

**MINUTES of a MEETING of the
FANS FORUM OF CELTIC PLC**
held at Celtic Park, Glasgow
on 23 October 2017 at 19:00

Attending:

Club Representatives: Chris Duffy (Company Solicitor and Secretary for the Forum)
Tony Hamilton (Chief Executive, Celtic FC Foundation)
Ronnie Hawthorne (Head of Safety, Security and Operations)
Chris McKay (Finance Director)
Michael Nicholson (Company Secretary)
Alexis Dobbin (Supporter Liaison Assistant)
Brian Wilson (Non-Executive Director, Celtic plc and facilitator of the Forum) (“**BW**”)

Fans: A list of attendees is attached at Annex 1

1. Opening

BW welcomed everyone and opened the meeting, introducing the table of representatives from Celtic.

2. Fans Forum Update

Chris Duffy updated the meeting about the future Fans Forum dates that have been set (5 February and 9 April 2018) and confirmed that minutes from meetings would be circulated to the attendees for comment and then published online. The Forum agreed that the minutes for the main agenda item for this meeting would not record individual contribution but would summarise key themes of the discussion.

Chris referred to the actions update, which had been made available online, highlighting several outcomes from actions raised at the previous two meetings. Michael Nicholson gave an update regarding Glasgow City Council’s proposals for an Event Parking Zone for the area around Celtic Park on a matchday. No changes would be made for the current season, but proposals have been made for a limited scheme to be in operation next season. The Club maintained its opposition to the proposals and will continue to engage with fans and the Council as appropriate.

Chris re-iterated the Club’s desire to ensure the Forum was working well, explaining the practicalities behind invitations and the rationale behind the composition of the Forum before requesting feedback again. He further noted that John Paul Taylor would be providing an update on the operation of the Forum at the forthcoming Celtic plc AGM therefore feedback was especially welcome in advance of that.

Some queries were raised regarding ticketing, with the Club confirming that it was reviewing its communication regarding ticket criteria and the operation of the HCTS, which could be discussed at a future meeting of the Forum.

3. Unacceptable Conduct and Strict Liability and Consultation with the Fans Forum

Chris delivered a presentation on the rules of the football authorities regarding unacceptable conduct. At the outset Chris confirmed that the Club recognised that the behaviour of the vast majority of Celtic supporters was very good, which was reflected in the fact that John Paul Taylor and some representatives of the Fans

Forum were in London attending the FIFA awards where Celtic Supporters had been shortlisted for the Best FIFA Fan Award 2017 [the good news that Celtic supporters had been recognised as the winner of the Best FIFA Fan Award 2017 was received during the meeting]. Chris gave an overview of the current position in Scotland – touching on the definition of Unacceptable Conduct, highlighting some of the changes brought in by the SPFL and SFA in January and summarising the obligations on Scottish clubs (including the nature of these obligations, i.e. to take all reasonably practicable steps to prevent/manage/deal with Unacceptable Conduct and how this works in practice).

He then contrasted these regulations with the UEFA position where strict liability is in place and looked at some of the recurring themes. After summarising the current position in Scotland in respect of the proposals to introduce strict liability, Chris detailed the Club's strong opposition to the imposition of strict liability in Scotland.

Chris then opened the floor to the Forum.

A detailed discussion followed involving fans and the Club representatives.

The key themes may be summarised as follows:

- *The Offensive Behaviour at Football Act has not worked well and fans consider that the current relationship between fans and the Police has been damaged by the implementation of the Act (in particular the filming of fans) and that in some cases behaviour had deteriorated as a result, views also expressed by the Club in its response to the Scottish Government Consultation regarding the Act;*
- *it was agreed that certain songs or messages didn't have any place at Celtic matches. There was however a lack of clarity from the authorities that led to a 'grey area' which was problematic;*
- *it was agreed that some anti-social or aggressive behaviour was experienced at matches, although the number of individuals involved was very low. While the numbers were low it was more prevalent at away matches. It was suggested that the behaviour may be more prevalent among younger sections of the support and may involve individuals not actually attending the match. It was made clear that certain groups were often wrongly deemed to be involved in such incidents and that individuals who were not group members may seek to move into areas occupied by other groups;*
- *societal aspects were discussed, and the challenges with self-policing among supporters was noted;*
- *the Forum considered that education was a key tool in addressing these behaviours and that consideration was required around how best to communicate and engage with the support;*
- *the Forum discussed the methods of distribution of tickets and the challenges around control. It was agreed that this would benefit from further review and discussion;*
- *there was general consensus around the safety concerns regarding pyrotechnics at football matches; and*
- *there was a shared concern regarding the away club stewarding at some away matches.*

4. Close

BW thanked all attendees for their contribution, re-iterating that a short summary of the key themes of the discussion and actions would be circulated to attendees following the meeting. BW then concluded the meeting.

Annex 1: Fans in attendance

Bobby McCullagh
Brenden Darcey
Collette O'Neill
David Barrett
David McComish
Des McCafferty
Eliot Jordan
Frank Smith
Gerry McDonnell
Gordon Cowan
Jamie Garamanli
Jamie Metcalfe
Jim Hamill
Jim Lewis
Joe Mackin
John Andrews
John McLaughlin
Lee House
Keith McGinty
Kevin Lyons
Mary Cannon
Michael Bryant
Michael Dyer
Michael Scott
Mike Glancey
Peter Ritchie
Sean Morin
Simon Mullen
Terry Murphy
Tommy Gilmour
Tommy Stephenson