



## Supporters Group Statement – 4<sup>th</sup> August 2023

### **On the eve of the start of the 2023/24 National League season, we would like to provide Southend United supporters with an update.**

Discussions took place during a supporters' groups meeting on Wednesday evening about the potential to call for a boycott of Saturday's fixture against Oldham Athletic at Roots Hall.

The strong consensus amongst those involved in the discussion, although not unanimous, was that this would not be appropriate at this time. It was felt that the prospects of a successful boycott of this match would be low.

Over the summer, fans have fought hard for the future of the football club, whether that be in the form of responsible protests at Ron Martin's house, contributing to a hardship fund to support staff, helping to clean up Roots Hall or liaising with key stakeholders including local and national government and Southend City Council.

The football department, headed up by Kevin Maher, Darren Currie and Mark Bentley, and our small squad of remaining players, as well as our ever-loyal and dedicated club staff, have fought hard, too. By contrast, Ron Martin has done the bare minimum, and even then only under duress, to ensure we take on the Latics tomorrow afternoon.

Against that backdrop, Saturday should be a celebration of all that is good about our football club and its crucial place at the heart of our community. However, we understand that some supporters may wish to make their own protest, either inside or outside of the ground, and we respect that. We also thank Oldham Athletic Supporters' Federation for their offer of support.

Our objectives remain the end of Ron Martin's tenure as owner of Southend United Football Club and a greater involvement for fans in the running of the Club moving forwards. Supporters' groups will continue to work together towards those goals, and discussions are ongoing regarding direct action in relation to the fixture against Hartlepool United on 19th August.