



Fan Advisory Board Meeting (FAB)
Thursday 21 November 2024, 6:00pm, Boardroom, The Brick Community Stadium

Club Representative	Attendees
Chairman	Ben Goodburn (BG)
Director	Lucas Danson (LD)
Head of Operations	Andy Birch (AB)
Supporter Engagement Officer	Diane Winnard (DW)
Head of Commercial	Greg Coar (GC)
Head of Marketing, Media, and Communications	Jamie Allen (JA)
Meeting Chair	Jason Taylor (JT)
HR Officer (Note Taker)	James Kilby (JK)

Fan Advisory Board (FAB) Representative Attendees
Ian Wadsworth
Caroline Molyneux – Apology. Adam Pendlebury as proxy.
Simon Humphries
Jason Ford
Mick Wimsey
Barry Worthington
Cael Alcar
Daniel Stacey
Louise Kumar
Rachel Draper
Will Patterson

No.	Agenda Item	Lead(s)
1	Arrival from 5:45pm	
1.1	FAB representative apologies	JT
2	Welcome and Introductions	JT
3	Approval of minutes from 29.8.24	JT
3.1	Matter arising	JA/AB/GC
4	Club Update (Stadium Ownership, CEO)	BG
4.1	Fans Forum	JA
5	Communication (Web, Social Media and App Experience, Regular 'bulletins' from Board / Management)	LD, JA, GC
6	Membership and Loyalty Offers – Reciprocated Ticket Deal	LD / GC
7	Any Other Business	JT
8	Date Of Next Meeting	JT



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FAB representative apologies - Caroline Molyneux.

Welcome and Introductions - All club representatives and attendees introduced themselves to the room.

Approval of minutes from Thursday, 29 August 2024 – meeting chair ensured everyone had reviewed the minutes from the last meeting. This was approved.

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS FAB.

JA – ran through progress from the previous meetings actions.

Additional questions or actions to be looked into further following run through:

- **AB** – looking into mixed fan zone. This would be based on a risk assessment basis.
- **BG** – concerts and events. Long term aim to host at stadium. We are working through some safety issues with stakeholders.
- **LD** – budget for Stadium Flags has been approved. Designs underway and this is being scoped out how it will look in the Stadium.
- **JA** – any digital ticket issues will be discussed with Ticket Office. JT, as SLO, will look into workshops for fans who are adapting to this new method.
- **LD** – budget approved for more matchday engagement. This started with Wycombe Remembrance Weekend.
- **MW** – club to look into recommendations for use of microphone in Whelan's pre game.

Stadium Concourse:

See accompanying documentation of proposed improvements to matchday experience for fans on the catering side.

CLUB UPDATE

Stadium Ownership:

BG – presented the new structure of stadium ownership, rationale behind the structure, impact on WAFC. - ***See accompanying images.***

Additional FAB Questions on stadium ownership:





DS – Would any potential new owners be able to do what previous WAFC ownership did, in terms of incorporating stadium ownership into one entity, just under the Football Club?

BG – No, the new structure and provisions, which have been reviewed by the Council and EFL, safeguard the stadium in the long term for both sporting clubs and the local community.

BW – Who is taking on costs, is it split between two clubs?

BG – The Football club currently pays for the significant operational costs of the stadium. To improve the sustainability of the football club we are therefore shifting the operational costs to the new stadium entity which, like the football club, is funded by the ownership group.

CA – Any issues with the Club being in breach of lease under Phoenix 2021?

BG – The Club being in administration was clearly a difficult situation at the time for the Club and all stakeholders in the community. We have worked with the council to ensure the new structure correctly reflects the intention of the lease and there are no issues for the football club moving forward.

BW – Who will own the sites?

BG – The ownership group own/lease all the sites through the three different entities. In terms of specific entities, the training grounds remain under the ownership of each respective club.

WP – Would the Rugby Club come under the main holding company, with WAFC and Wigan Stadium Events Limited?

BG – Not a priority at this stage.

Sodexo

BG – We're in a long term contract which was agreed with Sodexo immediately post Covid by the previous ownership. I'm unable to discuss the confidential terms of that contract. Ben explained there are a mixture of Club models that outsource stadium management and those that provide it in-house. Our Club has operated both models previously.

LD – Would like stadium to be a 7 day a week venue and we're currently looking at next steps to realise this.

CEO

Ben Goodburn then provided update on plans for a permanent Managing Director/CEO.

Ben explained that the stadium re-organisation is one reason why there isn't a permanent Managing Director/CEO at this moment. Ben's own skill set has complimented the current



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situation (*in terms of reducing the £17.5m losses, reviewing and reducing our exposure under current contractual arrangements and re-structuring the business*). Acknowledgement that capable Heads of Department, with a wealth of experience, are already in place and I would like to thank them for their help during this first phase of our new ownership.

Now we have laid the foundations for the new structure, moving forward we will appoint a permanent Head (Managing Director/CEO) of the Football Club and a separate Head of the Stadium. We're close to having people in these positions.

When we first took ownership of the Football Club we were looking at appointing a Chief Executive to oversee everything, including the stadium. On reflection, and as mentioned, there were so many fundamental issues to address that we shifted to resolving those issues first and laying the foundations for a different structure with a view to appointing Heads with more focused skill sets thereafter. The new structure allows the Head of Football to focus on Football, not the wider stadium or operational issues. Likewise, we are appointing a Head of Stadium with venue-focused expertise.

Additional FAB questions on CEO:

WP – Last year you mentioned we were close to appointing a CEO, what changed?

BG – As mentioned, the role evolved from overseeing the Stadium and Football Club to overseeing just the Football Club. The skill set we required therefore changed. Candidates were originally being looked at for the bigger role.

WP – Timeline in terms of the holding company?

BG – We wanted clear foundations in place before Head appointments were made to ensure we weren't setting up roles to fail, which included the incorporation of Wigan Sporting Events Limited and the related re-structuring work.

DS – Are you advertising for a Head of Football Club/CEO?

BG – Not publicly.

BG – Nearly there with re-structure of the stadium company and work with the Council and EFL, which means we can then move quickly on the appointment of the Heads.

FANS FORUM

JA spoke on a proposed Fans Forum event with a date currently being firmed up. Will be announcing the date soon. Date likely to be before end of January 2025. Would like to have clarity on Heads of Football and Stadium in time for this so it can then be discussed at the Fans Forum.



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COMMUNICATION

Lucas Danson emphasised two main points on communication. Club is working on the development of a new app. This would move the Club from having two apps (club and retail), to one for news, retail, ticketing - all encompassing. Push notifications would lead to more instant communication with fans. This is close to being signed off before development can then begin.

Second point, Lucas explained the Ownership Group are aware that the fans want more direct communication. He explained we have created the FAB as well as a separate group with international members where regular calls will take place.

He explained the Ownership are looking to release a monthly board communication update, similar to a 'Board Bulletin'. This will be broken down into three areas: Club, Community, and Performance.

One of Lucas, Mike, or Ben would update at the beginning and would touch on First Team, Academy, and Women's Team and a performance overview of month. Club update would cover areas such as commercial, kit launches, fan events and stadium updates. In the New Year will go more into detail on long term aims. Community, would touch on what is the club doing in the community, charity work, and schools.

Additional FAB Questions/Feedback on communication:

WP – it would be good for fans to hear what good looks like in the January transfer window?

BG – we did mention no.9 previously in last update and to local media and this is something we have been working on and are continue to do so on a daily basis.

LD - explained we have got to be careful on what we say regarding transfers as if club's know we are after X position or we have X to spend – the price shoots up.

LD – we've invested heavily in data recruitment. This helped us in previous window and will help us in future window.

DS – you've spoken about long term planning, is sustainable message contradicted by the amount of loans we have to replace?

LD – most clubs in League 1 have 6 loan players. We want to be a Club where top teams send their best young talent to be developed. Balance between youth and experience. Had success with loans last season and that has enabled the club to attract players this year. We want Wigan to be a hot bed location for young players to develop.





FAB members all agreed that a video version of the above proposed 'board bulletin' would be great to kick things off. There has been little face communication from previous ownerships and the group felt if you see Lucas or Ben share the messages/updates in person it would help.

BG – we'll look into that if it's what the fans would like. Conscious that the previous ownership have said an awful lot rather than focusing on getting stuff done. We have wanted to focus on building strong long term foundations and we are now in a better position to communicate more regularly.

RD – it would be great to have more information on the facilities for the Women's game fixtures away from home. Fanbase is growing and it's been a fantastic experiences.

JA – sometimes we have little information on these venues. Some are brand new to us, and some are grassroot venues, but we will look into gathering more information on these venues were possible.

AP - Is there an update on Junior Fans communication as part of the engagement project?

DW – media squad is set up. They are filming content in Family Zone. Filming and editing with support of media team. They will be publishing content over Christmas. They've been tasked with what you would want in a Junior Membership package.

MEMBERSHIP AND LOYALTY SCHEMES

Greg Coar presented the proposed new ticketing loyalty points scheme. More formal way of allocating tickets when we have a smaller allocation. Fan will have visibility of their points online and it will be on a rolling two year basis. You can assign tickets to people in your network. The person who uses the ticket will get the points. To buy for a member of your network, they will still have to be at the points level required for a game at that stage. A full FAQ will be issued on launch.

The group were in agreement on the whole and after a discussion about changing Season Ticket Holders points from 250 to slightly higher number to reflect the importance of a full season ticket compared to a half season ticket, the group were all happy with the proposed points system below.



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The points will be allocated using the following chart:

- 2024/25 Season Ticket Holders – **275 points**
- 2024/25 Half Season Ticket Holders – **125 points**
- Future Fund Member - **100 points**
- Home Match Tickets | Tuesday fixtures - **10 points** | Saturday fixtures - **5 points**
- Away Match Tickets | Sliding scale for away games depending on location and status of the game which will be decided on a match-by-match basis – **15 points & 20 points**

Additional FAB Questions on Membership and Ticketing Loyalty Schemes:

MW – any issues with people buying wrong level ticket, e.g. U5's?

GC – we have a vigilant checking system in the ticket office. Appreciate this can always be a problem, people using tickets that are not the correct category, but all Club's stamping down.

AP - issue raised around rewarding fans who buy a season ticket at the start of the season. Would a half season ticket be the same amount of points as a season ticket at the start of the season.

GC – point acknowledged and agreed. Since moved points system from 250 to 275 as highlighted above.

CA – is there a way to reward those that have been season ticket holders for several years with club discounts?

BG – retrospective seasons would be a problem as the previous system did not sufficiently capture data.

LD – clarified data did not go past two years.

GC/JA – explained ticket office currently backdating all points from this season to ensure all fans have correct amount of points ahead of launch.

The amount of rearranged fixtures to a midweek was raised due to international call ups.

BG – we are pushing the EFL and canvassing other clubs to implement international breaks into the League 1 schedule. We will address this again at the next EFL meeting in February.

Reciprocating details raised by **MW** and **JT** - if another club charges £30, we charge £30, can negotiate better process for our fans that go away.

LD – would have to run a cost analysis.



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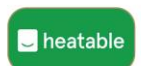


BG – we now have CRM in place that will be able to monitor what deals work and what deals don't for ticketing initiatives as well as fan behaviour in terms of who is attending and what they are purchasing.

A.O.B:

MW – would like code of conduct for FAB read out at each meeting as a point of order.

Date of next meeting – Wed 12 February, 2025.



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