

## **Trust Statement – 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**Representatives of the Shrimpers Trust, together with Anna Firth, MP for Southend West, were pleased to be given the opportunity to meet with the National League today to discuss the current situation regarding Southend United FC.**

We felt it was necessary to arrange such a meeting given the lack of information being provided by the owner, Ron Martin, who has - largely speaking - been hiding behind an NDA relevant to the potential sale of his shares in our football club and related interests. To remind, not that long ago, the club was just hours away from being expelled by the National League due to failure to publish its accounts and the fanbase were none the wiser.

We were also keen to try to understand the deadlines and milestones that the Club is required to meet to ensure we have a team to support in the 2023/24 season.

The meeting has done nothing to change our opinion that Wednesday 12th July 2023 is the latest in a series of crucial dates in Southend United's history. Ron Martin's evidence in the High Court will not only be considered by the judge but, if he seeks an adjournment and that is accepted, the matter will then be considered by the National League in respect of their regulations.

Despite our sense that there was a willingness from the National League to give the Club every chance to resolve the outstanding issues, they were clear that they will not compromise the integrity of their competition. There would need to be a compelling reason present for the National League to allow a further period of grace. For that reason, it is vital that the parties involved make significant progress regarding the ownership of the Club in the next 36 hours.

The Shrimpers Trust would like to thank Mark Ives, General Manager of The National League, for his time this afternoon and for providing as much clarity as possible regarding the league's handling of Southend United's ongoing issues. We fully respect the league's position that it has its regulations and competitive integrity to uphold.

We would also like to thank Anna Firth MP for helping to facilitate this meeting, and a previous opportunity to make representation to the Department for Culture, Media & Sport, and her continued involvement in supporting our football club at this difficult time for all Southend United fans.

The Shrimpers Trust Board.