

Meeting Minutes of the All Together Town (ATT) Panel – 26.06.2023

Monday, 26th June 2023 – 18:00-20:00

Hosted at the Kirklees Stadium

Note: These minutes were taken by the Huddersfield Town Supporters' Association (HTSA), not Huddersfield Town Association Football Club.

Present

Club representatives: Andy Booth (Supporter Services – AB); Ann Hough (Operations Director – AH); Robyn Kennerdale (Supporter Services – RK); Kevin Nagle (Chairman – KN); Rachel Taylor (Supporter Services – RT); David Threlfall-Sykes (Director – DTS); Jonathan Wilkinson (Marketing – JW)

Supporters' Groups: HTSA; Huddersfield Town Disabled Supporters' Club; Cowshed Loyal + Multiple panel members

Agenda

1. Welcome from the ATT Panel
2. New Ownership
3. The Future of the Kirklees Stadium
4. Relationship Between the Men's and Women's Clubs
5. Club Branding
6. Disabled Car Parking

7. Vaping Inside the Stadium
8. Any Other Business (AOB)

1. Welcome from the ATT Panel

A panel member welcomed Kevin Nagle (KN) to Huddersfield Town on behalf of fans. They went on to clarify the purpose of the ATT panel specifically and EFL structured dialogue guidelines more generally.

KN thanked the panel and explained that the new chief executive, Jake Edwards, was unable to attend the meeting because his flight from the United States had been grounded due to inclement weather. KN then provided a brief overview of his personal and professional background.

HTSA observed that, if followed, structured dialogue guidelines can encourage mutual understanding, accountability, and respect between clubs and fans. They noted that the previous administration at Huddersfield Town had sometimes ignored the guidelines, making big decisions without notifying or consulting the panel or wider fanbase. The restructuring of the academy, change of the club crest, and mid-season amendments to the ticketing points and priority system were highlighted as examples of such indifference. HTSA added that the panel should be just one aspect of the club's fan engagement strategy, arguing that more should be done to establish regular two-way communication with season card holders.

KN said he was open to increasing the club's engagement with fans. As part of this process, he suggested the club should make the panel more representative of the fanbase and community by increasing the participation of women, LGBTQIA+ persons, people of colour, and young people.

HTSA pointed out that structured dialogue and fan engagement rules will be expanded and tightened once the new independent regulator for English football is established. It would therefore be sensible, they asserted, for the club to begin implementing the relevant recommendations outlined in the final report of the Fan-Led Review of Football Governance as soon as possible.

2. New Ownership

HTSA asked how the deal to transfer ownership from Dean Hoyle to KN was structured, and whether it had left the club with historic debts and/or burdened it with new ones.

KN replied that the only outstanding debt on the club's balance sheet is a conditional payment to Dean Hoyle if the club is promoted to the Premier League. He further stated that fans should feel confident in his ability to fund the club over the long-term.

A panel member enquired whether KN intends to remain the sole owner of the club or create a multi-shareholder consortium. KN said he does not intend to dilute his 100 percent shareholding in the immediate future by bringing in other investors.

HTSA then asked whether Canalside was included as part of the takeover deal. David Threlfall-Sykes (DTS) explained that Huddersfield Town Association Football Club Limited is the controlling party of Huddersfield Canalside Limited through the newly formed Town FC, LLC.

Next, HTSA asked about KN's ambitions for the club.

KN replied that he aims to create a successful and sustainable club that recognises and builds on historic accomplishments. This can be achieved, he said, by consistently and purposefully investing in core infrastructure over a long period (i.e., the academy, stadium, Canalside, etc.). In the short-term, KN said the club is determined to improve the catering and service on matchdays, as well as commercial and retail offerings.

A panel member observed that investment in the playing squad should be the club's priority because, ultimately, this is what fills the stadium and generates revenue. KN agreed, reassuring the panel that he wants the club to be a competitive force in the Championship. He pointed out that the club acted quickly and decisively to secure

Neil Warnock as manager for another season, first to build on the momentum of the past few months, and second, to ensure a smooth transition between owners. KN elaborated that, first and foremost, he wants to win, but the club must balance its various responsibilities. The benefit of this, he explained, is that if results do not go the club's way over a short period, high standards are still maintained off the pitch.

3. The Future of the Stadium

HTSA asked whether the club intends to assume operational control of/a long-term lease on the stadium, as discussed at the Kirklees Council meeting on 21st December 2022.

KN confirmed the club's 40 percent shareholding in the Kirklees Stadium is now owned by Huddersfield Town through Town Fc, LLC. KN said that his long-term aim is for the club to own 100 percent of the stadium and for it to be run as both a club and community asset. To this end, discussions with the council and Huddersfield Giants are ongoing. KN disclosed that the club has retained the services of David Baldwin as a strategic advisor, with stadium negotiations falling under his remit.

In addition, KN said he wants more activity at the stadium on matchdays and during the week. He added that the club is focused on improving the matchday experience to give fans more of an incentive to spend time and money at the stadium before and

after matches. More broadly, the club has ambitions to work with interested parties to develop the stadium site.

4. Relationship Between the Men's and Women's Clubs

A panel member asked whether the club plans to work more closely with the women's team under KN's stewardship.

KN said that he is an enthusiastic supporter of women's football and is eager to see how the two clubs can work together. The club has already scheduled a meeting with returning women's chair David Mallin to determine how the relationship can develop in the interests of both parties.

5. Club Branding

A panel member enquired whether the club had plans to change its branding. They said that, in their opinion, it could be improved, especially when it comes to the 'Working Class Club' slogan, which they felt lowered expectations.

DTS said the club is in the process of overhauling its brand, highlighting the 'Thrice Champions' mural on Leeds Road as an example.

6. Disabled Car Parking

HTDSC lodged a complaint about increased charges for disabled car parking at the stadium, which had been introduced without consultation.

DTS replied that there is a significant disparity in what people pay for parking at the stadium. The club's aim is to work towards parity for all fans. Following on from the feedback the Club it was decided to apply last season's charges for disabled parking during the 2023/24 season. Discussions will now take place internally and with HTDSC and HTSA along with Michelle the Club's Disabled Liaison Officer regarding plans for season 2024/25 so supporters are aware.

7. Vaping Inside the Stadium

A panel member complained about persistent vaping in the South Stand. They said they had repeatedly implored stewards to intervene, but to no avail, even though it is explicitly prohibited.

DTS stated that vaping is not permitted in the stadium. The club has issued several press releases drawing attention to this fact after receiving multiple complaints, some from people with respiratory problems. DTS added that stewards should intervene, while Ann Hough (AH) promised to raise the issue with KSDL and report back to the panel.

8. Any Other Business (AOB)

A panel member asked if there were plans to appoint a Sporting Director, KN confirmed there was.

A panel member asked whether the club would consider selling adult replica shirts without sponsors on them.

DTS said he would pass the request onto the club's commercial director, Ian Birtley.

Finally, KN informed the panel that he had purchased some of Tom Wilson's medals at auction, donating them to the club for posterity. The items include a 1922 F.A. Cup winners' medal, 1923/24, 1924/25, and 1925/26 Division 1 winners' medals, and an England cap from the 1927/28 campaign.

The panel thanked KN for this kind gesture.