



Plymouth Argyle Fans' Assembly meeting minutes

Saturday, 21 January, 2023. Players' Lounge, Mayflower Grandstand

PRESENT

PAFC – Christian Kent (Head of Venue – CK)), Andrew Parkinson (CEO - AP), Zac Newton (Club Secretary- ZN), Dan Phippen (Supporter Relations Manager - DP), Dan Cole (Communications Manager - DC)

FANS – Mike Gale, Graham Clark, Mark Smith, Mike Cooper, Fraser Lloyd-Davies, Chris Corbett, Bill McCarthy, Jan McGregor, Virginia Pike

APOLOGIES – John Penney

Andrew Parkinson gave an update

Argyle are doing well in league with lots of progress on and off the pitch. Matches sell out regularly, season ticket sales are the highest ever been, Project 35 has launched and PAFC has issued a good set of accounts.

We're on the way to being sustainable and the recent investment allowed the purchase of Goals. We are looking to see how that can be branded and developed in the future. [Note, since meeting, the site has [now been rebranded to Harpers Training Centre](#)].

Andrew thanked all for their support and commented that there is a real togetherness around the club - players, executive and fans. The city is very proud of Argyle.

INFRASTRUCTURE QUESTIONS

Wi-Fi & 4G connectivity - Vodafone has a mast and is looking to upgrade that to 5G, going through planning at the moment. It was suggested that Argyle look at a partnership with them to see if they could offer a discounted "PAFC" mobile tariff.

Upper Mayflower issues – Timing for any further work is impacted by other events eg Summer concerts. To fully fix, would need at least 2 out of season 1 for concourse and 1 for re-profiling seats. There is no set timetable for these works at present.

Mayflower pre-match entertainment from other parts of ground. No access at present but possibility once that external area has been sorted. [Note, the club has now [submitted a planning permission application for the upgraded Fan Zone outside of the Mayflower Grandstand](#)].





Pull down baby changing is present in all Mayflower disabled loos but not all other parts of the ground. These will be marked and added to the fans guide.

Warm water – the club is trying to catch up on aspects of previous stadium under investment but not a priority at this stage. CK advised looking at dryers.

PA - some areas of Mayflower (lower front) still need to be addressed. Can we have specific blocks feedback?

Increased capacity - segregation configuration has been changed to allow more home seats even when we have a big away following – continued use of block 21 with external loos etc allowing that area to be sold. As per the above, work continues to further increase the capacity of the Mayflower Upper.

Fill in the corners – there needs to be a solid business case as this is an expensive task. Demand needs to be understood which is driven by the league we are in, etc.

CLUB SHOP & TICKETING

Argyle looked at footfall and changed opening times due to a big drop off after 15.00 weekdays, but they are open later on Saturday. They are trying to meet the majority requirements so will keep times as is and review periodically. May look at later opening, especially in build-up to away games.

Priority scheme – this is a trial at the moment so prior history was not considered appropriate. Any future scheme will include purchase history (e.g previous three years). Most games have reached general sale so, in the vast majority of cases, all season ticket holders who wanted to could get tickets.

Concerts - some bands control tickets so they cannot give ST holders priority (e.g Muse) but some let us have advance priority (e.g Kiss).

Digital tickets – Argyle believes there is no discrimination against people without digital access, this is simply just an extra option for people to use when purchasing.

Staff-free turnstiles - nothing imminent on this front.

Away price cap – there is little appetite within the EFL, especially as regulations already exist to prevent charging away fans more than home fans for comparable seat.

Safe standing – Argyle are looking at this through a consultancy which is considering all the angles but it looks like there will be a possibility in a couple of seasons or so.





MISCELLANEOUS

Under 18 matches - fixtures get changed often as well as the venue whilst some venues cannot accommodate supporters. Thus, whilst there is no bar on attendance, there are practical barriers. A state of flux expected for a while but this will improve when there is a permanent location for the academy. Academy results will be announced at the Argyle league games.

[Note – since the last meeting, the club has announced a £21m partnership with Plymouth City Council and the Argyle community Trust to find a permanent home for the Academy and Women’s team at Brickfields in Devonport. To read, [click here.](#)]

NFT/Cryptocurrency - not appropriate for Argyle and this has proven the right decision in hindsight looking at the issues people have had at other clubs.

Stewards - as part of safety certificate a percentage of them have to have a qualification in crowd management. There are regular inspections by the relevant authorities. The Argyle contract was tendered and the winning bidder provided the right level of qualified stewards as well as more customer-focused personnel. Where training funding has been provided by the company, a steward is expected to work for a certain time on this contract otherwise the company asks for payment of their training fees. Circa 95% of stewards have stayed therefore this has not impacted the majority.

General consensus is that stewarding is better, for example, tickets are checked twice in the Babcock Devonport End - this is for safety reasons and will continue.

New Deal for Football/Fan Led Review - potential for some competitions to change significantly for EFL clubs (more European games therefore puts pressure on Premier League participation in domestic cups). These are important revenue streams for Argyle so discussions are ongoing between EFL, FA and PL clubs. This is ongoing and suggestion (by us fans) is that we monitor news outlets and respond accordingly as soon as any proposals are made.

Fan Led Review –There are significant differences of opinion between the differing groups, particularly around re-distribution of wealth and the appointment of an Independent Regulator (of which PAFC largely supportive but awaits the details, particular as there are already many bodies – FA, EFL, etc – so one more could just be duplication and cause confusion).





[Note – since the Fans’ Assembly meeting, the Government has published its [white paper](#). [Click here](#) to read the club and EFL statements on the matter.]

Leaving players and an opportunity to say goodbye to them – the two about whom this question was raised (Gary Sawyer and Luke McCormick) have been engaged in club activities thus are still around. Argyle will look at the situation, as and when future stalwarts leave, on a case-by-case basis.

Music before and after matches – this is a subjective issue with some fans liking some tunes and others not.

Inconsistent bag searches - is inconsistent by design (as a deterrent). It is a safety requirement for PAFC.

Parking – there is a political drive to have charging in all Plymouth car parks and the Council say they have sustainability in mind. CK advised Argyle are producing a comprehensive guide to how to get to the ground (by end of season). Lots of parking has to be segregated for media, first aid, etc but Argyle allows some of these as accessible spaces. A multi-agency approach required to effect a more dramatic change to bus provision, etc.

With regards to fans who may struggle with mobility issues, PAFC has partnered with Access Plymouth for their dial-a-ride service to offer this service. Take up has been very good with two buses full and looking to expand into a third. PAFC to look at possibility of a survey to establish demand.

Season tickets – 8894 sold pre-season then further 880. Argyle are discussing ticketing arrangements for next season as to whether there will be a ceiling, ensuring on the day or week-to-week access. It is possible to look at seat movements to ensure single seats are not left.

Evergreen – has been a success and the Fans’ Assembly suggested looking at extending benefits with Argyle partners e.g a discount on Evergreen Partners’ service offering. The Evergreen price is not linked to next year’s prices as these are in discussion and there will be an early bird discount.

Will Evergreen discount apply on top of Early Bird discount - Argyle to advise [Note, following Fans’ Assembly it was confirmed that the answer to this query is yes]. Evergreen supersedes the 1886 membership and Big Green Lottery.

Rainbow Laces & Argyle Pride match - will be Fleetwood and details are being finalised but will be in conjunction with the relevant stakeholders.

Argyle were asked by the Fans’ Assembly to commend Charlie Price on Argyle TV output.





PLYMOUTH ARGYLE FOOTBALL CLUB

Home Park, Plymouth, PL2 3DQ

Agents' fees – in common with most clubs, Argyle pay them and it's just a fact of life. However, FIFA are trying to change regulations but are expecting legal challenge from agents etc.

