

**Minutes of the Arsenal Disabled Supporters Association**

held on Monday 23rd January 2017 – Skype Meeting at 7.30pm

Present: Anthony Joy AJ

Anne Hyde AH

Nicole Evans NE

Allan Mabert AM

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Item |  | Who to Action |
| 1 | **Apologies for Absence** | Redmond Kaye (RK)  Ozi Kemal (OK)  Robert Greig (RG) |  |
| 2 | **Approval of minutes of meeting** | As this was the first ADSA Meeting, there were no previous minutes to approve. |  |
| 3 | **Matters arising from previous meeting** | As this was the first ADSA Meeting, there were no matters arising. |  |
| 4 | **Introduction of Committee Members** | AM introduced himself to the rest of the meeting. |  |
| 5 | **Communication** | AH had been approached by a member who is interested in assisting with ADSA. AJ requested AH to email him to ask if he would join the committee.  AJ was concerned that it will take a great deal of time updating the website / newsletters etc. and we should look at focusing on the website and Twitter.  AJ reported that the Premier League will be releasing a report on the clubs that will not be meeting the Stadia Guidelines by the end of this season. Arsenal are short but are looking at flexible seating options with easy access. AM reported that Arsenal did meet guidelines when the stadium was built but the goal posts have changed. AM said that Crystal Palace are going to be losing 3,000 seats to meet the required changes. | AH |
| 6 | **Approval of Constitution** | This will be approved by the members at the first AGM which will be held before the end of the 2016/2017 season. |  |
| 7 | **Short / Medium / Long Term Plans** | There was a discussion between the committee members and it was decided that our focuses would be (1) E-Ticketing (2) Sensory Provisions at the Emirates (3) Disability Lounge (4) Lifts and (5) a Buddie Scheme. The Disability Lounge and Buddie Scheme will be ADSAs short term goals and aim to complete by the end of this season.  AM suggested we found someone to be a Champion / Patron of ADSA. NE said that it should not be someone with a disability. AM suggested an ex-player. Everyone to think of possible players who would represent us and be interested in our association. Aim to get this in place for the start of the new season.  AJ was concerned that supporters cannot renew their season ticket on line and that tickets for Wembley have to be completed by post. NE said that for some disabled supporters they have to find a carer/helper and this can be extremely difficult at short notice. Also, disabled supporters do not have a choice of sitting with their friends which able bodied supporters do. This is an issue ADSA will follow up.  AJ asked AM how it works for visually impaired supporters and AM said it was very difficult for him to get tickets. He had been told that many clubs do not allocate visually impaired tickets.  AH said that many members are not clear on the processes of ticketing and that this needs to be looked at by the Disability Liaison Team. This is not a priority at this stage.  AJ said that the Disability Lounge at Manchester United had a bar and wondered if this could be installed in the Disability Lounge. AH said that she understood this doubled up as a computer room and may not be possible. AJ to speak to Stuart McFarlaine regarding signs for the Lounge. AJ to speak to Alun Francis about the Lounge.  It was agreed that the Committee would have a rota so that one person would be in the Disability Lounge before a home game. AH to organise.  AM suggested that we should look at a Buddie Scheme with a bank of carers that have awareness training for assisting supporters if their carer is not available. It was agreed that we should look into this with the Disability Liaison Team.  AJ reported that Sunderland had now a sensory room and wondered if we have a similar room for supporters with specific needs. AJ to email Alun Francis to find out.  AH to find out from Level Playing Field what clubs have special rooms and for what. | All  AJ  All / AH  AJ  AH |
| 8 | **Website / Media** | The website is live and members are aware.  AJ suggested that we Tweet our website and membership form. AH to arrange.  AJ asked AH to email all committee members for a bio and photo to be put on the website. These to be sent to AH by 3rd February. | AH  AH  All |
| 9 | **Finance** | NE will approach HSBC to open a non-profit making charity account and NE, AJ and AH will be signatories. AH to hold the cheque book as AH and AJ see each other at home and away games.  Once the account is open we will ask for the monies (£782.24) to be transferred from the old ADSA account to the new. | NE |
| 10 | **Membership** | AH reported that we had 128 members on the original membership list and we now have 170 in total. 8 people are not re-joining for various reasons. 83 members have signed up to the new ADSA which comprises of original and new members.  AH is currently trying to contact all those who have not responded.  AJ asked if we had sufficient members for the Arsenal Supporters Clubs Scheme and AH confirmed that we had met the requirements of 50 members for the scheme.  It was decided for the next two months that we would not focus on increasing membership as we wanted to concentrate on promoting the organisation in other ways.  It was agreed that old members would not be removed from the membership list.  It was agreed that the membership should run from 1st June to 31st May. |  |
| 11 | **Correspondence** | Two emails had been received and these had been forwarded to Alun Francis and Mark Brindle to investigate. AH to monitor progress. | AH |
| 12 | **Suggestions from Supporters** | AH to follow up the suggestion of tickets showing the correct disabled entrance on tickets.  AJ said that he had spoken with Alun Francis regarding supporters who use the car park and they could use Club Level after the match. This unfortunately is not possible because of security reasons and that Club Level ticket holders had paid for the privilege of having an area after the game. | AH |
| 13 | **Official Arsenal Supporters’ Club Scheme** | AH reported that we are now recognised as a Supporters’ Club which will give our members added benefits.  AH to find out how the benefits are allocated to the Supporters’ Clubs.  AH had been approached by Arsenal Cape Town to have a Skype Chat prior to a home game. AH to speak with Alun Francis to see if we can arrange this in the Disability Lounge using the screens. | AH  AH |
| 14 | **Newsletter** | AH said that she was proposing to send out the next newsletter at the beginning of February. AJ suggested that we only use the website and other forms of media to communicate with our members. AH said that there were members who did not have email or access to the Internet and therefore they would then not have any kind of communication. AH and AJ to discuss. | AH / AJ |
| 15 | **AGM** | It was agreed that this would take place before the end of this season. Date / Time and Venue to be arranged at next meeting. |  |
| 16 | **Any Other Business** | AM has ideas to improve the experience for Visually Impaired Supporters. AJ suggested that the next meeting focuses on visually and hearing impaired so that the committee has a better understanding.  AH had been approached by a student at London School of Economics who is studying Social Anthropology. AM suggested she sent an outline and objectives / hypotheses and the committee would look at it to see how they can help. AH to email student for information.  AM suggested we did a skill audit on the committee. Everyone to email AH with the skills they have.  AH confirmed that we were an Associate Member of Level Playing Field and AJ suggested that we look at becoming a full member next year.  AJ said that there is going to be a Level Playing Field Forum and AH said that she had received an email from Kieran Reynolds suggesting it will be later in the year and Arsenal may be able to host it.  AJ reported that Level Playing Field have this year between the 4th and 19th March ‘Game Changers’. AJ thought we should get involved on Saturday 11th March (Arsenal v Leicester) and should have a banner outside the Disability Lounge. Everyone to think of how we can get involved and email AJ. Suggestions included an article from one of our members in the Match Day Programme about ADSA (inside back page), Guard of Honour at the start of the match representing the different disabilities, Level Playing Field T-shirts for players during the warm up.  Although there were teething problems using Skype it was agreed that it had worked well. AH to speak with RK / OK and RG to see if there were any problems their end.  AM had written to Arsenal to complement them on their excellent commentary at the Arsenal v Burnley match.  Lifts are an issue with most supporters. AH reported that a member had complained that the lift was full of staff which should not have been allowed. The lift key for the N/P lift has been stolen – AH to report to Alun Francis. | AM / RK  AH  All  All  AH / RK/ OK / RG  AH |
| 17 | **Date of Next Meeting** | 11th February before the Arsenal v Hull match in the Disability Lounge at 10.00am | All |

Meeting closed at 9.30pm.