

Minutes of the meeting of the Dons Trust Fundraising Working Group held at Kingsmeadow on 29th November 2004 at 7.30pm

Present

Faz Ahmad (FA) (Chair)
Andrew Goodwin (AG) (Secretary)
Debbie Buck (DB)
Mark Davis (MD)
Mike O'Shaughnessy (MO)
John Owen (JO)
Ian Pollock (IP)
Mick Pugh (MP)
Anna Slade (AS)
Alan Wright (AW)

Apologies

Niall Couper (NC)
Sandra Lowne (SL)
Barrie Scott (BS)

1. Dons Draw (FA, JO)

The draw itself was now running smoothly to the point where it might be possible to perform it on the pitch at half time. Four ping-pong balls were being used as the random number generator in the DD database had not yet been audited to ensure that it did not favour some numbers over others. The previous draw had been done by Dave Andersen and had taken five minutes.

320 people had signed up to date, yielding revenue of £3,500 per month. When costs of £100 and prizes of £1,100 had been taken into account, the draw was yielding a profit of roughly £2,400 per month. Revenue had been increasing by around £500 per month since the launch.

Members debated how more participants could be attracted to the draw. Some had already tried to sign up fans in the bars on matchday but this had not proved very successful. It was suggested that selling could also be done inside the ground, in particular in the main stand and on the terraces. Members also raised the possibility of increasing the prize fund to 20% of revenue, once the draw reached £5,000 per month, or having extra prizes for selected draws.

2. Marketing of FRWG events (FA)

Discussion about the DD moved on to a broader debate about the marketing of FRWG events. Since bad weather had rendered the gazebo unusable, the DT matchday base had become a table in the back bar. However most felt that this was not visible enough. It was suggested that

a banner – like the ones used to advertise the DT bond – could be made. FA expressed a desire to appoint someone to oversee all FRWG activity on matchdays.

FA reported that a month-by-month marketing plan had been drawn up in conjunction with the communications team. Each month all marketing would be concentrated on a particular event. Members also suggested making greater use of the bulk email facility to advertise events to DT members.

ACTION:

- Anyone interested in taking on the role of matchday project manager to contact FA.

3. An Evening with Ossie (MO)

FA reported that the DT board had been very pleased with the management and the concept of the evening. They were particularly impressed with the detailed briefing they had been given, which had helped the event run smoothly. The event raised more than £9,000. FA thanked MO on behalf of the DT board for his hard work in making the event a success. The board had indicated a desire to do 2-3 of this type of event each year, using An Evening with Ossie as a template.

MO reported that the auction had not done as well as had been expected, though Peter Osgood bringing his own items had been a good idea. The item that attracted the highest bid was club-related, which suggested that this should be the focus of future auctions.

MO felt that it was important to obtain sponsorship as this helped to pay for the speaker. Producing a programme meant further sponsorship opportunities, with firms being able to buy advertising space rather than having to commit to taking a table.

The food was well received, despite the caterers having to hire equipment. The games and raffle were big successes, though it was felt that the raffle prizes were possibly too good.

Members agreed that the next event should take place in April with a Wimbledon theme. Planning for the event would need to begin shortly.

ACTION:

- MO to give FA a copy of the programme.

4. Sponsor a seat (FA)

£7,100 had been raised so far but interest had dried up recently. Members debated whether it had been priced too highly and suggested

that a discount could be given to kids. It was agreed to trial an offer where fans purchasing an adult plaque for £100 could buy a child's plaque for £30. There was also the possibility of reducing prices next season.

It was felt that the scheme needed to be pushed in the run up to Christmas. Therefore it was decided that Sponsor a Seat would be the focus of marketing in December. A reminder would need to be put on the official website and also in the programme. Businesses could also be targeted due to advertising being tax deductible.

ACTION:

- MD to work on pre-Christmas push.

5. FRWG finances (MD)

The group needed a formal way of accounting for income and expenses on a month-by-month basis. MD had agreed to take charge of this, and to this end had put together some guidelines for the group. A financial co-ordinator would need to be appointed for each project and they would then report back to MD at the end of each month. MD was collecting the data on a master spreadsheet, which would start from this month.

ACTION:

- MD to circulate instructions via email.

- Financial co-ordinator to be appointed for each project.

6. Mega Draw (AS)

AS had circulated a discussion paper several months before and now presented the feedback. The majority had expressed a preference for a full-scale prize draw – it was felt that a lower level draw would require equal effort for lower return. Christmas was the most popular choice of date.

Most thought that co-branding was a good idea, as this would make it easier to sell tickets, but the identity of the charity and the amount to be donated must be made clear at the beginning. Members preferred a local charity, possibly one of the Merton Mayor's charities, as larger ones were unlikely to be interested in being partners on a draw of this scale.

It was proving difficult to convince anyone to donate a car as a prize. Members were split as to whether it would be better to offer cash or physical prizes.

Some members expressed concern over how committed AFCW fans would be to selling tickets. Given the scale of the costs and the amount of effort involved, returns were, at this point, very uncertain. It was suggested

that, given the time available until a Christmas 2005 draw, a consultation should be undertaken, similar in style to the one carried out for the DD.

ACTION:

- **AS to produce an outline of the pros and cons and a business case. AS to circulate this to the FRWG by 3rd December, and FA to then circulate to the DT board.**

- **FA to ask the DT board for permission to consult the membership.**

7. Walk for Wimbledon II (MD, Angela Robbins)

The provisional date was 9th April – the penultimate home game against the Met Police. MD reported that he had not been inundated with applications prior to the original date, though applications had been better than for the bikeathon.

ACTION:

- **MD to ask the club whether 9th April is an acceptable date.**

8. Foreign Currency Collection (AW)

AW reported that he had recently sent off one batch. The cheque should arrive before Christmas. There was not much new money coming as there had been very little publicity recently. DB suggested that she could collect currency and phones at the entrance to the main stand on a matchday.

ACTION:

- **AW to obtain two swing bins in which DB can collect currency.**

- **AG to ask Brian Goodwin for electronic version of currency poster.**

9. Possible event with other London clubs (FA)

FA and NC had been in discussions with the Fulham and Brentford Trusts who had been impressed by the Weird and Wonderful rematch and were interested in putting on another match.

Bees Trust had access to Griffin Park on a rent free basis for two days at the end of the season. One possibility was a tournament with five other London clubs on a revenue share basis. The Bees Trust would take care of the administration. The proposed date was 28th May which raised two issues, namely that it was AFCW's birthday and that it was the Bank Holiday weekend.

The crowd would have to be more than 4,500 to justify using Griffin Park. Members were concerned that a match of past players was unlikely to yield a great attendance.

FA asked members to send him any ideas or suggestions. One suggestion was that an AFCW present v AFCW past match could be held, though it was felt that some of the past players would be unwilling to return.

ACTION:

- **Members to send any ideas to FA.**
- **AS to put David Hamilton in touch with FA.**

10. Memorabilia (DB)

DB had put together a list of what memorabilia was held by the DT and where it was located. Most was being held at Kingsmeadow but there was a need to buy some storage boxes in which to store it. It was suggested that DB contact Emma Day from the merchandising group who had recently purchased some similar boxes. MP had a number of items to add to DB's list.

The intention was to set up a committee comprising DB, MP and MO which would decide which items would be sold on eBay, which would be kept by AFCW and which would be auctioned at future events.

MP mentioned that he was planning an event with the teams from the mid-70s FA Cup runs and requested that anyone with programmes from the Burnley, Leeds or Middlesbrough games get in contact with him.

ACTION:

- **Committee to split memorabilia between eBay, AFCW and auctions. Committee to then make proposal to DT board.**
- **DB to buy storage boxes.**

11. Any other business

FA asked AG to look into setting up an email group for the FRWG. AG asked members not to 'reply all' to previous emails as a number of people had recently asked to be taken off of the contacts list. AG asked that members contact him for an up-to-date list of addresses before sending anything out to the group.

ACTION:

- **AG to set up an email group.**