

Manchester United Fans' Forum – Minutes

Friday 20th November 2020, Webex

Forum Members Present

Chas Banks	MUDSA Secretary
James Coatsworth	STH Rep.
Keith Coutts	65+ STH Rep.
Janine Kasmir	Local Rep.
John Massey	Executive Club Rep.
Rick McGagh	STH Rep.
Anthony Stewart	Family Stand Rep.
Ian Stirling	Fans' Group Rep.
Kieran Stockton	Official Member Rep.
Mick Thorne	MUSC Rep.

Club and Foundation Officials Present

Richard Arnold	Group Managing Director
Collette Roche	Chief Operating Officer
Charlie Brooks	Director of Communications
Nolan Hough	Commercial Director - Venue
Sam Kelleher	Head of Ticketing & Membership
Jim Liggett	Operations Director – Venue
Claire Mulroy	Ticketing & Membership Services Manager
John Shiels	Chief Executive – MU Foundation
Ed Woodward	Executive Vice Chairman

Topic	Speaker	Topic Notes
Introductions / Apologies	CR	<p>Apologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alan Harvey – STH Rep. <p>Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Minutes of Last Meeting	CR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good afternoon, as you are all aware, the last eight months has been an unprecedented time at the Club. We are conscious that our last meeting was in April, but with the return of fans to football matches being in the hands of the Government and local authorities, we are keen to maintain communications with our fans and provide updates where we can Before we jump into the main agenda, I'm delighted to confirm that Ed Woodward has joined us as a special guest today to give a quick update on the last few months and address some of the topics in your pre-submitted questions. Over to you Ed
Introduction	EW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome everyone to this virtual Fans' Forum. I'd like to start by thanking you all for your contributions as Fans' Forum representatives. This is a crucial channel for engagement between the club and our fans, and your roles in that are more important than ever at a time when the pandemic is creating so much disruption We know that you will all be missing Old Trafford as much as our team misses you, and we are continuing to work hard with our governing bodies and the relevant authorities to ensure that fans can safely return to football games as soon as possible. It is

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		<p>certainly a more difficult environment for players, without the fans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public health must always come first and we recognise that further patience will be required as society battles to keep the virus under control this winter. However, we are optimistic that the situation will gradually improve as we head into 2021. There are positive indications on vaccines, and we are confident in our ability to host fans in a safe, socially-distanced environment once we get the go-ahead • As I have said before, what we are seeking is consistency. As a minimum we are asking that Government treats football consistently with other sectors. It seems strange that a non-league game with 600 fans is allowed whilst crowds at games further up the pyramid are not. There is also clearly inconsistency with aeroplanes and cinemas vs. a game outdoors. We believe the risks associated with watching football in the outdoors at Old Trafford will be significantly less than in many other leisure settings and we will continue to work with fan groups to strongly make this case. We trust our fans and know that they will maintain social distancing. It can be frustrating if the game becomes a political football • Collette and Sam will provide more details on our planning for the return of fans and I would like to thank them and their teams for the huge amount of work that has already gone into that effort • I'd also like to highlight the contribution of people across the club to our ongoing pandemic response effort, including a partnership with FareShare to produce 5,000 meals for school children during the recent half-term holiday. More to come on that in the build-up to Xmas. This complements the amazing work that Marcus Rashford has been doing at a national level and we are all tremendously proud of him. We want to give him every support and the club absolutely stands alongside him • What happens on the field is clearly our top priority, and while it's not the same without fans in the stadium, we've seen lots of highs since our last meeting in April, with that 14-game unbeaten run to finish third in last season's Premier League run and great wins against PSG and RB Leipzig on our return to the Champions League this season • Of course, we recognise there's more hard work ahead to achieve the consistency needed to win trophies. But we see positive signs on the pitch and the training ground that reinforce our belief in the progress being made by Ole, his coaching team and the players • I told this forum back in April that we remained committed to strengthening the squad, while being disciplined in our spending during the pandemic. I believe we've delivered on that, with the additions we made during the summer taking our total net spending to over €200m since summer 2019 – more than any other major European club over that period. We will continue to support Ole with a planned, long-term approach to recruitment, focused on the summer windows

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While our strong commercial business puts us in a more resilient position than many clubs, these remain exceptionally challenging times for everyone in football, and especially for clubs in the lower divisions. We have been pushing the rest of the Premier League to provide emergency assistance to the EFL on a no-strings-attached basis and we will also remain at the forefront of discussions about reforms to improve the long-term financial sustainability of the entire English football pyramid • A strong Premier League and a financially sustainable and robust pyramid are both crucial to the health of the national game and that's the principle we will continue to pursue within the strategic review recently launched by the Premier League • Those objectives were at the heart of our involvement in Project Big Picture. It's important to reflect that this was a work in progress. It was not a behind closed doors power grab; only draft proposals and a discussion document. The next step would have been to roll them out to all stakeholders in search of consensus • We are also at the centre of discussions about the future of European club competitions and, as with the reporting of Project Big Picture, context is important. Most of my time in this regard is focused, through the ECA [European Club Association] and the UCCSA [a joint-venture between the ECA and UEFA], on the strengthening of existing UEFA club competitions. The dialogue focuses on them continuing to be predominantly mid-week games having little or no impact on the Premier League. We believe that any changes to European competition post-2024 must be complementary to thriving domestic leagues. Other domestic leagues feel the same way, reflected in conversation with our counterparts in other clubs and countries • We expect progress with UEFA through the ECA to be made in coming months. We'll stay in dialogue with ECA and UEFA and we will endeavour to keep this Forum abreast of key developments • What I can assure you of is that we will keep match-going fans firmly in the centre of thoughts, whether with the Premier League, ECA or UEFA, and across our decision-making processes overall, because the past eight months has reminded us all of just how crucial you are to the fabric of the game. This game without fans is nothing • With that, I would like to hand back to Collette
Return of Fans to OT	CR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks Ed, so on that note let's start with an update on the issue that is top of all our minds and priorities – that is getting our fans back in OT as soon as it is deemed safe to do so. Since we last met, we have continued to work with the government (via the DCMS), Premier League and the FSA to campaign and plan for the safe return of fans. Sitting on the Premier League working party, we have been able to inform and shape a safe model for fans return which, alongside being part of the European Club Association working party on the same matter, ensures that we are well-represented and versed in these key discussions

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In anticipation of a phased return of fans, we fed into the SGSA guidelines and have been exploring various operating models and seating configurations to ensure the safety and security of our fans when they return. This will obviously require changes to processes and match day operations which may include measures such as 1m + mitigation social distancing, adhering to a code of conduct, mobile ticketing alongside changes to the management of concourses and kiosks • Whilst some other clubs may have chosen to communicate their plans already, in many instances these are still subject to change, particularly given we are now discussing 'common standards' across the Premier League Clubs. Rather than speculate, we prefer to ensure we have clear guidelines and communicate them well, to avoid further confusion in these unsettling times • That said we want to reassure our fans that during this period, we have worked closely with MUST as our accredited Supporters Trust to gather their input and views into the proposed safety standards and fan support measures and once approved by the SAG, we will communicate as soon as possible and in advance of fans' return • There are also a number of measures within our own control that we can update you on, some of which address the questions you have sent ahead of today's meeting and Sam will outline these in his section • On a final note, you may have read recently that we believe we can safely accommodate 23,500 supporters whilst maintaining 1m social distancing. This figure was estimated based on responses to a survey sent to c10,000 Season Ticket holders to establish the size of their social bubble. This figure may fluctuate match-by-match, and in answer to a question submitted for today's meeting, it is unlikely that this figure will significantly increase until Social Distancing guidance changes (in fact, for some matches the attendance may be lower due to further government restrictions or as part of a gradual increase to 23,500) • Whilst we are unable to provide details regarding the timing of any potential matches with fans in attendance until we have more clarity from the government, we can confirm that if we do have reduced capacity matches, we will run a fair and random ballot which will be covered in more detail by Sam in a moment • RA: For clarity, there are dozens of possible outcomes on what happens next. Our Communications strategy is to try and simplify based on fact, not articulating potential scenarios and potential impacts. There is an enormous amount of work on sliding scale, but until we have certainty, we are avoiding getting into wider comms around theoretical possibilities. Renewal deadlines have been suspended, we have dealt with fans individually, and wider comms are intended to be clear and helpful, not speculative. Our solutions will be with a view to fan-centric and fair mechanisms

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<p>Corporate Social Responsibility</p>	<p>CR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving on to the next topic of CSR, I am hoping that you all managed to view the video that Sam sent yesterday, which we shared at our recent colleague briefing and I think gives a great overview of the work our Club has done in our local community, since we last met. As they often say, `out of adversity comes opportunity` and in this instance the opportunity for the Club to work in even closer partnership with the Manchester United Foundation to assist the most vulnerable young people, families and communities on our doorstep • Our response to the pandemic was focused on five key areas – to support the NHS; our schools; our communities; our staff and fans, and to tackle food poverty. John Shiels will cover much of our activities shortly but I will cover off a few key points here • Shortly after our last meeting, we recognised the sacrifices made by the NHS and wanted to show our support and appreciation by producing 60,000 meals for our local health workers. This initiative involved over 80 club / Foundation colleagues preparing food in our OT kitchens worth over £150,000 and delivering it to four NHS Manchester sites • Our recent support to national public health efforts have also included the provision of our car parks for temporary COVID-19 test sites and the use of our digital channels to reinforce the government’s health campaigns • As we know, food poverty has been the subject of significant media coverage recently, in part due to the outstanding efforts of our very own Marcus Rashford. John will outline the most recent project but we have been pleased to have been able to utilise our staff and our kitchen facilities once more, to help provide over 85,000 hot meals to thousands of families across Greater Manchester over the half term and Christmas school holiday periods • Protecting our people was another priority. We continued to pay them in full, without recourse to the Government’s current furlough scheme, and made goodwill payments totalling [over £3 million] (and counting) to over 3,000 casual workers to protect their incomes while our operations have been disrupted • We’ve also tried to keep in touch with our fans, with over 100,000 conversations taking place, which equated to a full years talk time (10,000 hours plus). These calls will be repeated from next week, to wish our fans well over the Xmas period • I will now pass over to John Shiels to tell us more detail around the great work the Foundation has done and plans to do over coming months
<p>MU Foundation Update</p>	<p>JS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throughout the pandemic, Manchester United Foundation has been at the forefront in supporting young people and families in Greater Manchester. Over the past seven months, the Foundation has donated £1m to local communities; funded by the money raised at the Treble Reunion match in May last year • A donation was made of £300,000 to partner schools and colleges while staff delivered online resources and virtual lessons. Thousands of activity packs were also produced and handed out to primary school pupils

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In collaboration with Manchester United, the Foundation supported the donation of 60,000 meals to the NHS and supported with food bank deliveries. In partnership with FareShare the club, we also piloted the delivery of 5,000 meals to schools across the October half-term • This pilot proved a huge success and as a result we are pleased to announce that working in partnership with MUFC and FareShare, we are now preparing to deliver up to 80,000 hot meals to families across Greater Manchester via hampers over the 2 week Christmas holiday period • 217 official supporters' clubs worldwide joined forces with the Foundation to help children's charities across the world. Clubs were offered a seed fund of up to £1,000 to raise money for youth focused charities that had been negatively impacted by the pandemic • Finally, in what will be a difficult Christmas for many, the Foundation will launch a fundraising appeal to support those most in need. With the financial support of players, staff and sponsors, we will provide food, gifts and special messages to children and their families during the festive period
<p>Renewals Update</p>	<p>SK</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We do not underestimate the impact that COVID-19 has had on many fans, and had worked together with MUST, to prepare a number of support measures that would have been introduced had we received clarification on the return of fans earlier. As Collette referenced, there is still a wide range of potential eventualities, so we will not be able to provide a detailed summary of all potential outcomes today • As per our previous communications to Season Ticket holders, we do not intend to announce a renewal deadline until there is more clarity around the likelihood on the return of fans to Old Trafford • With the ever-changing situation across the country, we are aware of the need to be flexible in our approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If the situation was to change over the coming months, we may still be able to undertake renewals for the 20/21 season, with applications for games with fans in attendance being taken from those who have renewed - Alternatively, if a return of fans was confirmed for later in the season (e.g. March onwards), we may bypass 2020/21 renewals and move straight ahead to accepting applications for those end of season matches from people who have renewed for the 2021/22 season • For fans already renewed and paid in full for the 2020/21 season, we are issuing refunds ahead of each game. To-date refunds have been processed for all fixtures until the end of November, and we will issue a refund for the three games in December next week. We will also provide full refunds if requested • Finally, earlier in the summer we attempted to speak to all Season Ticket holders and Official Members to answer any questions people may have. We will repeat this process, throughout the winter months, and discuss all of the above with relevant facility holders

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		<p>Executive Club Renewals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Executive Club Membership is a seasonal product and we do not normally offer a guaranteed minimum number of matches. However, we acknowledge that at the start of this season there was an implied guarantee of 22 matches to be attended at Old Trafford (19 PL and 3 UCL) • The vast majority of clients have paid a 25% deposit, and if that is not utilised during the course of the season, we will ensure no one is out of pocket • If someone has paid in full for their facility, at the point that it is no longer possible for them to attend 22 matches, we will organise for a pro rata refund to be issued to you on a game by game basis (in-line with our approach for Season Ticket holders)
<p>Home Games with Fans</p>	<p>SK</p>	<p><i>Post Forum note addition: This section is referencing how tickets will be allocated for matches with above 4,000 fans in attendance. Information relating to matches with 2,000 or 4,000 fans permitted will be sent directly to Season Ticket holders:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As Collette mentioned, we are unable to provide full details at this time, and as I alluded to in the renewals update section, the process will very much depend on timing in the season • However, if any fixtures are to be played with reduced crowds we anticipate to accept applications from Season Ticket holders, and for the first game conduct a fully random ballot • Executive Club members will have tickets allocated on a rotation basis, and will be contacted by their account manager (in this instance, all Executive Club boxes would be open but at reduced capacity to adhere to social distancing guidelines) • For subsequent matches, we expect that priority will be given to those Season Ticket holders who have applied for the most previous matches without being successful, and we estimate that if the majority of Season Ticket holders apply for the majority of games, each will receive around 1/3 of matches when we have crowds of around 23.5k • Whether supporters can apply together will be driven by government restrictions at that time • As we are issuing refunds for matches that aren't played in front of full crowds, all tickets would be paid for in the ballot process and tickets will be allocated across the stadium. Unfortunately, there will not be a facility for people to select their own seat • Allocation of seats in the stadium will be pro-rata and reflective of what we have in the stadium on a normal match day. This will mean that seasonal facility holders will have more than 90% of standard seating capacity (with around 10% being allocated to e.g. the away team, if applicable, Official Members and other contractual requirements) • There will be a lot more to consider and communicate as/when we receive confirmation that we can welcome fans back to the stadium, including arrival times and other safety precautions. However, given uncertainty at this time, full information will be sent by email to all Season Ticket holders, as well as telephone calls

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Digital Ticketing	SK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have been advised that all tickets must now be digital / contactless. Therefore, when we are able to welcome fans back, entry to the stadium will be gained via mobile devices – lots of testing has taken place to make sure this is seamless – or a print at home ticket • Internal stakeholders including Ticketing, Hospitality, Stadium Safety and IT staff have conducted, and continue to conduct, extensive testing and are working with our stadium access provider to ensure a match day experience which is as seamless as possible • We will provide detailed information, together with an instructional video we have prepared, on how to download / print your ticket, how to enter the stadium and more, if you apply for and are successful for a match
Barrier Seating	JL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the hard work and campaigning on the part of MUST, we are delighted to provide a positive update on our barrier seating trial • We now have confirmation from the SGSA that we can make arrangements to install c1,500 seats with barriers in the J stand area, as part of the proposed trial • This approval is without prejudice to the Government's decision of 1 October 2020 not to reopen elite sports grounds to spectators for the time being • As and when spectators do return, the requirement placed on our ground to be all-seated under the Government's all-seater policy, and our current SGSA licence conditions which implement this policy, remain unchanged and will apply to the whole ground: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only seated accommodation shall be provided for spectators at a designated football match - Spectators shall only be admitted to watch a designated football match from seated accommodation • Due to the ongoing impact of Covid and the fact that we are playing matches behind closed doors, the work to install the seats with barriers will commence early in the New Year • At this time, we are not aware of any further updates as to when the Government may take forward its manifesto commitment to introduce safe standing • On this note, we would like to put on record the positive and constructive work MUST have done behind the scenes to assist us with a safe and successful submission to the SGSA and look forward to continuing to work with them to ensure an equally as successful trial as and when we have all our fans back at OT
Accessible Stadia Update	JL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are pleased to confirm that construction work on our new £11m+ accessible facilities is now complete, with the largest scheme in Stretford End Tier 2 having been finalised over the past few months. This is a culmination of over two years of design, planning and construction, and we would again like to thank MUDSA in particular for their hard work and support in helping to ensure that we have the best possible facilities for our disabled supporters

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst two of the new platforms (North West Quadrant and Stretford End Tier 1) were completed and fully tested at the beginning of the year, testing for the Away Section and Stretford End Tier 2 platforms will not be possible until fans are allowed back to stadiums, and at full capacity This testing programme will be completed at the earliest available opportunity, following which we will be able to roll them out for permanent use
MUDSA Update	CBa	<p>Disabled Facilities Expansion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thanks Jim for your update on this, we look forward to getting fans back in the ground and start testing <p>MUDSA Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unfortunately all our usual social events are cancelled due to Covid-19, for the foreseeable future <p>PL Disability Advisory Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the secretary of MUDSA, I represent our DSA within the DAG. Again, everything is on hold until we reach a situation where we can meet safely <p>The Foundation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some good news at last; the project we are enabling the Foundation to deliver, "Ability Counts", is up and running. I've asked Claire to include the reports with the minutes so you can all see the excellent progress the guys are making. Especially in these difficult times <p>Unfortunately, that is all I have to tell you.</p>
<p>Members' Questions</p> <p><i>We received 10 questions which have been answered, or we have referenced that we cannot answer, within the updates so far. These will not be read / answered individually now, but will be published in the minutes.</i></p>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> It was great to hear the club has plans in place for the safe return of fans, initially for 23,500. Can you please provide the following detail: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How will the tickets be allocated? Will they be only for season ticket holders (Inc. executive members) or will members be able to apply? If the latter what will the % split be? Will there be any prioritisation for loyalty? E.g. length of ST tenure, away games applied for etc.? Will there be any tickets for away fans? Will there be an element of fairness as opposed to each game being a random ballot (I.e. if you are unsuccessful in game one will you have a higher chance of being successful in game 2?) Will there be the option to sit in your own seat / chose to your own seat? Have the club made a decision on how they will contact season ticket holders when the ground will be reopened to fans? What procedures are you planning to have in place? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will fans have to arrive at a set time / staggered time? Will fans have to leave at a set time / staggered time? Will fans be able to sit in groups of up to 6? Will face coverings need to be worn whilst in your seat? Will singing / celebrating goals be allowed? Will fans need to sign up to a fan agreement before attending (or anything similar?) 		

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		<p>4. Will season ticket holders be asked to renew?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will they be charged game by game or for the rest of the season once fans can return? - What will happen to any remaining balance they have with the club (ST holders who have already renewed?) - Can ST holders who have renewed leave money 'in their account' as credit rather than get it refunded game by game and then use it against future ST costs? <p>5. Can you confirm that ST holders who do not feel it is safe to return (e.g. if they are extremely vulnerable) will not be penalised if they don't apply?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They will not lose their 'continuous service' and say drop from gold to red status? - They will not lose the year that would help them progress from red to silver etc. <p>6. Will this season count towards one of the 3 needed for STH's to be able to apply for away games?</p> <p>7. What will need to happen to further increase the capacity?</p> <p>8. As supporters are unable to apply for games will European credits be affected by there being no games for supporters to attend, especially if Covid restrictions last until next season?</p> <p>9. What progress has been made with the safe standing area?</p> <p>10. What is the club's position re the proposed European Super League? And will you commit to full consultation with fans before agreeing to join it?</p>
a.	SK	<p>Will ST prices freeze for next season? The context behind my question is that I'm a TRA member (25 years old), so this season has been eligible for a reduced ST cost of £250 – but it's not looking likely we'll be attending many, if not, any games this season! However, next season, I'll be too old for the reduced ST price, but were hoping the club would offer those 25 year olds another season of reduced prices, as it's not looking likely we'll get the benefits this season?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pricing for 2021/22 Season Tickets is not yet confirmed, and we will contact Season Ticket holders directly via email (as well as outbound calls) as we do each season with any update once this is confirmed • Any supporters that will move age categories for season 2021/22 will be required to pay the relevant price. Concessionary discounts are based on age, and will not be extended into future seasons
b.	SK	<p>Will members who bought a membership for the 20/21 season receive a refund if they cannot apply for any games this season?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official Membership renewals were processed in July and August, at the height of the pandemic and national lockdown, and all supporters were given the opportunity to opt-out • Sales volumes this season, which are lower than previous seasons, reflect opt-outs from those Members who primarily purchase to access tickets • The Membership product provides much more than ticket access, with a range of club discounts, a merchandise pack, (digital) access to the Yearbook as well as newsletters and competitions. We have lots of additional activity in the pipeline for the remainder of the season which we hope Members will enjoy

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c.	CB	<p>During the current crisis when many fans are struggling financially, is the club supportive of the Premier League's policy of five games being broadcast on pay-per-view each week at a cost of £14.95?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If the club argued against the PPV pricing then why vote for it? - Does the club share the view of the vast majority of STH's that access to PPV matches should be free or at least heavily discounted? These are the very supporters who have lost most and whose loyalty is needed when fans can return. If the club is unable to subsidise the PPV cost for STH's will they commit to giving their share of the profits from the PPV games to the MU Foundation or to support Marcus Rashford's amazing work? - Can the club assure us that this isn't an avenue to the Premier League becoming a more PPV driven system with big games, like big boxing matches, being moved into 'non-televised' slots to boost profits? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The club did propose alternative approaches in Premier League discussions on the issue and our preference was for a solution focused on Season Ticket holders • Those proposals were ruled out because of technical obstacles. Therefore the eventual vote was on whether to support the PPV solution or to have games not shown at all • A large percentage of our games are selected for regular broadcast, limiting the impact of PPV on our fans. However, for a number of other clubs, a much larger percentage of games would not have been available to their fans and therefore, given the choice available, we chose to vote for that rather than no solution at all • The Premier League has now modified its approach and, from November 21st until at least January 2nd, all games will be shown on Sky, BT, Amazon or free-to-air on the BBC. None will be PPV. This approach will be subject to further review beyond January 2 • Regarding the proposal for use of PPV proceeds, we are making significant commitments through the Foundation to support our local community through the pandemic, and we are committed to continuing this approach
d.	RA	<p>Manchester United together with Liverpool have been highlighted as leaders of Project Big Picture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What consultation and engagement with fans did the club take when preparing the plans for Project Big Picture? - Why do the club feel 'the big six' clubs should have more voting power than the rest of the league? - It was reported that capping the price for tickets for away fans at £20 was part of the Project Big Picture reforms. Are the club able to support this? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EW covered the main questions within his update • With regard to the final question, this was one of a package of proposals within Project Big Picture, that included measures to protect the interests of fans and to recognise their crucial importance to the health of the game • We will be encouraging the Premier League to continue looking at this as part of its wider strategic review
e.	RA & CB	<p>What is the club's view on the proposals made by Gary Neville et al about introducing an independent regulator to oversee football in this country?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As demonstrated by our involvement in the Project Big Picture proposals, we recognise change needs to happen, and we are open to constructive ideas for making English football stronger and more sustainable throughout the pyramid, extending to grass roots and the women's game

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our view is that clubs and the existing leagues and governing bodies must come together to show that they can rise to the challenges facing English football • It should also be noted that under FIFA statutes, member associations must be independent and avoid any form of political interference
f.	CB	<p>My question relates to the clubs finances, in particular the multi million pound dividend that the owners have taken. In today's climate, with the global pandemic, businesses all over the world are seriously hurting from the impact of Covid-19, Manchester United is no different. The recently released financial results have indicated that we have made serious losses through lost revenue, whilst the debt laden onto the club has doubled. How can the club and more specifically the owners, justify the multi million pound dividend payments, which have continued during the pandemic considering the awful financial position the pandemic has caused?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While our revenues have been severely impacted by the pandemic, the club remains financially resilient, largely because of the strength of our commercial business, which diversifies our income more than many clubs • Regarding the debt, there has been no change in the overall (principal) level of debt since 2010. This is borrowed at historically low levels of interest and has not interfered with investment in the team • The <i>Net debt</i> figure is made up of principal borrowings minus cash reserves. This was reported to have risen in Q4 2020, because of decline in cash due to COVID-19 and player spending. Conversely the net debt figure declined in Q1 2021, reported last week • The club's commercial revenue has grown from £47m in 2005/06 to £279m in 2019/20, giving us resilience through the pandemic, even as we continue to lose match day revenue. This has allowed us to maintain normal course of business through the crisis, including payments for casual workers and not furloughing staff • Payment of dividends - which is reviewed on an ongoing basis – is standard practice for listed companies around the world and falls within our normal course of business; by providing a return on investment and encouraging capital discipline, dividends contribute to the long-term health and sustainability of the club • They are also consistent with the financial structure that has facilitated significant and consistent investment in the team (over €200m net spend since summer 2019)
g.	RA	<p>The club has extended its kit sponsorship deal with Chevrolet for six months. Can you confirm what this will mean should the sponsor change mid-season? Especially in terms of more new kits at extortionate prices for parents to pay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is too soon to discuss details of what will happen to the shirt beyond the current agreement – we have various options and time to work through the issues. We will keep fans firmly in mind as we consider these options • Regarding cost of kits, United's shirts are priced competitively and are not the most expensive among leading clubs

Topic	Speaker	Topic Notes
h.	SK	<p>Chester & North Wales branch pay for 2 coach park permits on N4 @ £650.00 each, and use this car park as there are a number of elderly fans who use buggy transport to and from ground. There has been an increase in price of 20% for season 20/21. They appreciate there has not been any increase for some time but feel the increase is unjust especially in the current climate and would like a justification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car park pricing for 2020/21 was reviewed in 2019, in advance of 2020/21 renewals launching and before the COVID-19 pandemic hit • All seasonal car/coach park pass holders that had renewed have already been issued with a full refund • The price of £650 per coach is equivalent to less than 50 pence per person, per game (assuming 50x passengers). Compared to a car park cost of £230 which is equivalent to £3 per person, per game for a car (assuming 4 passengers)
i.	SK	<p>Can followers of the women's team buy tickets for away games from our ticket office instead of having to buy through the away team?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a number of complexities involved in switching to sales from Old Trafford, and we do not believe that these would positively impact our loyal followers of the Women's Team • For example, there would be much tighter and less flexible sales windows, and collection would be required due to the restrictions on stadium access at Women's games • Additionally, liaising with opposition teams, setting up events and tickets would take considerable resource for what would be very few sales compared to other events that we manage • We therefore feel the existing set-up is the best for now, and are not aware of any fans experiencing issues when trying to purchase tickets from opposition clubs • There may be occasions, such as the Manchester City game, where we are required to sell, but in the main sales will continue as they are
j.	SK	<p>If the fan's forum is to continue can the club commit to more regular meetings and updates? It is hard to believe there hasn't been a meeting since April with so much going on!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As Collette has already referenced, we are very aware that we have not had a forum meeting since April. As the previous updates have also hopefully reassured you, we have been working incredibly hard since this time to prepare for the safe return of fans, whilst also supporting our staff members and local communities. Had we met over the summer or earlier in the autumn, much of what we discussed would have been overtaken by the changing situation and government guidance • We are obliged by the Premier League to hold one Forum meeting per season, and are proud that we usually deliver four per season, which are subsequently complimented by additional subgroup meetings in which we work through the finer detail on proposals discussed within the main forum • In addition to these meetings, we also hold regular Board-level consultation with supporter groups such as MUST, TRA and MUDSA and also hold relationships at Director and departmental level (such as myself) with these groups. These relationships are further complimented by a dedicated Supporter Liaison role as well as teams dedicated to look after supporters with accessible needs and our supporters club secretaries

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication since April with supporters has been focused on welfare and personal one-on-one interaction via the successful ST and OM outbound call campaign we ran during the first lockdown. We plan to repeat this during the winter months • We therefore do not intend to increase the number of Fans' Forum meetings, but remind you that as well as everything I have just mentioned, the MU Forum inbox is always there for you to use if you would like to reach out to directly, at any time
k.	SK	<p>For future meetings can we reduce the window between questions being submitted and the date of the meeting? A lot can change / happen in 3 weeks!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The deadlines are issued to help us prepare the content for the meeting, and ensure that any questions, irrespective of their complexities, are fully answered. Questions submitted quite often require significant background work which takes time, and regularly involve consultation with people who do not attend these meetings • At the end of each meeting, we do welcome any additional questions, but cannot guarantee that they will be answered, in full, on the day • We will continue to provide as much time as possible for questions to be submitted
l.	CR	<p>At a previous meeting there was talk of the club setting up a Heritage and Legacy Committee to review requests such as the one to rename East Stand after the great Jimmy Murphy. What is the latest on this? Has it been set up and if so who is part of it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We remain committed to the establishment of a Heritage & Legacy Committee to oversee and liaise with supporters and other stakeholders on memorials and memorial activities • We have received the proposal from a coalition of fan groups for a memorial to Jimmy Murphy • We have held constructive initial discussions with these groups and agreed that the proposal should be considered further by the H&L Committee once convened • Composition of the Committee has not yet been finalised but we expect it to include senior figures from the club and representatives of fans and former players • We cannot give a firm timetable for moving forward with the Committee due to the current need to prioritise urgent work related to the pandemic. However, we will keep this Forum briefed on developments
m.	SK	<p>Will this season count towards one of the 3 needed for STH's to be able to apply for away games? & As supporters are unable to apply for games will European credits be affected by there being no games for supporters to attend, especially if Covid restrictions last until next season?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No fans will be adversely affected this season, e.g. if someone was due to move from Red to Silver that will still happen, and we will ignore this season entirely for European away credits (so will use credits from the 18/19, 19/20 and 21/22 seasons for the 21/22 season, as opposed to dropping 18/19 in place of 20/21)

Topic	Speaker	Topic Notes
Rep Feedback	CB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have only heard positive things about the Social Media changes, the new approach is highly thought of and the changes that have taken place are being seen as huge improvements Can we arrange for a “vote of thanks” to acknowledge Marcus Rashford’s inspiring campaign - would be nice to acknowledge what he’s done I will now pass back to Collette to open up for comments
Rep’s comments/questions	CR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thanks Charlie - hopefully that has addressed the questions raised. We now want to give each rep (as last time) the opportunity to say a few words / comments of reflection
	JK	<p>I would like to re-iterate the huge improvement in Social Media. For John and the Foundation, I would also like to propose post lockdown that the club sets up food and gift banks at the stadium, before Christmas and once lockdown restrictions are lifted. I would also like to see the club publicise more the fantastic work that they have been doing in the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes this is a good idea, we will look into it
	CBa	<p>If no away fans are allowed back into the stadium during the initial return, can we test the new away facilities using our own disabled fans?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SK advised he and JL would pick this with Chas directly. Realistically though this won’t be at the first games when fans are back in the stadium as there will be a lot of other things to focus on
	AS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I don’t have any specific questions, but would like to share with you a story about my 9 year old son who is a STH. If anything good is to come out of the pandemic, it is the increased knowledge, particularly in the younger generation about the difficulties some people have in life and people have much more socially aware. He has always been proud of what the team do on the pitch, but he is now very proud of the work the club and Marcus Rashford have done off the pitch, he is proud to wear the shirt
	IS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I would like to make the forum aware that MUST have run a foodbank collection service on match days for a number of seasons. We would like to thank the club for their large and generous donation to the foodbank that we run in conjunction with Manchester City fans foodbank, and the Trussell Trust. We are always looking for volunteers if anyone would like to help <p>Can we get clarification on the clubs position on away ticket pricing? Will the club be supporting the campaign to cap away tickets at £20 in future and will push this with the PL?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RA advised the club was hugely supportive of the previous campaign for £30 away tickets and proposed the £20 away tickets as part of the reforms that were being discussed as part of a package of measures, we therefore support the concept, however this isn’t the only idea and there is more that needs to go with it. We haven’t considered it as standalone. Away pricing is potentially less urgent than other issues at the moment due to Covid, but we will keep under continuous review
	JC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Echo the views of other representatives on the excellent work the club has partaken of during the pandemic and if the club do anything to host mass testing or anything to do with the vaccine it would be positive

Topic	Speaker	Topic Notes
		<p>What transport plans have been looked for fans returning to the stadium and the pressure this would put on Metrolink etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CR acknowledged that this is one of the biggest areas to work through. JL and the team have been working on this and meeting with local transport providers. We will also survey fans to see how they will be travelling to and from the stadium and from where. We will then ensure we have the correct car parking available and work with the relevant transport providers to create a safe plan for getting fans to the stadium <p>Regarding digital ticketing – what is the situation for the small number of fans who don't have access to a smart phone?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CR advised there would also be an option to print tickets at home
	JM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bearing in mind the negative publicity, I think it was important that Ed and Richard gave us the true position of the club with regards the Big Picture and European League plans. Also, the Fans' Forum is always better in person, but I've found today's meeting very useful, thank you
	KC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Found it a very informative meeting, nice to be back after so long. Would like to suggest that we have a Women's team representative CR agreed this was a good idea and would be looked into
	RM	<p>I welcome the club's commitment to diversity targets and general work regarding diversity & inclusion. I believe that it is important that the make-up of the Fans' Forum represents all diverse views and demographics of our supporters and I do not feel the current membership does this. Will this be considered?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CR confirmed this would be considered as part of the next selection process for the Fans' Forum <p>Can the £3 per pint pricing in the TRA section be rolled out across OT? I requested this at a previous forum with the full support of TRA and was told it would be looked into. Can you please provide an update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CR advised the club would look at this and report back. It will not be possible to provide draft lager throughout the stadium, but we will look to provide price parity in all areas of the stadium <p>The last atmosphere survey to Season Ticket Holders was in 2018 – will full results be shared and will we re-run that?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SK confirmed we would share the results of the previous survey and work with the Forum and TRA regarding future surveys <p>Who decided the £14.95 cost for PPV?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RA confirmed that this was set by the broadcasters and the club didn't have any input in to the pricing of PPV matches. We had spoken up against it in PL meetings and would continue to do so <p>I have one question regarding interest payments and the assertion that this doesn't lead to reduced investment in team – that doesn't make sense to fans, surely the money going out of the club to pay for interest payments on loans could instead be used to invest in the team or stadium?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RA referred to the previous answer earlier in the Forum on investment in the team. He added that dividends are part of a financial model that brings two key benefits: access to capital and access to low interest rates

Topic		Speaker	Topic Notes
	MT		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lockdown hard for Supporters Club Members as they can't travel. We have set up a Facebook page for them to keep in touch we are looking forward to getting back to matches
Forum Close	CR		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OK Thanks everyone – appreciate the feedback. So just to summarise, before we close – we have mentioned in previous meetings the amount of positive change that has stemmed from this forum and are really keen that this continues in the future • With this in mind, I wanted to reiterate that we will provide an answer, to every question submitted ahead of the forum, and will continue to publicise the minutes more widely throughout this season. Due to the current environment we didn't replace Forum Rep roles during the summer, so we will communicate the recruitment process at the end of this season (for those vacant positions) • Also, as a reminder we have two permanent positions for MUST and MUDSA both of whom undertake significant roles on behalf of the Club • We've already heard from both Jim and Chas today about our recent work with MUDSA and the accessible stadia changes, but we've also just completed a significant review of all ticketing processes in recent years – this has been a significant process and Chas' expertise invaluable • Similarly, with MUST our official accredited supporter trust; whilst we don't `always` agree on every matter, we do always welcome their challenge and input and as I said earlier have worked with them closely on a series of topics recently, to ensure fan views are always considered, To give a few examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We worked together to implement significant changes following their proposals to 'reclaim the Stretford End' as a vocal area with more youth priced tickets - As Jim has mentioned today we are looking forward to trialling barrier seating which MUST have campaigned for tirelessly for over a decade - And they were a great support as we drafted policies for the 2020-21 season (before the second lockdown stopped us!) • As Ian mentioned, he is also the MUST ISLO which has increased not only day-to-day comms, but on wider topics such as the pay per view plans for games in lockdown and so on. So with this in mind, from now on, like MUDSA, I think it would be good to have Ian give a brief overview of the MUST work at this Forum, to keep everyone up to speed, if that's OK Ian? • And finally, I'd also like to place on record our thanks to all of you for giving up your own time, to work with us to represent our fans – we can't wait to have you back!!