



Supporters Direct – Public Statement - Funding – 13th June 2011

The board of directors of Supporters Direct (SD) meeting in emergency session yesterday, Saturday 11th June, expressed confidence in its past and continuing role in promoting the supporter trust movement - a model of football ownership that allows fans to re-engage with their local clubs, and begin the process of putting the community back at the heart of the football and other sports clubs.



The emergency session was called to discuss a possible crisis in the funding of the organisation (founded in 2000). On Wednesday 8th June 2011 SD was informed by the Football Stadium Improvement Fund, administrators of the Premier League Fans' Fund, that it would not be making an offer to fund SD. The reason given was the FSIF's concern over a number of tweets posted by SD chief executive on his personal account on twitter.com during the evening of Saturday 21 May 2011. SD has deplored the comments and disassociated itself from them completely.

The SD board took the following decisions at its emergency meeting:

- 1) To accept the resignation from office of chief executive Dave Boyle;
- 2) To appoint Brian Burgess as acting chief executive from Saturday 11 June 2011;
- 3) To establish an executive committee of the board consisting of three directors and the acting chief executive to steer the organisation during the current funding crisis;
- 4) To begin work on protecting the organisation's activities in rugby league, Scotland and in the rest of Europe for which it receives funds from other partners including the Scottish Government, UEFA and the Rugby Football League;
- 5) To seek early discussions with the Premier League Fans' Fund with a view to resubmitting its application which was acknowledged by the FSIF to have merit that would have attracted funding, whilst also pursuing other possibilities and sources of funding.

Commenting on the situation SD chair Dame Pauline Green said:

"The development of Supporters Direct over the past ten years has seen the trust movement grow and make a substantial contribution to a significant number of football clubs and their local communities. We have also made an impact in other sports such as rugby league.

"As an example the promotion to the Premier League of Swansea City, in which the supporters' trust is the third largest equity investor in the club with 19.99% of the shares, makes it the first club at the top level to have a substantial trust shareholding. In Scotland, Dundee FC is now under supporter ownership.

"The trust movement must now take stock and reflect on how it can most effectively contribute to the development of a healthy, more sustainable football industry at all levels.

"The Annual General Meeting and conference in Chester on 15th and 16th July will be an opportunity for us to debate this with our members and the wider football public."

ENDS