

## Trust meeting with MFC co-chairman

Our regular meeting with the MFC co-chairmen took place before yesterday's game. Below is a summary of that meeting:-

**Date:** 5th January 2019

**Present:** MFC - Graham Howse (Rod Taylor was ill)

**Shrimps Trust** - Ron Freear, Jimmy Goulding, Paul Hodgson, Jack Steer

On the issue of late payment of December salary (as tweeted by some players), Graham said this was unfortunate but a storm in a teacup, as all players were actually paid on the 28th December, their contractual pay date. As soon as the tweets were read, Graham rectified the situation and put out a statement to that effect at lunchtime on social media and Radio Lancashire.

Graham had no progress to report on the planning application for the roof at the back of the home stand. It has been submitted in full, but no feedback yet.

On the issue of catering problems on New Year's Day for the Carlisle game, Graham explained that there were 6 staff absent on the day and the attendance was more than 300 above the anticipated number, which resulted in insufficient food for sale and insufficient staff to serve it.

The Trust put forward several suggestions to improve the organisation of the half-time catering, including setting up barriers to provide distinct queues; dividing the queues up into separate alcohol, food, and hot drinks queues; using the room next to the serving hatch in the home end to handle one of the queues; serving cans or plastic bottles of beer to customers instead of spending time pouring out each one; pre-pouring drinks so that they are ready to hand over; and pre-ordering food and drink before the game.

Graham said the club had already looked at most of these ideas and rejected them. Queue barriers would need a steward to supervise them; customers often order a mixture of food, hot drinks and alcohol so segregated queuing would not work; a safety officer at the club had forbidden handing over cans and plastic bottles to customers as they could then smuggle them into the terraces / seats which is against League rules; pre-pouring drinks does not work because the drinks have to be chilled to a certain temperature so that they pour more quickly, etc.

The Trust still believes some these ideas need to be tried, as the club must be losing out on a large amounts of revenue with the current arrangements.

Graham appealed for 5-6 volunteers to operate the away turnstiles for the upcoming games against Bury on 9th February and against Lincoln City on February 23rd. A large away following is expected for these 2 games, so 5-6 turnstile volunteers would free up 5-6 club staff to help with the catering. Trustee Paul Hodgson immediately volunteered, and if anyone else wants to help with turnstile duty at either of these games, please contact the Trust [here](#).

Graham said that as part of a Community Trust initiative to encourage the next generation of supporters, season tickets will be distributed to local schools starting the week after next.

Graham also revealed that the club had received feedback from the Football League on a "secret shopper" day when they visited the Globe incognito for the game against Macclesfield Town on September 22nd. Some improvements suggested by the League included:

- more staff training required for club staff engaging with fans
- more child-friendly activities needed outside the ground
- more half-time entertainment to be provided
- family areas need to have their appearance enhanced
- the club website needs to contain information for away visitors, including directions to the ground and transport recommendations

Jack Steer asked if the club had any objections to the Shrimps Trust providing a simplified analysis of the club's accounts to email out to Trust members. Graham had no objections, but would like to see it first.

Just before new loan signing Paul McKay made his home debut for MFC, Graham revealed that more loan signings would be announced in January. With MFC Academy player Leif Davis making his first team debut for Leeds United this week, this will trigger more payments to the club to enhance the player budget.

The next meeting will take place before the Lincoln City game on February 23rd.