

Trust Statement – 17th March 2023

The Shrimpers Trust, and Supporters' Groups, note Ron Martin's announcement today regarding the opening of a formal process for the sale of, or introduction of new investment into, Southend United Football Club.

This process is long overdue considering the continual financial problems that have blighted Mr Martin's tenure as owner of our club, with repeated winding-up petitions, transfer or registration embargoes and a failure to pay playing and non-playing staff, local suppliers and other creditors on time.

Ultimately though, little changes immediately. The embargo remains in place due to unresolved issues with HMRC, some staff members are still behind on salaries, and the club's ability to meet its financial obligations for at least the next three months continues to be in doubt.

Until any inward investment or sale becomes a reality, we remain concerned about the club's short-term future, with important stage-posts for the new stadium development at Fossetts Farm due to be reached over the next three months.

We expect further clarity to be provided to supporters directly about what this means for our club and the city in the short- to medium-term in line with previous requests over the past few months.

We have been in contact with Ron Martin regarding an update on such matters over the past 48 hours and a meeting is expected to take place next week. We will push to go ahead with this as planned alongside other supporters' groups, regardless of today's news. Until we get answers to our questions, our stance on season cards remains unchanged.

Whilst it is important to recognise some of the highlights of Mr Martin's period as owner, with three national finals, two play-off final successes and a League One championship delivered, it is impossible to forget the lows, most notably the double-relegation from League One and out of the EFL for the first time in over a century.

The past four years have been a very tough time for Shrimpers fans, and the last few months have been particularly difficult. Despite that, supporters have continued to turn out in incredible numbers at home and away.

We encourage supporters to continue to show potential investors the strength of feeling for Southend United, and we really hope this announcement is the beginning of a positive change in the football club for all of our sakes.

The Shrimpers Trust Board.