

CUSP Internal Meeting

Report of the CUSP Internal Meeting held at 8.00pm on 4 August 2021

Present

Ben Payne (Acting Chair), Philip Saich (Secretary), David Burkett, Nigel Browne, Mark Mumford and Jason Petch

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Chris Neild and Ben Phillips

Report of Last Meeting/Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the last meeting.

CUSP election

Two existing CUSP members – James Mills and Paul Moffat – decided to stand down from CUSP, reducing the current headcount to six. We received applications from three new candidates, one of whom subsequently withdrew due to work commitments. The two remaining new candidates – Jason Petch and Ben Phillips – brought the headcount to eight, so as per the constitution it was not necessary to hold an election. We welcome Jason and Ben to CUSP and look forward to working with them.

Appointment of officers

As per the constitution it was necessary to appoint officers after our first two year period. Ben Payne offered to stand as Chair, David Burkett offered to stand as Vice Chair, and Philip Saich offered to continue as Secretary. With no other candidates standing, all three were duly appointed.

CUSP's role and relationship with CFU

It was agreed that CUSP needed to define its identity and communicate this with the wider fanbase, and also that CUSP and CFU would benefit from a closer and more clearly defined relationship. To this end, Ben Payne has been liaising with Andrew Stephen from CFU with a view to agreeing a way forward and issuing a joint statement in the near future. It is hoped that this will also be supported by the Club.

Fans' issues

Issues have arisen with the bars at the QPR friendly and with the retail operation, and these have been raised with the Club and are being resolved. These are good examples of ways in which CUSP can connect fans with the Club and help reach resolution. The Club appreciate the role CUSP is playing, but communication with the fans needs to improve.

The return of fans

It was agreed that this represents an opportunity for CUSP to make a difference and to that end we will request feedback from fans after the first home game on Saturday. This will be collated and

passed to the Club for comment. It is hoped that the Club will like and share our posts regarding this to ensure we reach the widest possible audience. Where possible, CUSP members will also be available outside the Club shop at home games so that fans can raise any concerns.

Communication

It was acknowledged that communication is an area for improvement, and we will look to ensure that fans are aware of the work we are doing behind the scenes to help the club improve the fan experience. We will also demonstrate how we are being proactive in different areas.

Ballboys and ballgirls

David Burkett has done a fantastic job recruiting and looking after ballboys/girls for the home matches, and many of these have enjoyed the experience and have become regular attenders. They have also spent money in the Club shop, so this will be a key focus moving forward.

Mental health and disability

David Burkett will continue his excellent work on the mental health side. Vicky Neal from MK Dons is keen to engage with us on the mental health side. It was agreed to invite Vicky along to a future meeting to share ideas. There is also a growing feeling that disabled supporters could be better treated at the Club and there is a potential opportunity for CUSP to create a survey and request feedback to assess the needs of supporters with disabilities.

Women's football

There is a concern that the Club is falling behind other clubs – such as MK Dons – in recruiting and retaining women footballers. David Burkett is monitoring this situation and will feed back to enable CUSP to raise this with the Club.

Date of next CUSP meeting

This will be confirmed after the start of the season and in the light of supporter feedback from the first couple of home matches. It is hoped that a meeting with the Club will take place before the end of September.