which will include a state-of-the-art new artificial pitch, the first of its kind in the UK and only PSV Eindhoven in Europe have this surface, which is the most 'grass-like' artificial surface available worldwide. AW said the developments also include four new dressing rooms, new male and female officials' changing rooms, a new reception area and social area for scholars in the daytime and parents in the evening to watch their children train from an indoor environment.

PH asked for an update on the possibility of the introduction of safe standing at Hillsborough. AW said there are regulatory requirements to fulfil and talks are taking place but progress is slower than expected. AW said it may be that smaller numbers are introduced as per other clubs but this is to be determined and will expand in time. AW said regarding the Fan Zone we will look to improve in the summer, it was discussed at a previous meeting not to increase space so to work within the area we have that will not impact on disabled parking. AW said a lot of work is currently being undertaken at the stadium and will continue throughout the summer, with large amounts of money invested. Much of these renovations would not be visible, such as resolving irrigation issues at the bottom of the Kop. AW said we will continue to implement improvements to help enhance the matchday experience. He said the numbers and data from the trial of EBars are where we expected and will hopefully be expanded next season. AW said the technology of the EBars is particularly impressive and early indications point to a successful trial period.

CL asked for assurances on speculation regarding potential stand closures and DC assured the panel that safety for supporters is always a priority. He said that we have annual reports on all aspects of the stadium and must undertake any work that is deemed high priority. He said the club are fully compliant with all current requirements and if that was not the case, we would not be issued with a Safety Certificate and licences. DC said the club act immediately when necessary regarding supporter safety, for example the additional security measures in place when sports grounds were deemed high risk for potential terrorism. He said fans' safety is a priority and please do not worry, if there are issues raised, they have been and will be investigated.

DC said there are ongoing discussions with consultants regarding renovations to the North Stand roof, as in 2021 it was advised that remedial work was required on the roof which would run into millions of pounds and would last for circa 30 years and if not carried out the stand would be closed, but after annual inspections there was nothing to suggest that any safety factor was compromised, so why do we need to spend so much, especially if in the future, the club opted to move stadiums. If any serious concerns were evident, we would not have been issued a Safety Certificate since then. We have since commissioned other engineers for the same report but when we presented their findings we were told different engineers have different opinions. DC said we will not accept any potential stand closures without good reason that does not affect the safety factor, currently there are none but if we need to spend, we will, because safety comes first.

DC said the pitch will undergo renovation as soon as the season ends, PH said the club's new groundsman (Lee Jackson) has done a fantastic job over the last few weeks and DC said we will always

look to recruit the best people, the opportunity came to recruit LJ, who had many years at Manchester City and this is a good appointment.

JW said referencing Reading in a recent media interview angered some fans and DC said he was asked a question by the journalist on the impact of a potential three-window embargo. DC stressed that if he was not asked the question, he would not have referenced it – Reading was just an example of a club who have had embargoes in the past but can move forward and it wasn't the end of their life. He said of course he would not want an embargo but Reading was just an example of a previously embargoed club and this season have a chance of promotion.

CL asked on the promotion of the three games incorporating the double discount offer for club members. AW said this was promoted some time before the offer was applicable but based on buying habits, tickets tend to be purchased 3/4 days before the respective game. He said the latest game – Middlesbrough – would be promoted throughout the week, via the website, social media platforms and the club member database for those opted in. CL asked if the offers could be spread over a less congested game period and AW said this is something to be discussed with his team, who will look to possibly implement.

A discussion was then had on the importance of protecting the club's reputation and assets. EP raised concerns about the value of fans' community contributions to the club as well as financial commitments. EP expressed concern that negativity could come across from the meeting, stating most fans do not have access to personal wealth. Some of the panel groups do so much for the community reputation of the club such as the Wednesday Week Easter egg drop and the SWFC Women's Supporters Group introducing eight new fans to the club for the first time at the last home match, the Rainbow Owls meet up for every game, and EP wondered if the club value these initiatives as a means of protection and giving back to the club?

DC misunderstood the question, reiterating that some fans do not protect their club, EP said she respectfully disagrees - AW intervened to clarify and said what the groups do in this respect is fully appreciated and we offer support with various initiatives, the club values every community contribution alongside financial elements as groups have stepped up to protect the club on numerous occasions from a reputational point of view and raised a lot of money in the face of horrible abuse seen at Hillsborough - this provides protection and balance alongside financial contributions.

ES asked if Season Ticket holders could receive a refund if they wanted to do so, AW confirmed that Season Tickets are non-refundable which is part of the terms and conditions at the point of purchase. He said we do have requests in relation to illness which are actioned on the merits of each case. He added that Season Tickets are historically sold at the same time of year, irrespective of the performance of the team, as this gives supporters the option to receive the best price by buying at the earliest opportunity. DC said for example that if everything was good at the club, we were fighting for promotion, can I ask to refund fans who bought already and then ask for more? Of course I cannot do that, it has to be fair, you have to think for both sides.

AW asked if there were any more questions and none were asked, so said the next opportunity to put questions would be at the pre-arranged next meeting in June and hopes the same number of people can attend.

With no further questions, a debate was held on communication after DC expressed his disappointment that following a recent group meeting without the club, the panel gave notice of the intention to release a statement whilst requesting an emergency meeting. DC felt strongly that this meeting today should have taken place before any statement was released as we are meant to work together as part of the engagement process. He said there was no issue with individual organisations commenting publicly, but not the panel as a collective given the club are part of the engagement panel process and said he did not think their actions were professional. The club were happy to accommodate an emergency meeting as requested and he said the panel exists to help each other, to think of both sides and be professional. EP said that last year the panel put together an internal Terms of Reference in which the club agreed to meetings without the club present. DC said there is no problem with that but this meeting today should have taken place before any statement was released in the interests of fairness. He said this could create doubt on the process moving forward. PH responded that the club announced via the chairman's letter that this meeting was taking place and the panel received only a few minutes' notice prior to publication. DC said this was on his instruction as a reciprocal response. PH pointed to responsibility on both sides and suggested this issue is parked and all parties move on to which DC agreed but felt he had to raise his concerns. ES asked if the club are considering disbanding the panel, DC said no, he was merely disappointed as trust is needed on both sides for the panel to successfully move forward. He is happy for the club to devote time to the panel as this is the correct platform to answer questions and also set the record straight on speculation surrounding all areas of the club.

Close

The meeting was closed with AW and DC thanking the panel for their valuable time and input and hoping to see all the groups at this meeting represented at the next meeting in June.