

Nuneaton Town Supporters' Co-operative

1. Meeting opens 7.40pm on 27th August 2013 at Coton Liberal Club.

2. Present: Jim Astley, Andy Briggs, Jim Skuce, Dave Hall, Pete Davis, Pete Burdett, Ray Miller, Mike Turner, Roger Barnes, John Hobson, Martin Ball and Ian Neale.

Apologies:

Jim A. introduced Ian Neale and said that Ian had rang him at 7pm that night and asked to attend the meeting as he had something to say. Jim A. asked how long this would take and Ian said ten minutes, so it was agreed to let Ian begin the meeting.

Ian said he asked to attend the meeting as he wanted to discuss some items and he felt that it would be better to do so in person to avoid any misunderstandings. Ian said that while he acknowledged that we are all volunteers, the lack of interaction between the Club and the Co-Operative had become a real concern, and he thought that the drive for this interaction should come from the Co-Operative. Ian said that the minutes of Co-Operative meetings on the website were three months out of date, and he did not think this was good enough. Ian said that he had only received two to three emails from the Co-Operative in 2013. John asked if that included the email that John sent to him a few weeks ago about the Co-Operative looking to organise a Player of the Year Event that the Club had yet to reply to? Ian said he was not aware of this email.

Ian said that the Co-Operative was not aware of the direction of the Football Club, and this means that we could not fulfil our aims properly. Ian said that one aim is to strengthen the bond between the Football Club and the Co-Operative. He had asked the Co-Operative to create a formal agreement on the relationship between the Club and the Co-Operative and felt that the Co-Operative should produce this.

Ian said that agenda items had dropped off the minutes without being resolved (such as the Sportsman's Evening). Ian said he expected lots of questions from the Co-Operative, especially as they had worked hard in pre-season to improve the match day experience for supporters. Ian also felt that Co-Operative could use the programme notes better. Jim A. replied that he wrote the programme notes and that he wrote a short version for the last set as the last time he wrote a set the notes had been split between two random pages and messed up. He wrote some short notes, as he wanted them to fit in properly. Jim A added that his notes from last season had been lengthy and informative, and he did not feel that this criticism was fair. Ian replied that he had not looked at the notes from last season.

Ian said he felt that the Co-Operative spent too much time listening to Supporters' Direct and they were too stringent and would lead to the Co-Operative not achieving anything.

Ian said that he no longer wanted any funds raised from the 200 Club to be sent to the Football Club until the situation had been resolved. Ray asked for this request in writing (see attached email sent 28-8-2013).

Mike asked if monthly meetings would help to resolve the lack of communication between the Club and the Co-Operative. It was agreed that the Co-Operative would look to create a Charter as requested by Ian.

At this point Eddie Stevens popped into the meeting to say thank you to the Co-Operative for the support the Youth Team have received. Eddie said it was fantastic and looked forward to the relationship continuing throughout the season.

3. The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record.

4. Chair's Report – John said they had run the table at the last few games and it had been a success.

5. Secretary's Report – Jim A. said he would require two cheques – one for membership of Supporters' Direct, and one for the Gaming License with the Council.

6. Treasurer's Report – Ray reported that the general account contained £4787.55, the contingency account £3762.37. Total amount of £8549.92.

7. 200 Club – John asked if the Club refuse to accept the cash, what should be done with it? Andy said that he thought it should be kept separate and hopefully can be passed onto the Club in the future. Dave said maybe the prize money could be increased to attract new members? It was agreed to keep the money safe for the future.

Dave said that a couple had fallen behind and there had been two withdrawals.

8. Youth Team – See Eddie's comments above.

9. Football Museum Trip – Mike asked if we needed to contact the Football Museum? Jim A suggested checking the website for info.

10. Heritage Website – John said he had spoken to a lady called Judy Crabb who had agreed to create a preliminary draft of an application for lottery funding for the Heritage Website Project. Judy advised that an independent project manager would have to be appointed and the project would last eighteen months before being passed onto the Co-Operative to administrate. John and Mike said they had visited the Heritage Centre to discuss the project there.

11. Any other business - Roger said he had been invited to join the board of the Army Benevolent Fund, and he hoped to create a relationship.

12. Next meeting was set for 7.30pm on Thursday, 12 September 2013 at Liberty Way. Meeting ends at 9:40pm.

Action Plan

1. Create Charter.
2. Continue to assist with Youth Team.

Good Morning Jim,

Firstly thank you for allowing me to attend and speak to you at your meeting last night at short notice, I had drafted a lengthy email but felt that to explain the clubs position would be better.

I won't cover everything that I had written and I acknowledged previous good work in particular the Memorial Garden, work to PA and action for supporters with the localism act, I also acknowledged individuals like Michael Turner and Pete Burdett whom off their own back have given time to club community projects. You also have an interesting and worthwhile history project progressing.

I have however for a period of time become somewhat disillusioned with the aims and objectives being reported on your website and In your August Newsletter and had recently expressed these to your chairman, Andrew Briggs and Ben Bruce and to summarise.

I see you as the Key supporter organisation that had taken over the former trust whom it was acknowledged had no future. The new organisation appeared to have a clear view of fans representation and relationship with the club.

As a member and supporter of the club myself I was somewhat surprised that meeting minutes are virtually three months out of date on the Website and therefore offer both fans considering membership and members no current information on the workings of the Cooperative.

Your aims summarised as listed on your website and newsletter

- To strengthen the bond between club and supporters
- To provide a platform for fans to express concerns
- To work with the club to improve Matchday experience
- To Promote supporter representation with the club.
- To raise money to spend for the aims listed above for benefit of all Nuneaton Town supporters.

It is my opinion that you are struggling to tick the box for your members and supporters as you have no regular dialogue with the club.

I highlighted to you a number of matters that simply fell off the agenda that involved the club from January 2013 onwards which from the Clubs viewpoint was disappointing.

My major concern however is that I see it very difficult for you to justify your aims when there is no dialogue or representation with the Club, I don't feel that the club should be expressing these concerns to you but the responsibility of the Cooperative Board to look to engage the club as without that do not see how you can justify to the supporters your Aims.

I would have thought rather than rely on rumour or speculation that a large number of subjects would have been of real interest to your Members and Supporters of the club and I list a small selection below that would or could have been engagement on.

- Kit
- Matchday Prices
- Ground Grading
- Matchday experience
- Ground Sale
- Localism Act
- Challenges faced by the club
- Club projects
- Fan engagement
- Foodbank
- Community Foundation
- Free season tickets for Minor League.

I had suggested previously that you create a small group for this engagement so that it does not end up with an argument with board Members who have not been appraised of dialogue between individuals. I suggested previously that you form a charter with the club that outlines the aims in more detail to which it was suggested that I present a draft, with respect this is a matter for yourselves and not the club as you are outlining your aims and not ourselves.

I had advised due to what I consider a failing relationship between the club and the cooperative that we would not accept any further payments from you for the 200 club until such a time that a productive relationship is achieved on the basis that I do not want to be seen as the side blocking or lacking in an offering to which I have been steadfast on fan engagement.

I will now let you consider any proposals or actions you may wish to take to either continue as you have previously or look to engage with the Club as you see fit.

Kind Regards, Ian