

Thank you all for attending today, can I start by thanking all those that have attended today and also to those members who have sent apologies. Thank you to the Griffin Pub for allowing us to use the restaurant for this meeting for the second year running.

I would like to thank our two outgoing Officers of the Association, our Finance Officer, David Gathergood and Secretary Anna Mason, who have both decided to leave the committee this year.

David has served on the Committee for eight years and has done a sterling job in keeping our finances in check and healthy. He has been extremely committed to travelling to committee meetings from his home Hampshire. So thank you for that level of dedication.

Anna took up the role of Secretary 2016 but has been on the committee for many years before that and was a key member of the Stadium Action Group (StAG) which campaigned successfully for the new stadium at Lionel Road.

Also leaving today are Sam Bolton and Adele Peleschka, I would like to thank them for their time and contributions to the executive committee.

With regards to events over the last year, we have continued to work hard on diversity and inclusion this year and are pleased that after a short break the club has agreed to restart its Inclusion Working Group meetings, which we will continue attend and be a key influencer. It has taken a lot of work over the past few years but the club now do appear to be taking all aspects of diversity and inclusion seriously.

We have been attending meetings with the Metropolitan Police Football Unit and are present at the new Advisory Group alongside other London football clubs, to discuss safety and other football related policing matters.

Our work with the FSF includes participating with EFL Fans group meetings which sees representatives of all EFL clubs decide which topics and issues will be fed into the top level FSF meetings with EFL executives, such as Shaun Harvey. We also attend our regular FSF Southern Region meetings and hold two votes at the FSF AGM as well.

Unfortunately we have not met directly with the club as frequently as we would have hoped but we will be again soon and look forward to meeting with the incoming CEO when they are appointed.

All this aside I do understand that working hard behind the scenes is great however at times, we and that includes me, are guilty of not being visible enough and being slow to respond to some key issues that are directly affecting fans. This includes things such as the new ticketing site and the final phases of the new stadium development. With the latter we were hoping that the club would have started its focus groups by now and that this would form the basis for our contribution, however sadly this has not happened yet.

It is our responsibility to hold the club to account and ensure that Brentford remains the unique, family and fan focussed club that it has always been. I can only apologise if we haven't met the expectations of our members.

BIAS is only as strong as its members and ultimately its executive committee, which is why I am backing the motion at the AGM to remove the membership fee for BIAS and to make it free to join. Being able to widen our membership base will help to ensure we stay relevant and also ensure we can represent all fans which is key to any supporters association. This will hopefully also attract more people who wish to join our executive committee. Whilst our financial balance remains healthy and our outgoings are low then I can only see this as a positive step.

I am of course very grateful for those that wish to continue to contribute a small amount and we will remain open and transparent as to where your money is going to.

Today we have three new executive committee members who have been nominated today and I hope this will help revitalise us and give us a new lease of life and allow us to be more pro-active and responsive to issues.

I hope the coming year is a good one for the club both on the pitch and off it and I am determined to ensure that BIAS will still be here to represent you all and to ensure that as the club transforms, the core element that makes Brentford unique, that is the fans, remain that important element.

Adam Hobbs