



Members Forum Minutes

26 September 2017

Member Questions

Member, Alan Shepherd: The worry at the moment is the operation of our ticketing and membership department. It's been appalling this year. Membership cards coming out late, membership cards not working, Test Match tickets coming out late. I'm a member at Nottingham and the MCC and they are both superbly efficient. We should be following their model. A friend of mine who is a member but not on the internet rang me on Monday trying to access a ticket for the One Day International. All the information he got when he rang the Club was to leave name, address, email and we will get back to you in 24hrs. I looked on the internet on the website, I couldn't click onto the area where you could buy tickets for Tuesday. That was mid-day on Monday. Half an hour later I received the standard email from the Club stating this is your last chance to buy tickets for tomorrow. I tried again and it would not work. It highlights the inefficiency of our ticketing and membership department and it's also not particularly member friendly. Nobody in that area ever seems to want to talk to anybody face to face. I ring other Club's and it's not a problem. I think it's something we need to look at.

Daniel Gidney, CEO: This year we have had some good days and not such good days. Definitely in terms of international ticket sales and tickets being dispatched very late. Chairman commissioned a review of our ticketing and membership operation and a detailed report has been prepared for the Board. There are certain things in there that we can't talk about as we are currently reviewing the whole process but also there is potentially some very exciting things around technology but crucially that report is entirely focused on how we improve that service for members for next year, and rest assured there are things that we will be looking to do particularly around technology where hopefully I will be able to talk in

more detail in the New Year on exactly what we are going to be doing for the new season and how it will be improved for members. I know this is an area that we haven't got right and it's an area that I can give you my word that over the winter it will be an absolute focus for us.

Chairman: Smiling faces and friendliness is very important at this Club. I thought last week at the ODI and the opening of the hotel, the service immaculate, it was fantastic. We will get that throughout the whole Club.

Member, Alan Payne: I would like to ask you about the Red Rose Suite. I know you have been quoted in the press about demolition. I'm a fairly new member and I really enjoy watching cricket from the Red Rose Suite. It's a great place to watch cricket. Could you tell us what your future plans are for that facility?

Chairman: I started off as a Red Rose member. We are looking at all options at the moment. It doesn't necessarily fit in with the future structure of the ground but we are very conscious of the reaction from people who enjoy and use that facility so whatever we do, we will try and incorporate something that is very similar. It is a big picture and it's very early days. The University opens up a whole new plethora of opportunities and potential ideas for us. We do want it to be a great stadium and we will endeavour to continue your experience in some form or another. Your comments are certainly noted.

Member: Have you got any plans to follow other counties examples of putting live feed on the website as the days play is happening?

Justin Hopwood, Director of Sales & Marketing: Once the season has finished we will be looking at options to have some fixed cameras in ahead of next season to see if we can do some live broadcast. It does require a little more infrastructure investment to ensure good coverage and that's one of the conversations that are on-going with Salford University, but also with the UA92 that the Chairman mentioned earlier that needs a little investment and will be exploring that over the course of the winter.

Member: Is the new Director of Cricket fully employed by Lancashire County Cricket Club? We have a very successful lottery and the staff who are working there .. is that being recognised in the new structure? I was in the hotel today, brilliant. Thanks very much for it being customer friendly and giving members an opportunity to go there. It was a wonderful day's cricket – thank you.

Chairman: The new Director of Cricket is full time and is a paid employee of Lancashire County Cricket Club.

Daniel Gidney, CEO: In terms of the reorganisation and merger of The Foundation and the Lancashire Cricket Board, everybody's experience will be taken into account and we will be doing everything we can to accommodate everyone as part of that re-structure. I can't say any more on that because of how people are affected, but rest assured we will do everything we can to accommodate as many people as we can.

Member, David Benwell: I would like to know whether the pop concerts are causing a problem with our state of the art drainage? And if so what will be done about it? The second part of my question is that whenever I come to the stadium, it seems pretty clear to me that the priorities here at the stadium are pop concerts, international cricket and white ball cricket, and I want to be reassured that you are going to give equal priority to preserving, protecting and promoting the four day game that we value so highly?

Chairman: I have been saying that cricket and membership is the Board's main priority and that is what we are concentrating on. We are going to have the best team, the best access, the best Members Club in the country. The promise from the Board is that this is a members club and we appreciate you. You have the Board's assurance that we are dedicated to cricket and Lancashire.

Anthony Mundy, Director of Operations: This year as you will know we had two unplanned concerts, so we always plan the outfield very closely with Matt around what events we have coming up on the outfield itself. We didn't know about these concerts and after the tragic events at the arena we stepped in and I believe we did a fantastic thing for Manchester. But we can't get away from the fact that it did put a lot of pressure and damage onto the outfield. We are working closely with Matt and with an independent outfield consultant who works round all the grounds with the ECB. We are starting quite an aggressive renovation at the end of the season and we are hoping to rectify a lot of those problems before the start of next season. Towards the end of next season we are going to do an even more aggressive renovation of the outfield to fully rectify any of the concerns that we've got with the outfield as it currently stands. This is not a drainage issue, so the drainage itself that we put in a few years ago is not damaged. This was the impact and the pressure that we put onto the surface after the concerts, so are fully aware of it and are dealing with it.

Member, Malcolm Lorimer: I was at Lord's last week and I enjoyed watching cricket through the sight screen in the long room. I know when the pitch was turned round we looked at sight screen here where you could watch cricket through it. If I'm right, the ECB wanted a sight screen where you could put adverts on, especially at Test Matches and One Day Internationals. Lord's don't have that restriction and Lords can have this super sight screen. I would like to think we could have something like Lord's because if it is good enough for Lord's it should be good enough for us.

Daniel Gidney, CEO: I'm afraid Lord's has a special dispensation – how long that will last with the 2019 World Cup coming up, in terms of ICC regulations I'm not sure. Sadly we were told that we are now classed as a new ground. As a new ground we have to comply with more stringent sight screen standards. We have a structure in place here that does give us the flexibility. Currently we have panels that slide in. Ultimately if we can find technology that will enable us to see-through something without it creating a glare for players, because the last time we looked at this there wasn't actually a product where we had some players stand out in the middle and the best products that you could see through from one side created quite a glare in terms of a reflection. But it's a good point and is something we will continue to work on, and if we can discover the technology that enables us to come up with a panel to look through without creating a glare then we will do it.

Chairman: I think it's a very good question and affects us massively. We will really look at that.

Member, Jill Jones: Glen, congratulations on your first year. Mr Chairman – you eluded earlier to the preparation for young cricketers finishing the game through the education system. The PCA benevolent fund has been working on this for years. The PCA brought a play to here and at all 18 grounds and it was so good. Nothing was advertised here, I contacted the PCA and I got a ticket. We were not a sell-out. Warwickshire the night before was a sell-out, along with Derby and I felt like we let down the PCA because we could have been advertising and selling tickets.

Daniel Gidney, CEO: This is a really important issue in terms of the PCA and preparing players towards the end of their careers. Kyle Hogg is an example of somebody who was incredibly pro-active very early on about what he wanted to do after cricket. Sadly we lost him to the game much earlier than we should have, a real talent. He decided he wanted to go into the music industry and worked effectively as a volunteer for SJM Concerts and developed a good rapport with them and now he enjoys a really good career in the music

industry. It's something that we as a Club recognise that we need to work on. Once a player gets over 25/26, we have an obligation and duty of care to work with them to understand how we can help, whether it's education, business or media experience. It is trying to understand what a player wants to do next, because we recognise we have an obligation for professional sportsmen who are a long time retired. We need to work closer with the PCA in terms of how we can help them when they finish their careers.

Paul Allott, Director of Cricket: To add to what Daniel has said, it is very much part of my thought process and remit that we should look after players when they enter the Academy and older. We need to take an interest in them, even though they may or may not become professional cricketers at that stage. If they are very lucky they might play for 10 years plus as a professional, but the majority unfortunately fall by the way side after perhaps a couple of years, and in that period of time we need to have given them as much opportunity to experience life outside of cricket as we possibly can. It will take some time and I feel that it's a very important part of our cricketing and life education process that we are going to embark upon.

Member Question: Stuart Warburton from Oldham. Firstly, during the Yorkshire Championship match I sat next to a Yorkshire member throughout the match, and he was most impressed with the friendliness and the efficiency of our stewarding. It was nice for a Yorkshire man to admit that ours was far better than theirs and it is far better than anywhere. Secondly, do we really think we have made enough of the success of the women's Lancashire team who have won both of their Championships?

Chairman: Agree totally. Our future is inclusive, women, youngsters. Going forward there will be a lot more publicity, praise and direction.

Daniel Gidney, CEO: Just to add, you are absolutely correct. Credit needs to go to Dan Atkinson the Coach of the LCB Women's team for winning the double also of course to Chris Benbow for winning the Second Eleven Championship as well.

Member Question: Ian Birchell – I was at the One Day International and it didn't start for two hours due to 3 or 4 damp patches. Is it not possible on a big match like that to cover more of the area due to how much rain we have had lately?

Anthony Mundy, Director of Operations: We were extremely frustrated that the game was delayed. There was no reason for it to be delayed. There were not any damp patches. The

umpires came out and they were disagreeing amongst themselves whether it was fit to play on. Matt our Head Groundsman said it was absolutely safe to play on. It was wetter for the Test Match a few weeks before. Daniel and I went over and spoke with the ECB and expressed our serious concerns at the fact that it was being delayed. After our conversation they did another inspection and let the game go ahead. Why would you delay a match when the service was dry knowing that later in the evening the mist was going to create a wet surface? There was no logic to it at all. This was an individual decision which we totally disagreed with and it wasn't to do with the condition of the outfield at all.

Chairman: We have probably got the best Groundsman in the country in Matt. His Test wickets are always judged the best by the ECB and he has been an unsung hero. Also Nic, who industriously works away in the kitchens, providing many thousands of meals every year. Those are two really good guys who deserve a round of applause.

Life Member: If we are not going to be able to watch cricket from the Long Room is there any chance of members being allowed back on the balconies and also are we going to have a forum where we can discuss facilities, because we seem to be getting less and less facilities for members?

Daniel Gidney, CEO: We've had a number of forums where we have talked about facilities. I am happy to talk to you offline about it. We also have the MRG where you can speak to anyone there at any time about facilities. I am surprised to hear you say members are getting less and less facilities, as I would like to think we have, compared to a lot of Clubs, have a lot of facilities for members. That is not to say we can't do more and it is something we are looking at. David has already talked about if we replaced the Red Rose Suite what we can do recognise the fact that there is a raised viewing there. In terms of the Lancaster balcony, that membership is completely sold out at the moment so it would be very difficult from a capacity perspective to get more people on there. We will continue to do an end of season member's questionnaire where we urge everybody in this room and also to tell as many people as possible to complete the survey and urge people to put down what their priorities are. Please give us some detail of what you would like to see, and anything that is reasonable that we can find a way of funding and we will do our very best.

Member Question: Do you think it would add to the interests of the scorecard if on the back of it you printed details of previous encounters with the visiting team?

Justin Hopwood, Director of Sales & Marketing: Daniel just talked about the end of season survey. That's exactly the kind of information and thoughts and ideas that we want, so I will make a note of the suggestion and will see what we can achieve next year for you.

Member Question: I've had a wonderful fortnight at Taunton and at Lord's. Disabled facilities were great, I could have a meal brought to the table to me, and there were quite a lot of Lancashire people dining at Taunton particularly. We were supposed to have a hotel where there was a restaurant overlooking the ground where we could go and eat at lunchtime. Neither of those things has happened. What went wrong?

Daniel Gidney, CEO: I don't believe there was anything in the plans of a restaurant overlooking the ground but obviously we did open the restaurant in the hotel for lunch.

Anthony Mundy, Director of Operations: The restaurant was open yesterday, today and will be open tomorrow for members. A number of members have been in today. There is a facility there, where you will have table service. We've been trialling it for these 4 days to see what the uptake is, so if people use the restaurant and like the facilities and we get enough people going in there to warrant it being open, we will absolutely have it open next season. However if we only get 1 or 2 people going in it wouldn't be worthwhile. Today was really positive.

Peter Ash, Conference & Events General Manager: We are open from 12noon to 2pm tomorrow.

Justin Hopwood, Director of Sales & Marketing: Once we have gaged what we are going to do for next year, based on this weeks' success or otherwise, we will formally notify people, not just through the internet but through other means.

Member Question: The service we got when six of us decided to have an end of season lunch in the restaurant today was very poor. We had to wait an hour for our meal. I thought I should let you know so that you can have a word with the appropriate people to get it right.

Anthony Mundy, Director of Operations: I will take that back. I wasn't aware of that. We want service to every customer to be absolutely right. We've been open 3/4 weeks and we are still training staff. We are absolutely aiming to get it right for everyone, including members. It is not acceptable what happened to you today and I will look into it.

Member Question: Firstly we have got no museum. You go to Edgbaston and they have got two. Secondly, the naming of stands after players has been asked time and time again. We now have two stands named after commercial firms. Where does that leave naming after players? Thirdly a recommendation – when you go to Taunton, Worcester, The Oval you have got lovely panels round the back of the stands giving details of past players, their records and as you walk round the ground you get a feel for the history of the Clubs and I would like that here.

Chairman: I have been thinking about the heritage and the lack of promotion. Over the years I have personally bought quite a few items and donated them to the Club so it is close to my heart. It has not been our top priority because we have been developing the ground. It is going to the top of the list now. I also think the stadium is quite hard, and I would like a few trees and plants. It is a bit too industrial. We are looking into this.

Daniel Gidney: We have a space that has been cleared for a potential museum, we just haven't had the money to actually develop it. It is something we are now going to look closely at during the winter. You are right in terms of player recognition. I was delighted that we named the one end the James Anderson End. I think it was absolutely deserved. He was the second most popular person after Brian Statham (in the members survey) to be recognised and we have other elements where we will be looking to recognise some of the other key players that were in that top 10 list of players. So we are working on it so please bear with us.

Chairman: Thank you everyone. Some really good points raised and noted. Thank you.