**Fans Forum**

**Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**

**Online Teams Meeting**

**12 March**

**18:30 – 19:30**

**In attendance from LFC**: Yonit Sharabi, Supporter Liaison Officer; Rishi Jain, Director of Impact; Amanda Jacks, Director of Supporter Engagement; Bryan Denny, Digital Research Manager.

**Fans Forum**: Paul Amann, Supporters Board Representative and Chair, Ross Hovey (representing Disabled fans), Rabbi Marc Levene (representing faith & culture ) Riaz Ravat (representing faith & culture) Anna Orlinski (representing LGBT fans)

**Apologies:**  Collette Armitage (representing LFCW) Yunas Lunat (representing faith)

**Other Absences:** Marie Linger (representing Overseas supporters) Sandra Walton (representing LGBT fans)

Yonit opened with thanks for those joining the meeting and apologies were acknowledged.

**Reds Together**

Indicative of the fact that there is never time for complacency, Rishi outlined both campaign progress and the future aims of the Red Together campaign.

A review will take place over the summer and will look at various subjects such as equality v equity, are we using the most current language and, importantly, where do we align mental health and wellbeing as part of our external campaigning efforts as a club.

We’ll of course continue to focus on important topics such as online abuse, and accessibility will be reviewed as will how we campaign and advocate on these important issues.

The Forum asked if they could be involved in the review and were advised that there would be a consultation when we are at the latter stages of the process. A commitment was offered to the Forum to provide an update every three meetings to provide confidence that the club were meeting their commitments.

**Work Place Diversity**

We are broadly happy with progress to date although are not quite getting the traction and movement we’d like to. Our approach to ensuring genuine workplace diversity is underpinned by a data driven approach which enables us to measure and track diversity. We’ve encouraged senior team leaders to use the data we’ve collected to date in decision making with positive and immediate results. For example, we now have more females in the workplace and are confident we are in a good place with our LGBT+ employees.

Thanks to the data driven approach, we have identified two areas we would like to be stronger on – ethnic diversity and disability.

We will continue to analyse the data we are collecting and we have quarterly reports that are produced for internal purposes only. We have year on year targets set as part of our strategy and will continue to use the data to make properly informed, people driven decisions.

We are constantly working on this data and in parallel to that ensuring what we do and ultimately are looking to do to continue positive behaviour traits and see more diversity joining our workforce.

The Forum welcomed the update and noted that it was encouraging to see positive shifts on gender.  They asked what the hierarchy representations looking like which was acknowledged as important area of focus.  We don’t actively publish the figures but disclosed that the turnover among staff is lower at a more senior level.  As and when vacancies arise our ongoing plans are to have an increasingly diverse internal talent pool to look to recruit from for all roles.

The Forum asked if Exit Interviews were carried out and if they were, did they identify any patterns or trends. The club confirmed that interviews did indeed take place and are integrated into the club’s work in this area.

**STEWARDS TRAINING**

This summer the club will be running training sessions for our stewards. All of our stewards have NVQ training and receive further in house training on an ad hoc basis. We have identified the need for a refresh from an EDI perspective and the sessions will cover:

* A general EDI overview including what the club are doing in this space, the correct terminology they should be using and how their role as stewards encompasses keeping people safe, not only physically but from a mental health and well-being perspective too.
* Possibly in partnership with Her Game Too to look at increase knowledge and understanding of acceptable and appropriate behaviour and language towards and around females.
* We will bring our stewards up to speed with the rapidly growing issue of antisemitism in society generally.

The Forum welcomed this additional training and it was suggested that allowing fans to take part to tell their own stories could enhance the training and bring it to life. It was also noted that it is just as important to see fans educated and engaged with topics and issues under the diversity umbrella. It was felt important that fans are given licence to safely police other fans.

The Forum strongly felt that LFC us a community and that educating and empowering supporters with knowledge leads to the best of diversity. Short burst videos were thought to be a powerful and impactful way of doing this. It was further suggested that when the club celebrate important dates in the cultural and religious calendars, they could be supported with a short explainer as to what they were which would serve to encourage others to take an interest and be educational too.

The Forum went on to note that in their view, the club has stewarding responsibilities in the online world too and that it would be valuable for them to receive training as a priority to supporter fans and encourage better, online behaviour. Discrimination in all areas is far more rife online than in real life.

The club reiterated the good and impactful work that has been carried out with a overwhelmingly positive impact on supporter behaviour and advised that we are always reviewing reporting methods within the stadium.

The club agreed that the online world is a huge challenge and that we have limited resource to deal with the vast amount of discriminatory comments taking place across all levels of social media. The club encourages all supporters to use the online reporting hub to share details of any concerns so that these can be investigated fully with the support of the Premier League and major social media platforms.

It was suggested that it could be helpful if the club, on occasion, responded to hate tweets with a comment along the lines of that we are Reds Together and reject any form of hate and discrimination.

The club committed to give further consideration to all the suggestions raised as part of this discussion.

At this juncture, the Forum were keen to have it formally noted that our stewards were incredibly impressive and congratulated the club on their work. The work Yonit Sharabi does as SLO was also praised and noted.

**KEY DATES AND ACTIVITIES**

**International Women’s Day** – this was presented as a ‘look back’ to previous activity, which saw campaign content across club channels featuring Diogo Jota and Leanne Kiernan. This was recieved very posiitvely by supporters and the club continues to deliver events for its colleagues, across LFC Foundation and within local communities to mark the important date.

**Red Together fixtures**

We are planning two games over the weekend of 4/5 May, against THFC and MUFC in the mens and womens game respectively. There will be messages for supporters from both teams and as and when we can, we’ll share our full plans.

**Pride 2024**

This year, Pride will take place on 27th July and we are already planning to replicate what we have traditionally done and intend to work closely with Kop Outs. It was reiterated that all are welcome at Pride, especially those who don’t know LGBT+ people but wish to show their allsyship.

**Fast Breaking Event**

Despite great efforts, on behalf of the Regional Mosque Network. we were unable to host a Fast Breaking event to mark Ramadan last year but very much hope to host it at Anfield in April. Further details will follow and an invitation is extended to the Forum.

Yonit asked about hosting other events to mark important religious days, an idea welcomed by the Forum.

The meeting closed with the date of the next Forum being confirmed for 30th April with timing to be confirmed.