



Joint Supporters Group Statement – 22nd July 2023

The supporters' groups of Southend United FC note the contents of media reports that the Club's bank account has been unfrozen to enable payments to football creditors.

Despite this, we continue to harbour serious concerns for the future under the current ownership. Yesterday's news is welcome in that it may prevent our club being expelled from the National League, but it is merely a sticking plaster and Southend United FC remains in a vicious circle of late payments, court appearances and sanctions with Ron Martin at the helm.

With the HMRC debt under the existing Winding-Up Petition remaining unpaid, we call upon Ron Martin to provide a clear indication of when this can be expected to be cleared and what sanctions against the Club remain in place under an embargo. The football department can only properly begin their preparations for next season, which have been further hindered by the postponement of the Roots Hall friendly against AFC Wimbledon on 29th July, once this matter is resolved.

Our thoughts continue to be directed towards the Club's staff. Urgent clarification is required for them about when they can expect their salaries to be brought up-to-date, and anyone that continues to be affected can make contact with the Shrimpers Trust in the strictest confidence to make an application to our hardship fund. Ron Martin should, frankly, feel a sense of profound shame that the owner of one of our divisional rivals, Matt Uggla of York City, with a significant personal donation to the fund, seemingly cares more for his staff than he does.

As a result of the continued uncertainty surrounding the club, we can confirm that the plans announced earlier this week for a lawful and responsible protest in Benfleet from 11:00am-2:00pm on Saturday 22nd July remain in place. We encourage supporters to make their voices heard.

During the course of the past week the Shrimpers Trust, backed by the other supporters' groups, has been liaising with key stakeholders - including Southend City Council and local MPs, who share our concerns - to attempt to safeguard the future of our Club. That work will continue. We believe Southend United's interests are best-served with supporter involvement at the core. We urge Ron Martin to engage in a meaningful and expedient sale process and reiterate our desire to speak with any interested buyers.