



## TO ALL EFL CLUB CHAIRMEN, CHIEF EXECUTIVES & SECRETARIES

12th July 2017

Dear All,

### **Consumption and Sale of Alcohol During Matches**

Further to my presentation at the Summer Conference, the EFL met recently with officials from the Home Office and the UK Football Policing Unit to discuss whether legislation prohibiting the sale of alcohol during matches could be amended to enable clubs to serve supporters in instances where the risk of disorder is considered to be low.

It was a useful initial meeting and the officials in attendance recognised that the issue merited further discussion. Nonetheless, they also made it clear that it would be a challenge to get the matter onto the Home Office agenda given the significant issues currently facing the UK with regard to Policing, Counter-Terrorism and the Fire Service.

As a pre-cursor to a potential future meeting with Nick Hurd MP, the Minister for Policing and the Fire Service, to discuss this and other relevant issues, the Home Office have asked us to provide them with further information about this matter, which we will now do. They have also suggested that it would be useful to include some written views from clubs as it would help broaden their understanding of why we want to see change in this area.

Therefore, we would gratefully receive any submissions you might wish to make to support us in our efforts to convince the Government to review the prohibition on the sale and consumption of alcohol during matches as set out in the Sporting Events Act 1985.

As guidance, this is broadly the approach taken by the EFL during the meeting:

- The EFL intends to approach this matter in a responsible manner as we recognise the link between alcohol and disorder, as well as the reduction in football related disorder achieved since the introduction of the Act in 1985.
- Nevertheless it should be understood that football has changed significantly since 1985 (for example, there is currently just one arrest for every 20,000 spectators attending games and the majority of EFL matches are now played in police free stadiums).
- We believe a blanket ban is disproportionate to the level of risk. Where there is a low risk of disorder, for example at certain matches or in certain parts of stadia, we believe clubs should have the ability to serve alcohol during matches.
- Football is also being treated inconsistently in comparison to other sports (sometimes occurring in the same stadium) and other forms of public gathering.



- It is unfair on private businesses that wish to be able to be able to sell alcohol to the many law abiding citizens attending matches who wish to be able to drink while posing no threat to public order.
- The commercial benefits to EFL clubs, and the Exchequer, could be significant. Figures supplied by EFL clubs suggest the average spend on food and drink for Rugby matches played at EFL stadiums is at least double that of football.
- The EFL is not prescriptive in the approach it believes should be adopted and instead wishes to engage with Government in a progressive, evidence-led discussion of the relevant issues.

Please direct any written responses to me at the email address below. Thank you, in advance, for any help you can provide with this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John Nagle', written in a cursive style.

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