

MINUTES

Meeting of the Disabled Supporters Association

13th June 2024 at 3.30pm

Zoom

In attendance:

Bryan Martin (Acting Chair of Seagulls Disabled Supporters Association); Gillian Martin (Fan Advisory Board Liaison); Niraj Haria (Disabled Supporters' Liaison); Nicola Gibson (Secretary)

Absent:

None

	Agenda Item
1	<u>Introductions</u> The meeting commenced with introductions. <u>Gill Martin</u> Gill was Chair for the first 2 years of the Fan Advisory Board (FAB) where she also focused on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion issues with NH. She was then asked to stay on for an additional year to lend some continuity to the FAB. She had been an accountant by profession & is now semi retired. <u>Niraj Haria</u> Niraj had been an engineer until an accident four years ago. He was now a full time wheelchair user & very keen to focus on disability issues hence his involvement with the DSA. He plans to continue in an advisory role to the FAB. <u>Nicola Gibson</u> Nicola had a background in teaching, disability advocacy & clerical work & is carer to her youngest son with a learning disability. She is keen to be able to contribute to the development of the DSA & offer her admin skills.
2	<u>Update on Current Activity</u> BM was very pleased to announce that he has been able to recruit John Jory to the Steering Committee. John is the travel coordinator for North West Sussex Seagulls (NWSS), a travel group which organises matchday travel from villages around Sussex to the Amex. He is also coordinator for the NWSS MemberMoJo package. BM expressed his view that John would bring a unique set of skills to the Committee & that he would be a tremendous asset to it. John was also happy to join as a Membership & Travel Coordinator.
2.1	<u>Steering Committee Recruitment</u> BM and GM talked about a meeting with Eric Williams & his wife, Sara. BM explained that he

	would like to offer Eric the opportunity to join the DSA Committee. BM described him as a very vibrant man with good knowledge & a smart brain on a whole range of issues. He was very active in community matters before a recent accident that has rendered him paralyzed from the chest. . NH asked in what capacity Eric might join the committee. BM suggested that it could be as a special advisor. He explained that Eric was very keen to meet NH & that this could be arranged at the ground soon. It was agreed that BM would offer the position to Eric.
2.2	<u>Donation for MemberMojo & Website</u> It was reported that BM had had a recent conversation with the Chair of NWSS. NWSS make annual charity donations from profits they make on coach travel. This year NWSS have decided to award the DSA £400 to help establish the DSA committee. BM would be attending their AGM on Thursday 13th June at which they would announce the award to their own members. This generous donation would give the DSA the opportunity of also initiating the MemberMoJo and explore the options for a website. BM had put out another appeal for someone to manage DSA social media. He expressed his reluctance to use Facebook but that this was something to be discussed with the committee. It could also be openly debated at the Disabled Fans Forum in July/August.
2.3	<u>Meeting with Club on Friday 21st June via Teams at 11:30</u> A meeting with the Club has been arranged for Friday 21st June. Prior to this there would need to be a meeting early in the week beginning 17th June to decide on issues the DSA would like to raise with the club. Items for the 21st June agenda could be such things as recent DSA activity. BM commented that it had been great that the Club had referred to the DSA with an issue for the first time. He warmly welcomed this. The issue in question was regarding disabled parking & the Club's proposal to reduce the number of strikeouts to 3 from 5 for any disabled driver who had booked a disabled parking bay to then not use it. BM had asked the Club how many disabled bays there were & was told 79 in areas A, B & C. BM suggested that this issue be added to the agenda for the 21st June meeting with the Club. NH said he would like to know the breakdown in allocation of disabled parking spaces. BM mentioned that he would also like to discuss with the Club, the use of the lift in the Upper West Stand. NH explained that the lift had been initially designed for workers & not spectators. The issue of safety standards have been raised in the past. This was a complaint that had been expressed a huge number of times. Someone had also pointed out that the lift had been used for spectators during the UEFA Women's Euros. It was suggested that some clarity also be sought regarding the small & larger lifts that link the coach part to the concourse. BM commented that new steps & a new lift were currently being installed & that this was an improvement. NH mentioned that the issue with the steps was the 2-way traffic on them with potential for accidents.
3	<u>AOB</u>

	NH asked if there was an agenda for the committee meeting on the 21st. BM said there was a draft agenda & that he would liaise with Sarah Gould upon her return from holiday to add any further items to it. This would be following a short meeting of BM, GM and NH in the week beginning 17th June. Action - please send availability to meet BM said that GM would arrange access to the DSA email for NG. Action BM asked if there had been any feedback about the podcast. NH said there had been some fantastic feedback & that he had shared the podcast widely amongst friends & acquaintances. He was also keen to chase media at BBC Radio Sussex to promote the recording. BM acknowledged that a slot on BBC Radio Sussex could be part of the preparation for the new season & that as soon as the fixture list is available, the DSA would contact BBC Radio Sussex again and give them the link to the podcast. The DSA would also, at that point, have more topics to be able to discuss with the radio station. NH commented that on the podcast DSA's talked about their close relationships between DSAs & their clubs & that it would be very important. NH feels we must ensure a close link with both Club and the Foundation. <u>Date of next meeting</u> TBA
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Minutes submitted by - Nicola Gibson

Minutes approved by -