

Nuneaton Town Supporters Co-Operative

1. Meeting opens at 7:35pm on 29/01/2013 at Liberty Way.
2. Present: Ben Bruce, Jim Astley, Mike Turner, Jim Skuce, Roger Barnes, Dave Hall, Martin Ball, John Hobson, Pete Burdett, and Mark Axon.
Apologies: Ray Miller, Andy Briggs, and Mark Mortlock
3. The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record.

Action Plan

1. Contact Club regarding Sportsman's Evening Committee – John – arrange meeting for next week.
 2. Contact SD about Fan on the Board – Jim A – ongoing.
 3. Send letter to Rugby Club – Jim A – letter sent.
 4. Email Ian Neale regarding roof to stores room – Jim A – done.
 5. Source a carpenter to help with new kit room – all – ongoing.
 6. Email Ian Neale regarding Foundation – Jim A – done.
 7. Prepare email to send to supporters regarding Work Party/Carpenter – Jim A – done.
4. Chairman's Report – John had nothing to report.
5. Secretary's Report – Jim A read out an email he had received regarding a charity event involving driving to Monte Carlo in a cheap car. Jim A also said that the Supporters' Direct West Midlands' Regional Meeting is scheduled for Thursday 21st February 2013 at Telford's stadium. Anyone who wished to attend should contact Jim A and he would draw up a list. Jim A said that Ian Neale had donated his winnings from the 200 Club to the playing budget – a very nice gesture.
6. Treasurer's Report – N/A.
7. 200 Club Draw – Dave said that the previous draw was the equal best payout, but we should continue to push the draw. John said perhaps a newsletter was about due?
8. Fan Ownership – Presentation from Ben Bruce – Ben began by thanking the Co-Operative for inviting him to a meeting and that he hoped to discuss his belief that the Club should be fan and community owned, while at the same time getting an idea on the Co-Operatives' opinions in this area. Ben said that he believed the name and ground change at the Club had caused fans to become alienated and disenchanted. Ben believed that community/fan ownership could improve the Club in three main areas; support, facilities, and an enhanced position in the community. Key areas to improve would be to increase the playing budget, involve education (local schools and colleges), and encourage membership of the Club by the community.

Ben said that he thought it important that the Club are not just a first team – Ladies and Youth teams are just as important to help the Club grow in the community. A European idea that may be worth investigating is to branch out into other sports as well as football. Providing facilities in these areas could improve the town's perception of the Club and encourage involvement. Ben said that the Rugby Club did at one time have planning permission to build a sports' hall and several retail outlets. Although this planning permission has now probably run out, this is the sort of venture that a community club would be interested in.

Ben said that a main question to be answered when discussing fan ownership is how it can raise finance? Ben said that a European model that worked in Germany was the Club is owned 51 per cent by the fans, and 49 per cent by local business/es. Ben said that he had received a lot of questions from Ian Neale about this idea, which he found encouraging. He hoped to create a proper business plan to discuss with the Club.

Ben said that any future plans would revolve around owning both the ground and the Club. As assets it was essential to control both. Ben added that any approach to the Council or local businesses would need to be done with the attitude of 'what we can do for you' rather than 'what you can do for us'.

Roger said that he agreed with much of what Ben had to say, and that he felt the best way to achieve this was to strengthen the Co-Operative. Mark agreed and added that Supporters' Direct was set up to assist with this. Mike said that a Community Share Scheme could be a way to raise finance in the Club. Dave said that Ian Neale's attitude to this is what matters most. Dave proposed we talk to Supporters' Direct first for their opinion before we talk to Ian Neale. This was unanimously agreed.

Ben said he was glad that the Co-Operative had common goals. John said that he had enjoyed Ben's presentation and requested that Ben commit to the Co-Operative to help us investigate the options moving forward. Ben agreed (work commitments aside).

Mike suggested we contact SD and maybe request a meeting before the WM Regional Meeting at Telford if Jacqui is available? Jim A said he would ask.

John thanked Ben for attending and making his presentation.

9. Fan on the Board – Jim A said that had been corresponding with Jacqui Forster at SD. He said that discussions had been halted due to Jacqui going on holiday, but she had recommended suspending the discussions with the Club about the Fan on the Board after the resignation of the directors. Jim A said he hoped to continue the discussions when JF returned.

10. Access/Rugby club entrance – Jim A said he had sent the letter and had not yet received a reply.

11. Bonanza/Sportsman's Evening – John said he would arrange a meeting for the next week.

12. Stores Room/Kit Room – Jim A had written an email and would send it out to members.

13. Any other business.

- John asked Jim A to read through the minutes online and send over any missing ones.
- Dave asked Jim A to have a look at the membership situation and report back.
- John said he would approach a local business to source the membership cards.
- Mike said that the name registration had still not been changed. Jim A said the form had been returned but he had signed it and sent it off.
- Dave asked if the Co-Operative still intended to offer John Rathbone life membership as previously discussed? John said he would contact him.
- Mike said that we should look to raise some money for the Mary Ann Evans Hospice this year. Mike said that he had had a discussion with Ross Kenny, Nuneaton's King of Mirth and maybe this could be linked in with the Carnival?

14. Next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, 14 February 2013 at Liberty Way, 7:30pm start.

Meeting ends at 9:15pm.

Action Plan

1. Contact Club regarding Sportsman's Evening Committee – John
2. Contact SD about Fan on the Board – Jim A
3. Contact Jim A if you wish to attend the SD WM Regional Event at Telford
4. Plan Newsletter – all
5. Contact SD about Fan Ownership – Jim A.
6. Send out email to Members concerning Stores Room/Kit room
7. Jim A to read through the minutes online and send over any missing ones
8. Jim A to have a look at the membership situation and report back
9. John to contact John Rathbone about Life Membership.