

Minutes of OUSP Meeting
6:00 pm Tuesday 12th July 2022
at
Bangkok Glass Training Ground



1	<p>Attendees: Paul Scaysbrook (Chair) (PS); Janine Bailey (Secretary) (JB); Grace Bailey (GB); Henry Lane (HL); Trevor Lambert (OxVox) TL (from item 5) By invitation: Andy Taylor (AT), (for item 6)</p> <p>Apologies for Absence: Pete Chilton(PC); Dean Worrall (DW); Niall McWilliams (NMcW); Lee Barton (LB)</p> <p>PS welcomed new OUSP members Pete, Henry and Dean. Joe Nicholls has decided to step down from the Panel with immediate effect to focus more of his time on his family. Joe has been involved with the Panel since it started up in 2021 making a valuable contribution over this time. We wish Joe all the very best.</p>	Action
	OUSP REPRESENTATIVES MEETING	
2	<p>Election of Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary</p> <p>This was deferred to the next meeting</p>	PS/JB
3	<p>Register of Interests</p> <p>For transparency and to ensure that OUSP representatives are not influenced by personal considerations nor benefit from their role on the Panel, the Expectations for Representatives policy requires panel representatives to make known any potential conflicts of interest. We therefore ask panel members to declare, at the start of the season, any potential conflict of interest. We will then ensure that mitigation is taken to ensure that the conflict does not affect the actions of the OUSP.</p> <p>No potential conflict of interest were declared.</p> <p>Declaration of gifts / benefits received 2022-23</p> <p>OUSP representatives should not receive any hospitality, gifts or benefits as a result of their role on the Panel. For transparency, an annual declaration will take place.</p> <p>For the season 2021-2022 no hospitality was received (apart from a few cups of tea at meetings. OUSP provided cakes!)</p> <p>T shirts sent as part of the HGT and LPF days were given to the club marketing team to be used for promotions. None were kept by OUSP members.</p>	
4	<p>OUSP Review of first Season – Supporter Survey</p> <p>OUSP ran a survey to give supporters the opportunity to feedback on our first season and make suggestions for the next. A summary is attached to the minutes. There were no surprises, with plans in hand to address many of the suggestions. For example, we recently arranged a story on the club website and in the Oxford Mail; there are plans for more frequent and obvious presence at home matches, starting with Cambridge on 6th August, as well as include stand-specific presence on the concourses. OUSP appreciated the great many encouraging comments and constructive suggestions made.</p>	All

	OUSP FULL MEETING	
5	<p>Away Match Information (TL joined the meeting)</p> <p>5a OUSP is looking into improving fan-focused information for our fans travelling to away matches. Some information is usually available on the home team’s website, on Level Playing Field’s for information on disabled access, and on away match blog pages, however the information we have looked at is often out of date or unclear.</p> <p>We have asked fans what sort of thing they want to know, the answers fall into the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ticket information/seating options • Travel information (car, train, London Road Coaches, parking) • Food / drink options (designated pubs) • Accessibility considerations (wheelchair spaces, blue badge parking etc) <p>DW is leading this initiative. He has contacted SLOs and supporter groups at away clubs, GB has made contact with #HerGameToo ambassadors and JB has messaged supporter group reps in the FSA network to begin to gather current information. DW is collating this information and will work it into a format that can be shared ahead of each match.</p> <p>TL observed that it is difficult to find out and maintain up to date information and cited as an example disabled access/seating/parking information. He also suggested developing a standard format questionnaire to gather the information (an online form could be used). This could be sent out to each club’s Supporters’ Trusts, and could be used to update the information each season. We agreed that DW should have a chat with TL.</p> <p>Ideally the information would be available 2-3 weeks ahead of the match.</p> <p>5b JB and PS are reviewing the information on the OUFC website for Away Fans and for Disabled Fans visiting us to ensure that it is supporter-focused and is helpful. JB is meeting AT at the stadium this week to walk through the away end.</p> <p>5c Post match Programme Initiative</p> <p>We’ve been talking to the programme team about including a small away match rating section in the programme alongside the “on the road” section. It will include a rating score or the actual cost for a range of matchday components, ranging from cost of a cuppa to view of the pitch to ease of leaving the stadium. JB to liaise with CW on practicalities.</p>	<p>DW</p> <p>DW/TL</p> <p>JB PS</p> <p>JB</p>
6	<p>Matters Arising From Minutes 24/5/22 (AT joined the meeting)</p> <p>4a –JB has sent access map back to AT with several suggestions for improving it for supporters. AT to send to graphic designers for updating for website and around the ground.</p> <p>4d – Blue badge parking bays will be re-marked during the season, won’t be done for start of season. OUSP request that lighting needs to be prioritised ahead of evening matches/darker Saturday evenings.</p> <p>6 – MoU: it had become clear that provisions for consultation had not been fully shared within the club. This has now been rectified internally, and follow up is ongoing with departments in the club to ensure it happens.</p>	<p>AT</p> <p>AT</p> <p>AT</p>

	<p>8a – Season Tickets Feedback: OUSP used May Newsletter to outline to supporters our discussion and response. OxVox has done similar.</p> <p>8b – 1893 Club: JB and PS have had several discussions with NMcW regarding the hospitality package and 1893. (see below 7a)</p> <p>9b – range of food: meeting tba with Bailey to explore ways of providing a broader catering choice. Have had 2 requests to stock non alcohol beer AT to confirm dates with Bailey.</p> <p>Feather banners have been ordered</p> <p>The re-located fan wall will be in place for the start of the season.</p>	<p>AT</p> <p>AT/JB</p>
7	<p>Club Communications with Supporters/Commercial</p> <p>Ahead of the meeting a briefing paper was circulated. Lee Barton (LB) had initially hoped to attend the meeting to address some of these points but was unable to rearrange a prior appointment.</p>	
7a	<p>Consultation</p> <p>OUSP understands that club staff have now been made fully aware of the contents of the Memorandum of Understanding between OUSP and OUFC. OUSP asked for assurances that meaningful consultation will be sought on relevant matters in plenty of time to allow for supporter feedback to be considered and responded to appropriately.</p> <p>OUSP discussed as an example there was no consultation regarding the hospitality packages before they were publicly released. This lack of consultation with supporters (whether supporter groups or 1893 club members directly) led to a package being offered that was not wanted and which alienated a group of long-term supporters. OUSP has pressed for this package to be withdrawn and an explanatory letter to be sent to the 1893 members, which we understand will now happen.</p> <p>OUSP has shown in the feedback they have given they can make a valuable contribution and have good understanding of the views of the supporter base, which can only be for the benefit of both supporters and club.</p> <p>AT agreed that major decisions regarding ticketing, retail, matchdays etc should come to OUSP for consultation before the club makes its final decision. Going forward AT will draw up a schedule that involves OUSP in consultation much earlier in the process. This will create a more constructive dialogue.</p>	AT
7b	<p>Quality of Communications</p> <p>Since the end of the season OUSP representatives have noted from their own experience and from wider supporter feedback examples of communications which have been poorly received by supporters. Whilst many supporters are not particularly bothered, others feel it is indicative of the club not giving due consideration to its supporter-base.</p> <p>HL observed that comms has appeared to get worse as more people have been added in, a situation not helped by staff being over two sites and/or working from home.</p> <p>Lack of clarity over the bigger picture of club ownership does not help fans feel engaged. TL pointed out that there were no fans forums last year, and these build a sense of anticipation and involvement. This pre-season feels flat and lacking momentum. Whilst the regular dialogue meetings with OUSP, as well as contact with OxVox, means that the club is nominally meeting its</p>	OUFC /OUSP /OxVOX

<p>7c</p>	<p>EFL requirement we all feel this is not sufficient. Even if the club doesn't get anything out of a forum, the fans do.</p> <p>OUSP has already written to the club (LB, TLaw, NMcW) on the matter of communications and urges the club to give greater consideration the impact of its communications, especially with those supporters who do not use social media /smart phones. AT will organise a communications-specific meeting with Senior Management Team to discuss communications and having a united approach with more awareness of supporter/customer focus.</p> <p>Yellows Membership</p> <p>OUSP was given sight of the news story and comparison table on Friday, with its release scheduled for Wednesday. In that short timescale a review was compiled by all panel members and sent back to the club on Monday evening. A number of OUSP suggestions are being actioned, notably:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity over first and second priority for tickets • Amount of ticket discounts (£1/£2) • Reduction in proposed cost for Junior Membership • More detail on content of the Junior package <p>We expressed significant reservations over the Junior Package, which still appears expensive alongside other packs. We also are concerned that it appears to offer benefits to Yellow Members above those given to ST holders. We also suggested that many elements could be clearer – for example “exclusive” discounts are exclusive to whom? What is the “discounted ticket price”? How does it fit with STs? These concerns will be feedback to LB and TLaw. TL expressed concern that OxVox was not consulted at all.</p>	<p>AT NMcW</p>
<p>7d</p>	<p>April Meeting Commercial Follow Up</p> <p>LB had provided the following updates by email:</p> <p><u>Q: Ticket master</u> - any update on changing or improving?</p> <p>A: We have a new Client Account Manager helping drive improvements to the TMS site at every opportunity. This is an ongoing process. We have a workshop scheduled with a TMS Premier League client in the coming weeks.</p> <p><u>Q: Replica kits</u> – there is significant frustration at being among the last to launch, of those who haven't launched most have at least given out a date</p> <p>A: There's a combination of factors at play that have contributed to the delays including, but not exclusive to, commercial sponsorship, change in technical kit partner, wider global logistic/supply issues. It may seem as if these are unique to Oxford United but speaking with colleagues from across the football pyramid we know this to be a shared experience. We hope once the kits are revealed the panel and supporters alike will appreciate the hard work and planning that's gone into the designs.</p>	<p>JB</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Site and Safety for 2022-23</p> <p>Clarification had been sought over smoking pens. It's been confirmed that pens are available at <u>half-time only</u> in the East and North Stands, and for hospitality boxes. The South Stand is designated non-smoking and the stadium bowl is fully non-smoking.</p> <p>Following fire survey hospitality area been reviewed and capacity has now increased.</p>	

	<p>For 22-23 league matches the North stand segregation line is changing following discussions involving the Club, the police, the SAG and SGSA. This will reduce the capacity for away fans, and will make it possible to manage the home and away sections in a similar way, hopefully further mitigating and reducing any potential issues.</p> <p>Traffic management to continue.</p>	
9	<p>Matchday experience.</p> <p>Fan suggestions for improving matchday experience were typically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More flags • Standing sections • Unallocated seating • Review music <p>There does not seem to be an appetite for a forum to generate further ideas, and nobody offered to personally contribute to improving the atmosphere.</p> <p>AT has met with Joe M. (fanatics) – Fanatics have plans to provide flags for East stand and family section of North Stand for Cambridge match and have started a GofundMe, which OUSP has shared. Fanatics are organising this and running fundraising for it. CW is interviewing Joe M this weekend about Fanatics and their plans. Joe M will communicate directly with AT at club level, and they will do their thing independently.</p> <p>OUSP is happy to be called in to help if needed, e.g. getting additional volunteers, putting info in our newsletters/social channels. TL confirmed OxVox would also be willing to help. Agreed it would be useful for East stand reps HL and PC to make contact with JM so that he has that connection made if its ever needed.</p> <p>Music – AT is revisiting the pre-match music. The PA system has been set up again. Tempo and volume to increase just before kick-off and new music for walking on to. AT has info from music survey 2021.</p> <p>AT asked for views on having a drum (would need to source a drummer) and goal-scoring music. Most fans likely to be against. GB to send out a couple of twitter polls to get an initial sense of feeling from a wider fanbase.</p> <p>AT suggested that some things should be tried, then reviewed. This may be one of them?</p>	<p>PC / HL</p> <p>AT</p> <p>GB</p>
10	<p>Special Matchdays/Events</p> <p>AT will circulate a list of the EFL designated matches, then OUSP will look with club at any other special match days (some suggestions have been received), as well as a family Awayday.</p> <p>GB to liaise with AT to confirm HGT evening</p>	<p>AT/ OUSP</p> <p>GB</p>
11	<p>SLO Items</p> <p>Extensive cleaning is being done. All seats cleaned. Stands been hoovered to lift dirt. Pigeon guano being jet-washed. Pigeon management programme underway and ongoing.</p> <p>General tidying done. North Stand concourse painting is done and signage delivered. TVs - some need replacing, and over the season this will be done.</p>	<p>AT</p>

	<p>New scoreboard has been ordered which will have video screen (better for ads) and at 2.8m x 10m is twice the size of existing one. Several weeks to delivery, then there are some logistics for getting it into place</p> <p>AT will arrange for MOTM be shown on scoreboard to assist hearing impaired supporters.</p>	AT
12	<p>AOB</p> <p>World Cup – There might be dates that kick off times change if England progress</p> <p>HL raised poor phone reception in the East stand and asked whether wifi or 5G boosters could be installed. There is no wifi in the East stand, AT will look into feasibility of putting in 5G data boosters. The concrete structure doesn't help</p>	AT

OUSP SUPPORTER FEEDBACK 2022

Background

A survey was made available to supporters from the end of May to the end of June. A number of short questions were asked, and the option for free text answers was provided. The survey was publicised through club and OUSP channels and on Yellows Forum. Around half of responses were generated from OUSP media (twitter, facebook and mailings) and around half from club publicity on the website and social media, a handful from Yellows Forum. Respondents were not required to sign in or provide personal details to encourage frank responses on which OUSP can build. This inevitably risked both duplication and a degree of trolling.

Who responded?

- Most (three quarters) are season ticket holders
- 22% are over 65, 16% attend with children
- Split between stands was:
29% East stand, 18% South Lower, 25% South Upper, 18 % North stand

Communication / Engagement with supporters

Most respondents find out about OUSP from a combination of several channels: usually a club website or emails and one or more OUSP channels (twitter, facebook, mailings). Of the few who only get their information from one source, most used club website, and a few only used Yellows Forum. Most people feel communication through the different channels is about right, although we should do more meet and greets at the stadium and more supporter surveys. Suggestions as to how OUSP can improve tend to fall into the following themes:

- More communication through club, on website (newsletter, summaries of minutes), in matchday programme and on youtube.
- More visibility at matches
- Increased media coverage - Radox, OxMail
- More structured fans forums throughout the season

Minutes

Most respondents read the minutes all or some of the time. 13% state they have never read the minutes – about half of these were not really aware of OUSP which indicates where we should increase awareness and profile, the other half are not interested in OUSP, commenting for example:

“Disband. It is not an effective platform and is not properly independent of the club”,
“Can’t see the point”, “Don’t Care”.

Have you contacted OUSP?

Most of those who had contacted OUSP were satisfied with their action/response, three felt the response could have been better, although only one provided further detail, saying:

“I felt my question when contacting OUSP was promptly answered however I have had no feed back from my secondary question”

Achievements and areas to improve

Looking at comments, there are a few very negative responses, several very positive and the remainder neutral-to-positive, providing constructive comments for improvement. Typically the very negative responses question the need for OUSP rather than criticising any specific actions.

Responses typically fall into the following themes:

What are the most important achievements of OUSP?

- Getting set up in the first place
- Forging better links between fans and club through purposeful dialogue
- Documented actions and transparency
- Working with other (fan) initiatives (e.g. Her Game Too, FSA, Level Playing field)
- Being a group who fans can easily contact and talk to about things
- Making the fans part of the club. Like a family
- Are there any "achievements?"

What do you think OUSP could do better?

- Get things done quicker - actions / minutes just seem to carry over from the last meeting.
- Press the club more for answers and activity on questions posed by supporters
- Widen panel to (hopefully) include other sections of the fanbase
- Increase awareness/profile with fans especially matchday presence
- Improve communication with fans, eg periodic newsletters, surveys, forums

What do you think OUSP should focus on over the Next 12 months?

Broadly speaking the responses break down into: variations of:

- Increase profile of OUSP
- Improve matchday experience/atmosphere
- Improve communications and fan-focus of the club
- Ensure equality and inclusion for all supporters
- State of stadium, variety of food
- Disband, we don't want you

Is there Anything you would like to Add?

Free text comments tended to be either:

- Words of encouragement and appreciation
- Questioning OUSP purpose
- Specific issues to look into