

**Minutes of the Arsenal Disabled Supporters Association AGM**

held on Sunday 22nd September 2019 at The Arsenal Hub at 2pm

Present: Anne Hyde

Nicole Evans-Dear

Anthony Joy

James Warren

Tom Head

Redmond Kaye

Tim Hyde

Shelley Evans

Christopher Clelland

Adrian Miller

Gary West

Gordon Moser

Steve Foord

Tony O’Donnell

Steven Powell

John Lloyd

Steven Gamble

Deborah Kopkin

Ruth Davison

Clyde Anderson

Alan Shaier

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Item |  |
| 1 | **Welcome and Introduction** | Anthony Joy welcomed everyone to the The Arsenal Hub and introduced the Committee and thanked Ruth (BSL Interpreter) for assisting with translation for the Hearing Impaired. |
| 2 | **Apologies for Absence** | Allan Mabert  Mark Brindle (Supporters, Clubs Liaison Officer)  Bob Greig  Jack Solomons  Lorie and Roy Oliver  Alun Francis (Disability Liaison Officer) |
| 3 | **Approval of minutes of meeting** | Minutes of the previous meeting (6th May 2018) approved. Proposed by Steven Powell and Seconded by Steve Foord. |
| 4 | **Chair’s Report** | Anthony Joy said that the dialogue is excellent and positive with the Club.  Anthony had attended a meeting in Bilbou as he had been asked to present as a wheelchair user.  A Strategy meeting with Alun Francis, Mark Brindle, Chief Executive of Level Playing Field and the Asenal Contact Team looked at removing barriers for those who attend matches r the disabled and following this meeting, a 3 – 5 year plan to identify key areas will be produced and how we are going to do it. Due to the club being in the Europa League for the 3rd year this has impacted on finances and therefore some of the key areas may take time.  ADSA is in the process with Arsenal FC in producing a survey which will serve both us and Arsenal FC and Anthony asked that everyone took time to complete it when it is sent out. Steven Powell and Gordon Moser both offered assistance and Anthony suggested forming a working group. The survey will focus around Access to Information, Access to Services, Access inside and outside of the Stadium and Access to Arsenal.  ADSA were hoping to have a banner for the stadium but the graphics had too many words. Gordon Moser said that his mother was a Graphics Designer and could help if needed.  Lack of interpretation for Visually Impaired in the stadium is a concern and the club has agreed to prioritise it.  The Club Disability page has not been updated as quick as we would have liked and ADSA was disappointed that the Media Department had not attended the Strategy and Website meetings.  Anthony said that the Call Centre now had Visual Relay Service. Christopher Clelland explained to the Meeting that it allowed Hearing Impaired Supporters to communicate in their first language (BSL). Christopher understood that Alun Francis was going to inform supporters but as far as he was aware this had not been done and that the Visual Relay Service was not yet up and running.  There is now a self guided Audio Tour for the Hearing Impaired in the Museum.  The club has assured ADSA that in future all big events will have text on the screens so that the Hearing Impaired can be part of the event.  ADSA feels that there is still not sufficient video content on the website for the Hearing and Visually Impaired supporters.  A Stadium Management Training Day is taking place on the 14th October and several Committee Members will be invited.  Part of the FA Advisory Group activities, they are looking at revision of the Accessibility to Stadiums Guidelines (2003). |
| 5 | **Secretary’s Report** | Anne Hyde explained that we are in our third year of relaunching the Arsenal Disabled Supporters’ Association and the membership has grown to 231 members from 209 in 2018.  ADSA has again become a full member of Level Playing Field who will be again be running Weeks in Action in 2020. They have been very supportive over the past three years in many ways.  Anne still represents ADSA on the Arsenal Supporters Club Forum and the Fans Forum. This is an opportunity for fans to raise any issues they can let Anne know but please not about buying better players or tickets!  Many members have been asking about the Official Arsenal Supporters Club Membership Cards and as soon as they are received Anne will email everyone.  Various members of ADSA have been working behind the scenes with Arsenal and ADSA is grateful to them all. Redmond Kaye and Christopher Clelland attended a meeting to discuss the issues for the hearing impaired. Anthony Joy, James Warren, Allan Mabbert and Anne Hyde attended a strategy meeting to discuss ways forward over the next few years. Anne had a meeting with Alun Francis regarding the Disability Page on the Arsenal website to make it easier to find information. We are hopeful that some of the changes that we have recommended will be made over the coming months.  19 members attended the Arsenal End of Season Event and 6 members greeted the Arsenal Coach earlier in the year.  Major changes have taken place. Disabled supporters can now renew their season tickets online and for this season supporters have not had to produce documentation except for their Blue Badge if they require parking in the stadium. This is on trial for the 2019/20 season and as long as this is successful, we understand it will be rolled out for forthcoming seasons. There has been some text for the Hearing Impaired on the screens, but ADSA still feels it is not enough. Also TVs have been installed on the lower tier by the wheelchair platforms for those who are unable to see the big screens.  Arsenal Football Club are extremely supportive, and Anne thanked Mark Brindle (Arsenals’ Supporter Liaison Officer) and Alun Francis (Disability Liaison Officer) and his team for their support over the past season. Anne also thanked Emma Wells from The Hub who has kindly arranged for us to hold our AGM in The Hub. |
| 6 | **Treasurer’s Report** | Nicole Evans-Dear reported that the opening balance from 1st April 2018 was £963.95 and the closing balance as at 21st September was £870.53. The monies spent were for meetings at Arsenal FC (Strategy and Website meetings), a donation to Level Playing Field, Website costs and an Arsenal shirt for the Raffle. Nicole suggested that in the future if we cannot raise enough funds through the raffle, then we will either need to look at charging members to join and/or looking at funding options. |
| 7 | **Communication** | James Warren informed the meeting that a meeting had taken place with Alun Francis to discuss the Disability page on the Arsenal FC website. The page has been recently updated but it is still difficult to find information. ADSA has put forward suggestions as to how it can be improved, and we are hoping that these changes will take place over the coming months.  Newsletters are going out to all our members but we want to look at other options of communication such as Facebook / Twitter.  Tony O’Donnell suggested Whats App but after a discussion it was felt that it was only useful for small groups of people.  Redmond Kaye suggested creating an Access App to log issues such as ticketing / facilities that would send messages to the club / Disability Team etc. Anthony Joy will follow this up with the Club. |
| 8 | **Election of the Committee** | Steve Foord had expressed an interest to join the Committee and this was proposed by Steve Powell and seconded by Redmond Kaye.  Gary West proposed Christopher Clelland to join the Committee and this was seconded by Steven Powell.  James Warren proposed that Anthony Joy was re-elected as Chairman and this was seconded by Steven Powell.  Nicole Evans-Dear was prepared to re-stand as Treasurer and this was proposed by Anthony Joy and seconded by Steven Powell.  Anne Hyde had agreed to re-stand as Secretary and this was proposed by Steven Foord and seconded by Gordon Moser.  Allan Mabbert, Redmond Kaye, Ozi Kemal and Tom Head had all agreed to re-stand and they were proposed by Anthony Joy and seconded by Anne Hyde.  All Committee Members will stand for 2 years.  Steven Powell thanked all the committee for their hard work over the past year. |
| 9 | **Proposed Changes to Constitution** | 3.8 – It was unanimously agreed that this would be changed to ‘ADSA will be a member of the Official Supporters’ Club Scheme run by Arsenal FC. All ADSA members will automatically be joined to the scheme’.  4.12 – It was unanimously agreed that this would be changed to ‘The Chairman will be in post for two years and will then need to stand for re-election’.  9.3 – It was unanimously agreed that this would be changed to ‘The Secretary shall ensure that minutes are kept of every meeting which will be available and distributed within two weeks of a meeting to all ADSA Committee Members by mail or email’. |
| 10 | **Proposed Priorities** | Anthony Joy said that the main focus will be:   * Access to information * Away fans access to information for ambulant / Hearing Impaired and Visually Impaired   Anthony explained that for away fans coming from abroad the Club only has the Access Statement in English and that it should be translated into 5 – 6 different languages. Steven Powell offered to translate it into Spanish and Portuguese. |
| 11 | **Questions from the floor**  **Lifts**  **Disabled Toilets**  **Fans standing during matches**  **Landyards**  **TV Screens** | Deborah Kopkin raised that staff are still using the lifts ½ hour before the match starts and after the games. Also staff are not using the key to put the lift on priority. Also there are concerns about spilt liquid that makes the floors slippery. ADSA will take this up with the Club.  Gordon Moser said that at Manchester City there was only one disabled toilet. Anthony Joy to raise this with the FA Advisory Group.  Gordon went on to say that many people were abusing the disabled toilets. Nicole Evans-Dear said that not all disabilities are visible.  Steven Powell said that at Chelsea FC the one accessible toilet door opens inwards which makes it impossible for some wheelchairs. Anthony Joy said he would take this up with the FA Advisory Group.  Gordon Moser also raised that fans stand most of the time and tickets are often issued to people with mobility issues at the back of the stand. However, this means that for those who cannot stand, they miss much of the game. ADSA to take this up with Arsenal with the suggestion that the Club allocate front row seats to those who can use steps.  Gordon also said that he has been allocated tickets in the second row but people in the front row still stand and when asked will not swop seats. John Lloyd said that he had also had a similar instant where home fans were abusive towards him when asked to sit. Anthony Joy said that he would speak with Alun Francis and Ivan Wossell in the Box Office to see if this can be rectified.  Deborah Kopkin suggested introducing landyards to show that someone had a disability. Anthony Joy said that he would look into this with the Club. Nicole Evans-Dear suggested that the Club reintroduce the Disability Card.  Gary West said that is it possible to check the TV screens as some supporters cannot see them. |

Meeting closed at 3.30pm.