

HARTLEPOOL UNITED SUPPORTERS PANEL MINUTES OF MEETING 22.09.25



DATE: 22nd September 2025

VENUE: 1908 Lounge, The Prestige Group Stadium

TIME: 6:00pm

ATTENDEES: John Pearson (Board Member), Sarah Rowntree (Head of Retail & Ticketing, Supporter/Disability Liaison Officer), Neil Nottingham (Independent Season Ticket Holder/HUCSF Trustee), Ben Forbes (South East Poolies), Jill Simmonds (Her Game Too), Darren Hutchinson (HUDSA), Andy Stuart (HUWFC)

APOLOGIES: Noel Brown (Hartlepool United Supporters Association/Corner Flag) Liam Wright (North West Corner), Paul Shears (HOOC),

It was reminded that this get together was intended as a 'catch up' rather than an official meeting.

It was agreed we would still go over previous minutes but being mindful that some actions would still be outstanding due to the timescale. It was agreed minutes should be recorded. This 'catch up' was scheduled to follow up on any immediate feedback following on from the launch of the Supporters panel, which can now be found on the Club website.

1 Approval of minutes of meeting.

JP Asked if all were happy to approve minutes of previous meeting.

ALL Agreed.

JP Clarified that we had agreed summary 'minutes' is how the meeting would be recorded, and that full minutes are taken and held for further reference if needed.

This was accepted and understood.

2 Review of actions from previous meetings

a. The Pitch and Stadium

- **Club to look at replacement of signage on CK stand.**

As mentioned previously, this is not a simple task due to the requirement for access. Still hopeful this can be done alongside any potential stand sponsorship naming rights. If not, will be done close season.

Actions: Club to look at replacement of signage on CK stand.

- **Club to investigate repair of road behind the Acland Homes Stand**

Actions: Club to continue to investigate the repair of the road behind the Acland Homes Stand and who's responsibility it is.

- **Club to ensure all toilets are in a hygienic and usable state and perform regular checks. And to check the council responsibility as part of the lease agreement.**



Hourly toilet checks will be put in place going forward on matchdays.

It was flagged up that there had been an issue with the NWC toilets at the Tamworth game, and this had been raised negatively on social media.

To clarify the situation: The toilets had been damaged during the game and therefore had to be closed on safety grounds.

The toilets have since been repaired.

The drainage system has been investigated with HBC. HBC can carry out a survey of the drains, but we would then be liable to pay for any issues discovered.

Liability does not fall with the water company; it lies with the Football Club.

In terms of the toilets in general, all work correctly. At busy periods they may take slightly longer to flush than a home system would, but they are all in working order.

With regards to running water at busy periods like pre kick off and half time, when the pitch is being watered this has an effect on the water pressure.

Actions: Club to ensure all toilets are in a hygienic and usable state and perform regular checks. And to check the council responsibility as part of the lease agreement.

- **Club to look to improve speed of service at bars and catering, particularly Acland Homes Stand.**

It was agreed that this has improved considerably over time, but needs to be carefully managed subject to expected crowds etc. The Club will take on board suggestions and see what can be reasonably implemented.

Actions: Club to look at ways to further improve speed of service at all bars and catering.

- **Club to investigate and monitor the use of the Acland Homes Stand car park barrier.**

Will communicate need for this to be manned with safety company.

Actions: Club to investigate and monitor the use of the Acland Homes Stand car park barrier.

b. Club Engagement

- **Club to work with Think Fan Engagement**

The Club have held an initial meeting with Think Fan Engagement to discuss their report, this will continue.

- **Club to launch Supporter Liaison Officer X account (SLO)**

This has been launched and is now actively manned to respond to fans.

It was reminded that official enquiries or complaints should follow the Club protocol, this can be found under the Customer Charter on the Clubs website.



The Clubs commitment is to acknowledge the enquiry / complaint within 48 hours and to respond within 10 working days where possible.

The Club have recently advertised for Match Day SLO's.

Suggestion to approach college students undertaking customer service or similar studies.

Actions: Club to continue to advertise for Matchday SLOs.

Club to create 'a day in the life' footage for SLO role.

Club to look at potential of college students for SLO roles

c. Media

- **Club to work on improving media output**

Ongoing and continues to improve, fans are also encouraged to send in any photos or videos of their match day experiences.

Club App was raised as not being fully utilised, this is meant to be the first point of news for fans, breaking news should be on here first.

Actions: Club to ensure App is promoted as main source of news for HUFC and breaking news goes on their first.

d. Club Car Park

- **Corner Flag to provide list of names and car registrations to be allowed to use Club car park during the week.**

Actions: Corner Flag to provide list of names and car registrations to be allowed to use Club car park.

e. Any Other Business

- **Club to look at ticketing incentives throughout the season.**

The Club will continue to look at potential ticketing incentives throughout the season, although these need to be economically viable for the Club.

Actions: Club to look at ticketing incentives throughout the season.

- **Arrange for HUFC staff to attend fan panel meetings.**

HUFC staff will attend as relevant to agenda

Action: Arrange for HUFC staff to attend fan panel meetings were appropriate.

3 External Media Situation.

- **Feedback from fans is that the Club claim that they accept constructive criticism so why are RL/RS banned?**
- **Doesn't sit right to ban individual journalists.**
- **we are trying to improve the experience for fans, and this seems to be one big negative.**



- **The situation is brought up every home game by BBC Tees and continues to create negativity on matchdays.**
- **Potentially would allowing commentary but not interviews be a solution for now?**
- **If The Chairman feels strongly about it, it is his prerogative.**
- **The HUFC commentary is a positive.**

JP - BBC Tees and Hartlepool Mail are not banned from reporting on HUFC, they are currently choosing not to send reporters.

There are 2 reporters specifically who are not able to attend HUFC home games or engage with staff/players with context that legal teams are still dealing with connected matters.

There is a responsibility for the media and their staff to present balanced journalism with factually correct information.

The Club including its staff and players are at the centre of this with livelihoods and there are various other stakeholders.

During the second half of last season and the off season there was an extended series of defamatory articles and content put out without balance, some of which included factually incorrect information that was misleading.

The Hartlepool Mail has since accepted this and apologised. The BBC as yet have not.

Bringing up the matter via the Supporters panel means it will be discussed with the Chairman/Board; however, the situation is with the respective legal teams, and it is unlikely anything further can be done at this particular stage.

Is the takeover dead?

The club is still up for sale. Any updates will be provided on the club website in due course.

4 Brunel Stand

- **The appearance of the sides of the Brunel Stand has been raised; it looks very shabby.**

The Club have had a cleaning quote of £6k to clean the side panels. The Club will explore other means.

- **There is no cover for fans behind the back of the Brunel Stand, this is not suitable for fans to consume refreshments prior to the game or at half time.**

The Hart of Our Club 1908 will look at options, and agree to fund this, subject to cost.

a. Code of Conduct

A reminder that all parties will be held accountable to the Code of Conduct they have signed regarding behaviour in meetings and on social media.

b. Sanitary Products

Her Game Too partnership will provide free sanitary product dispensers and products, with reduced price products going forward.



c. Pool Together

Next week is the Pool Together week of action, connecting Hartlepool through the power of our people. Lots going on at the match and throughout the town.

d. New methods of fan engagement

The Club have launched a Pools News newsletter which goes out each Monday with important information relating to upcoming fixtures.

The Club are also trialling a post-match email which will go out to anybody who attends a match with the SLO details and a survey for them to provide feedback on their matchday experience.

Next Meeting: Monday, 24th November 2025 6pm.