

Trust Statement – 18th January 2023

The Shrimpers Trust understands Southend United Football Club have been granted an adjournment in respect of outstanding monies owed to HMRC.

On 1st October 2022, when a Time To Pay agreement was cancelled by HMRC, Club owner Ron Martin declared it would be "weeks not months" before bridging finance was secured to discharge the debt in full.

On 31st December 2022, Chief Executive Tom Lawrence confirmed that bridging finance was the short-term solution to the club's current financial issues, and that it would be used to pay off the HMRC debt, resulting in the winding-up petition being dismissed.



Now, on 18th January 2023, that bridging finance still does not appear to have been finalised. The debt to HMRC is still to be discharged. A winding-up petition remains in place, with the next court date on 1st March 2023 marked "final", together with a National League embargo.

In our statement following the club's previous appearance at the High Court, we requested that Ron Martin sorts out the mess that threatens the existence of our football club. Head Coach Kevin Maher echoed those sentiments in a recent interview with BBC Essex, calling on the chairman to produce in the same way his squad have.

Kevin and his coaching team, and the hardworking staff throughout the football club, deserve better. On the pitch, we are firmly in the play-off picture with eyes fixed on a return to the EFL, as well as being possibly just three wins from an FA Trophy final at Wembley.

That is remarkable, but this progress on the pitch risks being threatened, not just because there is currently no prospect of any essential signings in the event of injuries to key players, but because there is unrest amongst supporters about the ownership of the club.

The Shrimpers Trust calls upon Ron Martin to urgently confirm when bridging finance is now to be expected, and how the club will be able to function until work begins on the new stadium at Fossetts Farm.

We expect all salaries to be paid on time. We expect outstanding monies to suppliers to be resolved. We expect loans to be returned and the club's accounts to be filed. If these expectations cannot be met, then bridging finance is not the solution.

We are disappointed that the can has been kicked down the road. The dark clouds continue to gather over Roots Hall. We need genuine hope that on-field delivery will be matched off it by the owner.

If you have any questions for the Trust please feel free to contact us via our website, <http://www.shrimperstrust.co.uk> or by email on info@shrimperstrust.co.uk

The Shrimpers Trust Board