

D S A Steering Committee Meeting

M I N U T E S

Wednesday 5th March - 4.30pm

Online

Attended by: Bryan Martin; Gill Martin; John Jory; Eric Williams; Shana Pezaro; Niraj Haria

Chaired by: Bryan Martin

Minutes by: Nicola Gibson

	Agenda Items
	<u>Welcome</u> Bryan opened the meeting at 4.30 Apologies had been received from Mark Butler
1	<u>Minutes of previous meeting dated 5th Feb 2025</u> Minutes were circulated prior to the meeting & approved by the Committee
2	<u>Follow-up Items</u> Bryan confirmed he had updated the DSA Future Direction document & that he had written to Paul Barber regarding season ticket holder attendance requirements. He would also write to DSA supporters to offer reassurance regarding this matter with best practice guidelines to be available on the DSA website. Nicola confirmed she had written to the CEO at Amaze to ask for potential future collaboration around developing packs for disabled children & young supporters.
3	<u>Monthly Report</u>

	3.1 Season ticket-holder attendance requirements of the Albion Bryan confirmed he had written to Paul Barber and had also had an email exchange with Millie Crowhurst. The legitimate concern was that if exceptions are granted to certain supporters regarding attendance, that it would discriminate against others. Bryan expressed agreement with Millie on this issue. Millie advised that going forward, requests from all disabled supporters would be considered on a case-by-case basis (from next season). Niraj also expressed agreement with this policy. Bryan stated that as far as he is aware, no other Premiership sites have this policy in place. Liam Bird from Level Playing Field had expressed sympathy with DSA concerns about it. Currently no data is held as to who puts their tickets on the exchange & that if tickets are not re-sold, it appears all data is deleted. Whilst it would be important to keep Katie & Millie on side, it would nevertheless be essential for the DSA to maintain a focus on this matter. ACTION - update the website asap & email supporters to communicate this message - BM Shana asked if this new policy applies only to Saturday & Sunday games but Bryan stated that this had not been specified. Eric mentioned that to date no-one had actually purchased his own unused tickets. 3.2 Bryan reported that the DSA website is very close to going live. He was continuing to collaborate with John Jory to upload Membership Mojo onto the site. He asked committee members to please visit the website & offer feedback. An announcement would go out on the old platform regarding the new website shortly. ACTION - inform committee members when website is live - BM Niraj added that he was working in earnest on developing a set of FAQs for the website. FAQs would come in the subsequent iteration of the new platform around mid April & that the FAQs can continue to grow. 3.3 Bryan informed the meeting that he had written a DSA article for the 8th March Brighton v Fulham programme. There is a further article also on the DSA website. Gill & Bryan would be present at the kiosk next to the Bag Drop before the game handing out Unite for Access badges. It would be good to get some photos of supporters posing together for future publications (in landscape format).
4	<u>Treasurer's Report</u> 4.1 Gill has now divided the report into period and year-to-date. The DSA had recently received a donation of £24 & the current balance was just under £790 in credit which should keep the organisation solvent to pay for the website design. 4.2 It would be important going forward that the DSA maintains good contact with Guy Butters & The Foundation to discuss ideas around fundraising.

5	<u>DSA Constitution</u> The draft constitution had been circulated to committee members prior to the meeting & they were asked for comments & suggestions. 5.1 <u>Annual membership fee</u> Bryan asked if committee members would agree that at some point, the DSA might have to introduce a minimal annual membership fee to help cover costs although he would of course much prefer the organisation to receive funding so that this would not need to happen. If however the DSA is successful in funding bids, it might be that it never has to introduce a membership fee. John suggested that it might be better to notify supporters of this possibility & that ideally a membership fee would be no more than £10. Niraj agreed a fee should be levied at some point. Gill liked the wording that whilst the DSA has some reservations about charging, it would in any case reserve the right to. Shana suggested that the wording of the constitution might be something on the lines of, 'The DSA will aim to keep membership free unless we are forced to charge'. It might be that fees are only introduced in 2026 but it would be imperative to continue to get people signed up from now. John explained how the North West Sussex Seagulls charge members to use the coach to help cover costs. . 5.2 <u>Vice Chair Appointment</u> Niraj expressed that this would make sense & that the appointment of a Vice Chair could lesson some of the workload of the Chair. There were no objections to this suggestion. ACTION - appoint VC at next meeting - All 5.3 <u>Terms of Office</u> Bryan stated how every organisation imposes time periods on committee roles to avoid everyone stepping down at the same time & that structurally the DSA should have something similar in place. . If committee members were in agreement, the Chair would write to wider membership to notify them of forthcoming vacancies as FAB do. Shana asked if committee members would need to be disabled but Bryan stated that Level Playing Field recommend a mixed committee which is the one currently reflected in the DSA group. The DSA could potentially use the FAB to advertise upcoming vacancies & it might be that it could recruit members who are coming off the FAB. Niraj suggested that the DSA also has an exit strategy. Bryan agreed & further suggested that any remaining funds for example would be donated to the Albion in the Community. Bryan asked members for any other comments. No comments were proffered. ACTION - redraft constitution & add to next agenda for approval, prior to a full AGM which is anticipated to be with the Disabled Fans Forum around July/August - BM
6	<u>Requests to help with projects</u> Bryan anticipates that the DSA can begin to engage with projects. He expressed his gratitude to Niraj & Shana for contributing articles

	for International Wheelchair Day. He would work with Katie Haines to put together a pack in time for World Autism Day on 2nd April.
7	<u>AOB</u> 7.1 Gill reported that she had been contacted by two university students requesting to conduct interviews of two disabled fans for their equalities (?) project. With their permission, the interview could be recorded & uploaded to the DSA website. Niraj had already contacted one of the interviewers to agree to be interviewed by them. Eric would contact the second person. 7.2 Gill reported that the FAB were currently working with the Foundation to secure 50 places for the Broadfield game for young supporters (going by coach). Many of those may have some form of a disability. Following a conversation with Katie, this may be the game that the Autism packs are trialled at. Gill commented on the good collaboration between the Foundation, the FAB & the DSA. 7.2 Gill reported that she had invited the FAB to see the Terrace & had been asked lots of questions about the DSA. The Terrace would be much more accessible than Nick's Bar & the DSA could even hire it for activities. 7.3 Shana asked if there is a Charity number for the DSA so that donations can be made by the public. Gill explained that on good advice, it was recommended the DSA become an association with the option to convert to a charity at a later date. Gill suggested that for now, GoFundMe would be a good platform for any fundraising donations. ACTION - provide DSA bank account details - GM Next meeting date - Bryan would send out a Whatsapp poll to committee members with potential dates. The meeting closed at 5.21.

Accompanying papers for the 5th March meeting: Agenda; Minutes 5th Feb; Monthly Report; Unite for Access & Dementia Packs Articles; Draft Constitution V3