



Annual General Meeting, Minutes

Thursday 22nd August 2019, The Stadium of Light

1) Introductions

Andrew Hird, (AH) Chair, introduced the RAWA representatives alongside him on stage: David Rose, (DR) Vice Chair, Jane Hughes, (JH) Vice Chair, Chris Blyth, Atmosphere Rep (CB)

2) Minutes and Matters Arising

Referencing the motions from the 2018 AGM, Andrew Hird (AH) was pleased to report 2,000kg of food had been donated by supporters at matchday foodbanks in the 2018-19 season.

David Rose (DR) offered thanks to Les Cooper for his financial assistance with the re-launched Red & White Army website

3) Chairs Report to AGM

- What RAWA have been doing this past year

AH reviewed RAWA actions to date: reiterating why RAWA was formed; membership is up to 14,000, representatives have participated in four structured dialogue meetings with SAFC, , 30,000 people have accessed minutes when they are published online. DR recognised SAFC's openness regarding dialogue under the current ownership.

Chris Blyth (CB) gave a rationale & summary of progress made in improving the atmosphere and the identity of the Stadium of Light. DR asked for, and received, a round of applause for Nathan O'Brien for his £5,000 donation towards the Roker End flags. Chris Blyth (CB) acknowledged the time, effort and commitment of the 50 volunteers involved in creating and organising the Latticework & matchday flags. A request was made for more volunteers to help the flags before games. (Tweet [@redandwhitearmy2017](#) if you would like to be involved)

- Finance Report

Jane Hughes (JH) presented the 2019 RAWA finance report.



4) Q & A with Officers and other RAWA reps

It was noted that the cost of the Captain's Mural was not included in the RAWA accounts. This was because a grant, from the Kick it Out / FSA's Fans for Diversity campaign, was applied for, and awarded, which covered the costs. The Kick it Out / Fans for Diversity campaign paid for the project directly.

RAWA has plans to develop artwork in other areas of the ground. DR confirmed the RAWA is open to receiving flag designs from members and particularly called on young supporters to submit designs. DR reiterated the need for volunteers, helping when they can, without necessarily committing to helping at every match. Anyone interested should contact RAWA via email (info@redandwhitearmy.co.uk) or social media.

A suggestion from the floor to acknowledge the history of shipbuilding in Sunderland in future flag and artwork projects was generally accepted.

DR responded to a question regarding a return to standing at matches, recognising a growing support for it amongst fan groups throughout the country: Wolves and Celtic have introduced rail seating. At Sunderland we have managed standing in seated areas, but hopefully the day will come when RAWA can do more.

In response to a query on the introduction of card terminals in the concourse, AH acknowledged some kiosks were contactless, but that RAWA had asked for more to be put in place

CB agreed to ask the club about pre-match music, as a member felt its volume immediately before the kick-off prevented fans from singing and building a more positive pre-match atmosphere.

Regarding the positioning of away fans, DR recognised the need for fan consultation on this issue; noting that where they are affects atmosphere but also that moving them has practical & financial implications for the club and season ticket holders that may have to be moved as a consequence.

One member raised the issue of ticket office interactions, including the short notice of away ticket sales. JH outlined the ticket office practice of only issuing ticket information when in receipt of tickets; away clubs aren't getting information to SAFC and so the club can't release tickets for sale. League One clubs aren't used to dealing with a club requiring the number of tickets Sunderland ask for.

DR agreed to ask SAFC about a dedicated singing area at Wembley, if it looked likely that we would get there again.

AH confirmed Stewart Donald had expressed his intention to allow the fans a vote on future kit design, after the Adidas contract ended.



5) Election of Officers

Jamie Bogle (treasurer) and Paul Nelson (secretary) were elected to the vacant positions.

All in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions.

Position of Chair and two vice chairs was uncontested. Proposed that Andrew Hird continues as Chair, Jane Hughes and Dave Rose continues as Vice Chairs.

6) Motions

Motion 1 “No to European Super League”

JH explained how it will become a ‘closed shop’. The implications on domestic football could be stark; potentially ending open European competition, reducing financial solidarity payments from the Premier League; the F.A. Cup may have to change to a midweek competition & the League Cup might cease altogether. DR worried Category 1 Academy funding might cease, as this is all funded from Europe, and there could be a massive ripple effect throughout the domestic game.

Motion carried; all in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions.

Motion 2: RAWA to support the *Heads First* program for the forthcoming year.

Sophie Ashcroft (SA) (Foundation of Light): SA outlined the background of the Foundation and Beacon of Light. The Foundation is backing the *Heads First* campaign to encourage openness and communication using football to support positive mental health.

A discussion on continuing to support the 2018 Foodbank motion concluded that it was important to continue to support the Foodbank. DR reiterated the necessity for volunteers to help run the collections on matchdays and encouraged members who wished to volunteer to get in touch via email or social media

Motion carried; all in favour, 0 against, 0 abstentions.

7) AOB

The inaugural RAWA Lifetime Achievement Award. Was presented to George Baker, who has worked for SAFC since 1959 and has only just retired from his position as ‘tunnel man’. RAWA made a presentation to mark the occasion and wishes George well in the future

Meeting concluded