

**STOCKPORT COUNTY SUPPORTERS' CO-OPERATIVE
AND STOCKPORT COUNTY FOOTBALL CLUB**

Questions

held on Tuesday 11 August 2020
at the Fingerpost commencing at 6:45pm

ATTENDANCE

Present (SCSC): Pete Towey (Chair), Ian Brown, Caroline Burt (Independent Secretary), John Giles,

Present (SCFC): David Ancell (Brand and Communications Director) and Steve Bellis (Club President)

Edgeley Park – 2020/21 Season

1. When is the Club planning to place Season Tickets on sale?

How many fans do County expect to be allowed into Edgeley Park? Has the National League issued any guidance?

If capacity is restricted, how are the Club planning to prioritise the sale of season tickets and match day tickets for next season?

Hopefully season tickets will go on sale in the next couple of weeks; however, we aren't 100% clear on what the capacity will be as the rules are constantly changing.

Season ticket holders will get priority with a fair ballot system being implemented after that. The caveat will be that although you can renew your season ticket, there is no guarantee you will be able to sit in your usual seat due to the social distancing guidelines.

Most Clubs are hiring an Independent Consultant to explore all ways to maximize seating within their ground without compromising on safety. The biggest problems are the circulation spaces such as the concourses. We have to do our own risk assessment and send to the National League for approval.

Ticket prices have been frozen from last season.

2. Will there be any live streaming service for National League Clubs – especially for away fans who presumably won't be able to attend in person?

We are looking at filming all pre-season friendlies; home and away, starting with the home match against Fleetwood Town on Saturday 15 August which will be free to view on YouTube.

In terms of league games, the National League are currently in discussion with media platforms so what we are allowed to do will depend on the outcome of these talks.

3. Given the likely need to reduce crowding when restart, even with the probably reduced attendances, has consideration been given to starting to use the exit in the corner of the ground between the Railway and Pop side again.

Yes, everything is being looked at.

The Railway End currently has blocks that don't have seats in at present. We are looking at putting an order in so that these blocks can have seats installed and be used going forward.

4. Were renovations on the Cheadle End able to take place under the circumstances? If so, where are they up to?

The work on the Cheadle End couldn't be started as early as we would have liked due to COVID. Getting hold of contractors and architects was been a problem at the start of lockdown.

The new cladding is about to be added to the back of the Cheadle End over the current corrugated iron. This is expected to be completed by the end of October, but it will be safe for people to have access to the area while this work is in progress.

The Cheadle End concourse will be having new flooring fitted and the kitchen equipment upgraded.

Work on the hospitality suites will begin in the next couple of weeks to create a proper events space.

The dug out is having new seats installed and the home dressing room will be refurbished to a Premier League standard.

The Club Shop will be opening soon. There has been a delay due to problems with the supply chain thanks to COVID (especially with suppliers based overseas) and everything having to be restocked due to the badge change. The aim is to provide better products but the same price as before.

5. n:gage life is a project to help support some of the most vulnerable in our community, 13 - 18 year olds on the edge or already involved too deeply with drug and gang activity. They are looking to raise money to fund mentors and programmes to encourage these youngsters to move away from a life of crime. Activities include engagement, respite and welfare.

The Club are offering season ticket holders a discount to recognise the 4 games that were cancelled last season. The Co-op have been asked whether it would be possible to publicise n:gage life and give ST holders the option to waive their discount and pay the full amount for their season ticket next season, with the Club donating the saving to n:gage life?

Web - www.ngagelife.info

This sounds like a worthy cause, but the Club have already agreed their charity partners for next year. We get approached a lot by various charities and it is important that we don't do things by halves

However, it is possible that we can support this in other ways e.g. other supporters' channels such as the Foundation.

Training Ground

6. The acquisition of a 3-year lease on the Carrington training facility looks very exciting. Can the Club provide details about which facilities will be available to Stockport County? Who will the Club be sharing the training ground with?

We have leased the facility from Sale FC who previously leased it out to Sale Sharks. Sale FC still has some pitches around the facility that they continue to use. Sale Sharks have moved into the premises that were previously used by Man City / Bury.

In terms of facilities, there is a gym, two full size pitches, huge office space, a players' lounge, a restaurant with a full time chef, an analysis room and a briefing room. It is a Championship grade facility.

Simon Wilson has done really well to acquire this facility. By getting on with sourcing a training facility, developing the academy, looking at nutrition etc. it leaves Jim free to concentrate on all the on pitch work. The relationship is working really well.

7. Would it be possible to create a video tour of Carrington?

The main fit out of the inside will be completed in the next 2-3 weeks. Once this is done we would like to have a video tour where the players show you around.

8. Can the Club expand on the medium to long term plans of having a training facility in the Borough of Stockport?

There were always two objectives when looking for a training facility, the short term goal which we have achieved with Carrington, and the long term goal which is a community training facility in the heart of Stockport. We are confident but this isn't going to be easy to achieve, as we would need to find approximately 9 acres of land which hasn't already been allocated to housing or is in a green belt.

The lease at Carrington does have the option to be extended if necessary.

Salary Caps

9. How does the imposition of a salary cap in Leagues 1 and 2 affect our future plans?

How would the suggested / mooted imposition of a Salary Cap in the National League affect our current plans?

Ultimately, if a player is on a contract it remains in place until the end. We are not even sure this is going to go ahead yet. It may never happen.

Fans Forum

10. Would it be possible to arrange a 'virtual' fans forum with Mark Stott, Jim Gannon, Simon Wilson, Jonathan Vaughan, etc? Could questions be submitted in advance, with the event streamed live, with the facility to allow fans to ask additional questions on the night?

There were plans to hold a Fans Forum last season, but then COVID hit. We would much prefer it to be a face to face event, although depending on how the situation develops, a virtual meeting with Jim and Simon could be a possibility.

Community Tickets

11. The Co-op has around 685 Community Tickets remaining from our scheme in 2019 - 20, Can the Club commit to carrying across the unallocated tickets from last season

once restrictions are relaxed and the Club are allowed higher numbers of people in the stadium?

This is going to be something Steve Bellis looks after going forward. The current tickets will be honoured, and the Club would be looking to continue with the scheme in the future, but what that will look like next season with the reduced ground capacity is unknown as yet.

Club restructure

12. The Co-op board are sorry to see the departure of Simon Dawson and Mark Lockyear, we have worked together with both closely over the last few years. Can the Club advise how the Commercial department will be structured going forward?

It is always sad to see anyone leave. In terms of the commercial department, it will be structured differently moving forward due to the commercial expertise and resources at Mark Stott's company VITA.

The position of Club Secretary will become the "Head of Football Administration". The person who has taken up this role will be announced in the next couple of days. We are very lucky to have this individual as he comes to Edgeley Park with a lot of experience and we faced competition from Clubs higher up the football pyramid for his services.

Catering

13. What is the situation with the catering at EP?

The contract for CGC has run out and the catering has now come back in-house. Again, it's something that VITA has a lot of experience in. There are plans in place for the conference and banqueting / events side of the Club to have its own dedicated website, separate to the football side, to generate more income for the club. This will also be announced in due course. The two main conference suites will be dedicated to hospitality with the Topaz and Sapphire Suites given over to the Junior Supporters Club.

Where possible we have tuped over staff from the old regime. Mark Stott is an investor in people and many people at VITA have worked there for many years and have worked their way up.

Concerts

14. Is the Club looking to hold concerts during the summer?

This hasn't been decided yet, but it unlikely due to the situation with COVID and also the preparations for the new season. The football has to take priority and that includes the quality of the pitch. The date the season ends may possibly change due to postponements caused by COVID, which would add extra complications.

Safe standing

15. The Co-op have been approached regarding a request for safe standing areas at Edgeley Park. Is safe standing something the Club would be willing to consider when the Railway End is redeveloped?

This is something the board have discussed, but we would a lot of further research is required, into whether safe standing is viable and there is a workable solution.

The Co-op is considering looking into a consultation exercise, to ascertain the views of fans.