

MINUTES
Draft
Meeting of the Disabled Supporter's Association

Wednesday 5th February 2025 at 4.30

Zoom

In attendance

Gill Martin (Treasurer & FAN Advisory Board Liaison); Bryan Martin (Chair of Seagulls Disabled Supporters Association); Shana Pezaro (Special Advisor); Niraj Haria (Disabled Supporter's Liaison); Eric Williams (Special Advisor), Mark Butler (Social Media Coordinator)

Apologies

Nicola Gibson, John Jory

<u>1</u>	<u>Welcome & Apologies for Absence</u> Bryan opened the meeting at 4.30 pm & welcomed everyone to the 5th meeting of the DSA Steering Committee. Apologies had been received from Nicola & John.
<u>2</u>	<u>Approval of minutes dated 4th December 2024</u> Minutes were circulated prior to the meeting & approved by the Committee.
<u>3</u>	<u>Follow-up Items</u> Updates were given on the following: • Accessing the DSA Whatsapp group - Shana will need to be added – <u>MB</u> (this has now been completed) • Details of Amaze pack for young supporters with Autism – <u>NG</u> . The club has indicated these will be distributed during the Unite for Access campaign. • Getting to the Match – <u>GM</u> This is an ongoing initiative with the FAB and Gill will provide updates from time to time.
<u>4</u>	<u>Chair's Report</u> The chair gave a verbal update on the progress of the website and reported that a meeting had been scheduled between the DSA and Katie Haines (DLO) during February.
<u>5</u>	<u>Treasurer's Report</u> This was shared ahead of the meeting. Gill reported that donations to date to the DSA were just over £1k with an expenditure of £200 on email registration and the DSA flag. Additional funds of £209 were raised from a raffle at a Partridge Green Players production. The bank balance remains above £1,000 which will enable the website and Membermojo to be set-up. It was noted that

	Mike Wilson , Chair of NWSS, has informed the DSA that he plans to donate refunds he receives on his own ticket when he escorts Eric to games. We thank Mike for his generosity. Perhaps we could all consider doing the same for the rest of the season.
6	<u>Website Update</u> Bryan thanked everyone for sending their pen portraits. Bryan will continue to work on getting the site up and running. We will need more content soon so please try to think of things we may be able to load.
7	<u>New Rules regarding Attendance Requirements for STH.</u> There has been a high degree of concern from disabled supporters regarding the new rules regarding attendance of games for season ticket holders (STH). It appears that if STH fail to attend 5 games during the season they may be disqualified from buying a season ticket for the following season. The Chair immediately wrote to the club to clarify the position for disabled fans and confirmed the following: • The rules do apply to disabled fans. • If tickets are put on the Exchange by 2 pm the previous day of the games this will count as attendance irrespective on whether the ticket is sold. • Supporters are urged to contact Katie Haines or customer services supporters if they experience special circumstances for not attending. • There isn't any method for a supporter to track their attendance. After much debate it was agreed that the DSA view is that these changes disadvantage disabled fans. We are aware that disabled fans experience a higher incident of medical emergencies and other problems on the day of a game. Equally many disabled fans can't attend evening games. It was agreed that the Chair will write to Paul Barber (BHA - CEO) to request that disabled fans are exempt from these changes. Also, he will write to Liam Bird at Level Playing Field to see whether they are seeing these changes being implemented at other clubs. <u>BM</u>
8	<u>DSA Future Direction</u> Prior to the meeting the Chair had distributed a discussion paper on a proposed direction for the DSA (Direction of Travel for the DSA). The paper explores the future role of the DSA and some guiding principles on how the DSA will have a clear purpose and identity. These principles are called the 3C's (Cost, Confidence and Companionship). After discussion it was agreed that the DSA will adopt these principles and the chair will update the discussion paper. <u>BM</u>
9	<u>AOB</u> Gill reported the FAB, will invite a member of the DSA Steering Committee to sit on the FAB at the end of the current season. This person will act as a liaison between the FAB and the DSA. In addition, they will be expected to contribute to the ED&I group within the FAB. Mark volunteered to take on this role and has the full support of the group. Discussion about food allergies and the hidden disabilities wristband took place. It was agreed Gill will write to Katie Haines to get clarification on whether food can be taken into the ground under such circumstances. Gill also reported that the club has informed the FAB that a budget has been allocated for the training of stewards in disability issues and from the start of next season these stewards will be clearly identified by wearing a different coloured tabard.

	Date of next meeting proposed for Wednesday 5th March at 4.30pm. This meeting closed at 5.25.
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Accompanying papers & links:

Minutes of 4th December; Treasurer Report; Direction of Travel for the DSA