



### Minutes of the Supporters' Collective meeting held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 5:30pm

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#### Attendees

Sunderland AFC:	Steve Davison (SD), Kristjaan Speakman (KS), Oscar Chamberlain (OC), Chris Waters (CW)
Supporter Groups:	
Branch Liaison Council:	Cath Reid (CR), Joanne Youngson (JY), Ian Smith (IS)
Red & White Army:	David Rose (DR), Rebecca Wilkinson (RW), Ewan Moffat (EM)
Senior Supporters Assoc:	John Heppell (JH), Michelle Barraclough (MB), Ian Wake (IW)
SAFC Supporters Liaison Group:	Steve Dean (SD), Richie Porthouse (RP), Jeff Smith (JS)
Spirit of 37	Patrick Scott (PS), Jamie Lauder (JL)

#### AGENDA

##### 1. REVIEW OF ACTIONS FROM JULY 2022 MEETING

###### ***The shop opening during the week with the ability to sell tickets on weekdays***

SD – The shop is now open, and we do have the ability to sell tickets. There haven't been many requests yet, as we haven't publicised this and instead opted for a soft launch.

###### ***Ticket office to open matchday and matchday -1***

CW – The ticket office is now open on all weekdays, plus all home matchdays.

###### ***Full review of all away ticket processes***

SD – We have carried out a partial review of our away ticket processes. Improvements have been made, particularly around the away ticket process for the branches. Upon carrying out the review, it became apparent that it was more complex than simply looking at individual processes.

###### ***Open phonelines on a regular basis as part of a trial from 15<sup>th</sup> August***

CW – This is an agenda item and is detailed later in the meeting minutes.

###### ***Suggested small group from the collective to carry out a walk around of the stadium facilities to agree on a plan for improvements***

SD – I am disappointed that we haven't found someone at the club to do a walk around with the group and complete this. I felt this was an easy engagement piece to carry out. I think whilst club staff felt they knew everything that needed to be done, it would have been a good to get the supporters perspective.

JH – Wasn't it agreed that this would be done before the start of the season?

SD – I think this is the main reason it didn't take place due to the short schedule during an intense schedule, with the season starting one week after the suggested activity. Although the suggested improvements wouldn't have



been completed before the season started, this should have taken place before now.

### ***Chris Waters and Phil Pollard (Branch Liaison Council) to look at introducing housing associations into the cashback scheme***

CW – This is ongoing. We had a successful cashback campaign for the Preston North End and Blackpool fixtures. We sold over 2,000 tickets for the Preston game and we had a lot of local schools and sports club get in touch for those fixtures. We are planning to do the next cashback game for the Swansea City home fixture in January. We want the success of the cashback scheme to grow, as it provides an affordable way for children to attend matches, and we are open to suggestions for other local sports teams or community projects to join the scheme.

### ***Spirit of 37 – 38,000 placard display for Sunderland vs Coventry City***

PS – Coventry was good and a lot has been learnt, including the amount of materials, people required and time that is required. We did always say this would be the only full stadium display and this game cemented that.

The Niall Quinn display at the Wigan game wasn't so successful. The products that were supplied weren't what was ordered and by the time this was realised, it was either don't do the display or do it and learn from it. We decided to carry out the display and learn from the experience.

This experience meant we ordered double the size of material for the Sunderland vs Cardiff City game and reverted back to a card display. We all saw what the Poppy display was like. Therefore, we have evolved and feel we have found the right format now and we will use this type of card moving forward. There are still some finer details on the display process that need to be discussed and agreed with SO37 and the Club.

All groups and the Club agreed Spirit of 37's poppy display was excellent.

### ***Joanne Youngson (Heaven Branch) to contact SAFC with details on the memorial garden***

JY – The memorial garden is going really well and supporters are leaving more pebbles. The Heaven Branch have added a new box where supporters that leave a pebble for their loved ones can take away a love bug. It has been a hit with young supporters and we are currently fundraising for a plaque dedicated to fans that have lost their lives travelling to a game, from a game or during a game. We hope to unveil this in January.

## **2. FOOTBALL UPDATE**

### ***Player Contracts***

KS – We are continuing to do everything we normally do in terms of strategy, succession planning and putting in place contracts that best protect the Club.

Naturally, when you have success that does become more difficult to do, as when you have successful players that are doing well, there is less desire for them to sign at an earlier stage. Players are prepared to take more risk and have less security. This is a by-product of having a successful team and successful players and provides a different dynamic. We have several professional contracts being discussed at this time across our groups.

I can't discuss these individually, but we are pleased with our structure and our position. When I first joined the Club, our expiring contracts for that season was at 14 players – as we progress, we only want one to three player



contracts expiring per season. For example, we have Abdoullah Ba signed until 2027, Jack Clarke to 2026 and Aji Alese is here until 2025, so we are creating protection for the Club.

### ***Transfer Window***

KS – We have had a lot of activity in previous windows. Our objective now is to be more specific around first-team requirements, as we feel we have a number of players that can fulfil the duties required within the group. We have a plan in place for this winter and we have a plan in place for next summer, as well as a plan in place for the winter after. We will trade decisions in each of these windows depending on player availability and we have a transfer budget aligned to this for the next three seasons. There is a lot of clarity in place internally to make the Club as efficient as possible.

A player audit has been carried out with the coaching staff to assesses our current players to the profiles we have in place across the positions required. These profiles are then compared across the league – for example, how does our player compare to what a player in that position is doing at a top-six positioned Club.

When we return from the winter break, we will be focusing on our targets. When the window opens, we will get a clear idea on the availability of our targets and work to ensure that the squad is still evolving.

### ***Scouting in South America***

KS – South America is no different to Germany, Belgium, France or any other area we are currently scouting within – it is no different to other activities we are doing. I understand South America has got more media traction due to our ownership, but as Kyril said at last week's fans forum, we are looking to utilise all of our contacts and networks in the game to expand our overall network and our understanding of player availability. You have seen this with some of the players the Club has signed.

There are no official deals or partnerships in place, but we are trying to maintain informal communication with several parties to help us to be first to know when players become available.

DR – I think it is important for supporters to know that this scouting network is now in place, as it didn't exist that long ago.

### ***Final Comments***

KS – We have got a training camp in Dubai organised. We have had a few issues organising the opposition, but the Club are currently resolving this.

We have just recruited our final Academy of Light member of staff and this means we have a full complement of senior staff at the Academy for the first time in around five years. We have recently had the Academy gym redeveloped, spending £200,000 on this project. This shows the direction the Club is going in and the investment we are putting in.

MB – What recent Academy staff have been recruited?

KS – Academy Manager and Head of Player Care have been the most recent. Since I joined, we have recruited over 20 members of staff. We have also moved the Academy refectory under the performance department and this is bespoke for the first team to ensure they are getting the correct nutrition.

We now have the infrastructure in place and the people in the right places, putting us near the top end of the Championship. We are trying to build an infrastructure for a promotion challenging team.



### ***Open dialogue***

SD – Is the game in Dubai behind closed doors?

KS – We have changed the opposition a few times and this could impact where the venue for the game will be.

OC – We have engaged with the local supporter branch in Dubai and we are setting up an engagement event on an evening where they can watch training. Fans can contact the Dubai branch for further details nearer the time for more information. We need to find out when the game is going to be, and determine the opposition, and then we can build the plan around that for ticketing and streaming depending on infrastructure.

DR – What is Ross Stewart's contract situation?

KS – The fact that Sunderland hasn't bought, developed and sold players in recent history has meant that this topic of player trading is sensitive. I completely understand this as supporters buy season cards and tickets to see these players. Supporters need to understand that the player trading model is two-way. Fans always ask who is coming in, but don't think about who we are letting go. We have some small successes with revenue brought in for Benji Kimpioka and Denver Hume.

With our most high-profile players, we want to maintain and retain the players that are having a positive impact both on and off the pitch for Sunderland. Naturally Ross Stewart fits this profile, but Ross does have a significant period of time left on his contract.

Unfortunately, it becomes a polarising discussion where it is either the Club don't want to pay the money and fans start demanding that money is spent. This is a nonsensical start point and no business would operate under that model. Or the other end of the spectrum is a player is holding the Club to ransom.

Neither of these are true with Ross. The Club wants to retain the player and the player wants to stay – and is naturally doing well at this time. Ross needs to make the best decision for his livelihood. It doesn't mean he doesn't want to stay and this is the basis of a typical negotiation which can sometimes take up to 18 months at a time.

This isn't an unusual situation that anyone should be getting worried about, but I do appreciate the supporters are keen we tie Ross Stewart onto a longer-term contract. These feelings are replicated internally.

IW – Kristjaan would you consider going on Talk Sport on BBC Radio Newcastle?

KS – We went to the Red & White Army talk-in on Monday and we tried our best to give as honest and open answers to all the questions we were asked.

OC – Alex Neil went on Total Sport earlier this season in the studio. In terms of the Executive Team, very few Clubs communicate as regularly as SAFC – for example, whenever a player departs, that context is explained immediately by the Sporting Director. We try to be proactive with this – both via our digital channels and through direct fan engagement activities such as the RAWA talk-in to ensure our messages is heard by supporters of all demographics. We are also hoping to stream some direct fan engagement activities moving forward.

IW – I believe anything that keeps supporters on side is vital. We sold out our allocation for Birmingham City away despite it being televised and it is a nightmare to get there. I think that even though we have podcasts and Club statements, it would be great to hear a human voice on Radio Newcastle to hear what the latest news is.

SD – Tony Mowbray, Kristjaan Speakman and I have done at least three events each where we have been speaking in the last four weeks. Added to that, Kyril participated in the talk-in last Monday. For in person engagement and getting the voice out there, the Club is currently doing a lot of activity. However, I appreciate your point that you may get a different audience on radio or with the Sunderland Echo.

KS – The reason we can attend events like the RAWA talk-in is because there is nothing to hide. As a team, we are fully aligned which makes our communication more straightforward. We do have to relax and enjoy what is going on right now – during the 18 months since Kyril took the Club on, we have a vastly different Club than what was



inherited. We should be championing and applauding that, but we don't want to sit still and we want to keep progressing. We need everyone behind what we are trying to do, but that doesn't mean we can't be held accountable for all of our collective decisions.

### **3. STADIUM DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023-24**

***SD opened the discussion with a background introduction to start the stadium development consultation.***

SD – League One was a very different environment for us financially than the Championship. We have done some benchmarking across the second tier to compare ourselves against other Clubs and the new ownership has also gathered experience from being across the Club for over a year.

We identified how important the concerts were to the business and this helped us put together a budget plan for this year, and a three-year plan for going forward. We now have a clear idea of what we can afford in terms of salaries and transfers – and what revenue we can generate to help fund this. The Club has now set out an investment program going forward and this has been approved by the board.

This three-year plan will allow us to invest in our infrastructure, in our systems, in our people and in our technology.

#### ***Away Supporters at the Stadium***

SD – There were issues with the away fans at the Coventry City and Burnley home games this season and the Club has had a meeting with the SGSA directly on stadium safety. We have a clear view from the SGSA on what their expectations are for Sunderland AFC. The SGSA regulate all stadia in England, so we must have a clear understanding of their requirements. We have also seen what happened at the games previously mentioned and that has impacted what we need to do going forward.

At our last supporter collective meeting, it was explained that there was a need to make changes to the stadium. The first phase involves implementing changes for the start of the 2022-23 season. With this in mind, the new stadium structure needs to be finalised before season cards go on sale in March.

Any engagement we conduct must be completed by the end of the January to ensure decisions and operational changes can be finalised. When we discussed the temporary measures for the Cardiff City game at the last meeting, it was agreed that there was also a long-term plan to decide on and this work has commenced.

DR – Will there be visible tangible evidence of improvements made for the match going fan? I.e., roofs fixed, look and feel of stadium, hospitality areas?

SD – We had our 25-year review of the stadium recently. There is now a program of work over two years already underway. Many of the changes will not be noticed by the supporters, but are essential. The overall feedback from the review was very positive about the stadium.

There is going to be a moderate amount of work that goes unnoticed, but there will be some things that are very visible – for example, if we were to move the away fans there will be new segregation areas and there may be new entry systems on the turnstiles.

Although we have to prioritise based on the recommendations, we understand that there is more to do and the benefit of having a three-year plan investment helps this. This is the first time in the last ten years that we are doing this, so the board needs credit that they have accepted that this investment is needed in the stadium and



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technology used. This will result in some visible changes, but until we specify the plan, we can't state in which order the changes will be made.

EM – We should still ensure engagement is still quite spread on this to ensure many fans are involved? If fans have to move seats, we need to give every fan an opportunity to voice their opinions.

SD – The process of engagement is the most important thing that we need to discuss in this meeting. It would be very easy to think you have engaged whilst inadvertently excluding people, which is the last thing we want to do. Our primary engagement is via the Supporter Collective, who at our meetings represent the supporter's views. With any changes that impact large numbers of supporters, it will require a comprehensive engagement plan and this will mean we need to decide how best to do this and what role the Supporter Collective has in this process.

### **Consultation areas**

SD – The four areas we are looking for consultation with the supporter groups over time on are:

- Safety
- Ground configuration
- Technology
- Ticketing

The Ticketing is connected to the technology category, while safety also impacts the ground configuration.

### **Safety**

SD – We have regular engagement with the SGSA around ground safety and the latest meeting reviewed the persistent standing of home and away supporters and the risks associated with this.

The Club has been on report with the FA at five matches this season. The latest report was the Sunderland vs Cardiff City game where we were on report for three incidents. We continually review our operations to ensure they are safe and liaise regularly with the SGSA and SAG. There is a good relationship with both organisations and they are very supportive of how the Club runs a matchday at this current time.

In terms of fan behaviour, we have had problems with our fans at away matches. Not as many as last season, but at two games we have had complaints about our fans throwing items, which also includes Huddersfield away where our fans were throwing objects at our own fans during the game.

PS – This often happens when a game goes to general sale. At most away games you see the same fans attending, but when away games go on GS, you get more fans that don't usually attend and they seem to be causing the issues.

SD – At the moment I am explaining all the challenges we face around safety. We had issues with Coventry and Burnley, which were totally unacceptable. Most recently, we have had the full support of the Burnley Executive Team in our responses. We recognise that the poor behaviour of supporters is by a minority, but we need to treat poor behaviour equally whether it is by home or away fans.

We have contacted the EFL and asked for a summit to discuss supporter behaviour across the league to address and tackle this going forward.



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CR – Is there a particular age group involved in this? Is it a misconception that it is younger fans?

SD – We have had most age groups involved in some elements of bad behaviour this season. It is grossly unfair to assume it is all younger supporters. The range of ages that have had banning orders is also vast. We will be in danger of implementing many more rules if behaviour doesn't improve this season. Poor behaviour post-covid is widespread across the league.

DR – There were real concerns last season across the league, but behaviour does seem to be getting better this season. The EFL have been pioneering a system to look at data on this throughout the season. Overall, the FA, Premier League, EFL and FSA think there has been an improvement, but we haven't really seen this at the Stadium of Light – however, overall the perception is a marked improvement in home and away supporter behaviour.

SD – We are open to suggestions on how to make improvements. You gathered this from the meeting we held and we didn't go into this with a preconceived idea on what the answer would be in stopping items coming down from the North Stand upper. After speaking to the supporter groups, and going through the proposals, we all concluded to trial the enhanced searching and banning of coins and vapes. This was in place for the Cardiff City game, which was ran as an experiment.

We still haven't processed all of the information from that game, but from the Club's point of view, it was a success. The engagement with Cardiff and their SLO was outstanding. They travelled with their stewards to try and alleviate any issues on the day and they went out of their way to help us – that specialist knowledge was important. I do pay credit to their SLO and the work that they did before the game on the coaches. 25 items were taken from supporters which were enveloped and returned to fans again after the game. There was a collection for the Peter Whittingham Trust and all money has been donated back to Cardiff. As an experiment, it showed it could work.

Whether it can cope with over 2,500 away fans is another matter, so I think this may be an area of concern going forward, but I was encouraged as I was personally a little sceptical. I must also give credit to our safety team, who did an outstanding job of doing the preparation.

My final point on safety is there is a societal problem around behaviour that we need to fix at the Stadium of Light.

DR – We probably need a subgroup to look at how to influence behaviour. What sort of things can influence changing anti-social behaviour?

SD – In relation to the group that attacked the coaches at the Cardiff game, this is under police investigation. Our understanding is this group didn't attend the match and we won't comment further. I don't want this including as part of the fan behaviour, as this group were not football fans.

EM – Please can we look at the lighting near the away coaches. This is mentioned a lot by fans online and a lot of fans are anxious walking past this area.

CW – This has been raised at the SAG. This is council land and they are looking into this, so at this time we are asking the Foundation of Light to leave the Beacon of Light pitch lights on to ensure there is something across this area for supporters. However, we do need the council to install the lighting on this road.

SD – We are proactive with the council and we do have positive engagement with them. Largely everything we discuss with them gets actioned.



PS – We should have a Club led anti-racism campaign to help educate supporters.

SD – The whole topic of supporter behaviour is what needs to be raised with the EFL. We have a particular set of issues that we will look to address.

DR – Please can I introduce Anwar Uddin to the Club again for engagement on this topic. Anwar is the Fans Diversity campaign manager at the Football Supporters Association and he would be available to meet the club to discuss this further.

JY – What age do you have to be to come into the ground?

SD – You must be 14 years or older to enter the ground unaccompanied.

### ***Ground Configuration***

SD – We need to look at the location of the away fans, the location of the family zone, re-opening the premier concourse and our accessible seating availability for a return to the Premier League.

We also need to look at how the Club will plan to use netting. Netting may have to be used as a segregation if the away fans move down to the lower section. The Club is not against netting and whereas it won't stop smaller items such as coins, it can stop larger items.

With the end goal in mind, we can change the whole configuration of the stadium and this will then allow us to carry out all the refurbishment required across all concourses. We haven't done any work on this to date, as it didn't make sense to do this in League One as there were higher priority expenditure items, but we can now work on our longer term plan consistent with the investment programme.

There had been dispensation for the away end to be in the upper tier when we were last in the Premier League. We wouldn't get this if we returned to the Premier League, as there are now increased safety concerns. With that in mind, the conclusion we have come to is that we need to move the away fans to the lower bowl. In the long term this needs doing, so it makes most sense to make this change first. We may be able to have the away end across the lower and upper tier, but this also would come with challenges. These are the topics we need to consider and engage on.

DR – It is finding the process on how we consult the fan base at large on this. We will all have varying opinions, so how do we consult with everyone on this?

SD – I am conscious of the difficult position the supporter groups are in with this and I know there will be dissatisfied fans whatever the outcome. That is why how we engage is so important, as well as facilitating the seat moves. We will need to put all the facts in front of all supporters, so all the issues are understood.

### ***Technology***

SD – We are in the process of developing a technology roadmap. We believe that new technology can help the majority get a better experience and service from the Club, whilst ensuring we are inclusive for those less able to utilise the technology.





We are constrained by existing contracts and we have to look at what can be done over a period of time, but work is ongoing on this. It needs investment which we are now in a position to do. This will help us with the service and matchday experience.

Our entry system is an area we are reviewing. There is a contract up for renewal and we are looking at four systems. We are going through these over the next few weeks to decide on our preferred choice.

We need to be a venue of choice for promoters, as we want to keep concerts and events coming to the Stadium of Light. It is an essential part of our revenue and what we are as a Club.

### ***Ticketing***

Our team are all doing the best they can to deliver the current services. However, the recent difficulties we have had have demonstrated there is a need to be clearer about the services we can reasonably provide and how we can make them more efficient. So far, we have only addressed some shortfalls around the away ticketing for branches.

At present, there isn't a definition of service we are providing for ticketing. A modern definition of service would define what services we provide in the ticket office and how these are managed.

An example of the services we currently provide that we are looking at is Direct Debits. We think we are the only Club in the country that offers Direct Debits without interest payments. Although we don't want to change that, it does mean we need to change our internal process on how we go about this. It currently takes two members of staff to manage this and it soaks up a lot of their time when a Direct Debit payments fails. 2,000 payments failed this year and if they all take a 15-minute call, you can see how this takes up so much resource and subsequently limits the service we can provide in other areas.

Now we have the ticket office and club store open and we have some footfall numbers on this. We are focusing on away ticket processes and Ticketmaster are going to implement improvements so supporters can purchase personal assistant tickets online.

If we implement the new entry system, it would require digital tickets. We know this will come with challenges for some supporters. Our engagement on this will be key on how we would implement this.

The final area we are looking at is Black Cat points. At the moment, every supporter is accumulating points but they aren't written off over a period of time.

We used to have a system in place where points would expire after three seasons. This hasn't been done for around 4 years now. We think this process of points being accumulated over a three-season period needs to return. This will ensure that supporters that are following the team at away games on a regular basis will be able to build up their Black Cat points and supporters that have stopped attending over the last few years will not remain in the top phases.

We have to look at what services the ticket office can offer. We have looked at what other Clubs are doing at their ticket office and many offer less services, but they are currently doing them better than Sunderland AFC. I am not saying we are taking away lots of things, but we need to be clear on what we can provide.



### ***Final Conclusions on the Process of Engagement***

The Supporters Collective concluded that the engagement needed to be a survey. This could be sent to the entire fanbase. It can be used to make decisions on where the away fans are relocated, plans for re-opening the Premier Concourse and where the Family Zone is located. It would be multiple choice options for supporters to select their preference on these areas.

It was agreed that there would be mixed views on where the away fans should be relocated – it won't be a final decision, but a survey to provide the Club with genuine supporter feedback. It is then for the Club to review these findings.

Once the decisions are made, there will be further engagement on ground configurations after this as we restructure the Stadium of Light. There will be a working group set up for this.

The BLC have offered to set up a hub to offer support for any fans that need help completing the online survey.

### ***Telephone Lines Update***

SD – The telephone lines were operational again in October. This was a soft launch and was not publicised.

CR – What number was this? We know we have had fans calling and they haven't got a reply.

SD – We have had technical problems with these lines and there were limited lines available. The ticket office lines were being used for outbound calls for direct debit payments and concert enquiries. So, to the outside world it may have looked like they weren't working.

CR – Even SLO's from other clubs couldn't get through to the ticket office. They confirmed they had a problem with the BLC. One fan we know has given up on a season card as he couldn't get through. It went in the minutes the phonedlines were going to be open.

SD – If publicised that the phonedlines were open and then found out that there were technical problems, there would have been a furore. We were better doing it as a soft launch to test and there were fans that got through.

DR – There is an acknowledgement of progression in some areas of the Club, however, this is one area where we feel we have gone backwards. It is disappointing that we still can't contact the Club by telephone when you can do this at every other Club.

SD – I will go back once more and then we can explain what we can and can't do. It isn't a lack of desire on my part to deliver this. I am as frustrated as everyone else is that the phonedlines are not operating more effectively.

CR – Even if fans know a set time it is available, they know they can get in touch.

DR – For a club of our size and budget, it feels like this can be fixed if there is a bit of commitment resources wise.

SD – We have more resources now with three new members of staff. We have more resource than we have across ticketing and retail than we have ever had in my time here. We will have another internal discussion about how we respond to this and we can put out a clear statement, but I am aware that patience is running thin on this.



*Post Meeting Note: The telephone lines have been operational since the Supporter Collective Meeting.*

### ***Ticket Donations for Blackburn Rovers fixture***

PS – Can we do the Gift of Football again for the Boxing Day game, where fans can donate tickets?

CW – We are speaking to Roker Report regarding their Sunderland Community Soup Kitchen Christmas campaign this season to see how Sunderland AFC can support them with this. We have been very impressed with the work Roker Report have done on this project and rather than the Club launching a separate campaign, we would like to support it this season.

If there are supporters that do want to donate tickets to families that can't usually afford to attend, we will not stop anyone doing this. If any supporter group wants to promote this and help get the tickets to the right people, we will help.

### **4. AOB**

#### ***Disabled Access to Eppleton***

CR – The access for wheelchair users at Eppleton isn't good. Supporters using a wheelchair can't see over the sponsor boards in the stand.

SD – This is under review as there are sponsor rules in place for the venue. We will discuss the options with our maintenance team and review this with you outside of the meeting.

#### ***Update on car park charges on non-match days***

SD – I am yet to have a meeting with the council following previous consultation. Parking provision across the whole city centre is being implemented. The council will have a challenge if there isn't a charge in the Stadium of Light car parks. I will be having a final decision meeting with them very soon. This isn't just a Club decision, it is across all parking areas across the city.

CR – Supporters are concerned that if they have to pay to park to use the ticket office and there are lengthy waiting times, this will impact them.

SD – There is an option of up to two hours free, which would help fans that want to use the ticket office. The current car park does get congested on non-matchdays.

JH – For our senior supporter meetings & committee meetings, along with visits to the Foundation of Light for well being events, supporter collective meetings and BLC Meetings at 60p an hour and for a whole year I would be paying £174.00 to attend these events. This is scandalous.

#### ***Crypto Sponsorship***

DR – This was raised by our treasurer. Has the Club had any further discussions on a crypto sponsorship? It is a concern for supporters and if anything was on the table, we would like to know.



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SD – It is an emerging area in football and we have had companies contact us in the past. There is a bit of scepticism across the football industry on this now and Clubs are not pursuing this as much.

### ***50<sup>th</sup> Celebration – 1973 FA Cup Win***

SD – There will be a number of events arranged for this. There will be a private event for the players and we are also arranging a black-tie event at the Stadium of Light, which is nearly sold out. We are also trying to raise money for the 1973 squad to support them and how we go about doing this is in discussion.

PS – We intend to do an FA Cup card display in the stand for the Sunderland vs Watford game at the end of the season.