



Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport

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Dear Mr V

Thank you for your correspondence of 15 February to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Sport and Civil Society, Tracey Crouch MP, about Blackpool FC. As I am sure you will appreciate, the Minister is unable to respond to all the letters she receives. I am replying as a member of the Ministerial Support Team at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

The Minister is aware of the problems that have beset Blackpool FC in recent years and remains in regular dialogue with the EFL regarding the on-going status of the club. While it is not the role of government to comment or involve itself in the private matters of individual professional clubs, we do care deeply for clubs and place a great emphasis on the owners of clubs and the football authorities to take every care possible to respect the club's history and seek to preserve their long-term status. For example, the Minister has regular meetings with the EFL (and Premier League), on the financial rules in place to ensure clubs remain sustainable.

The Owners and Directors Test is also something she has discussed with them. The test exists to protect clubs from individuals who fall within the disqualifying criteria, and we are pleased that the professional leagues and the FA have committed to keeping it under constant review and talking to supporters on how it might be strengthened.

Equally, we believe that fans have every right to ask questions of those that run their clubs. Through the work of the Government Expert Working Group on Supporter Ownership and Engagement, rules are now in place that requires open dialogue between fans and senior club executives or owners on the most important issues for the club. These are not prescriptive, but will usually include its financial standing, the identity of its owners and future plans. Our hope and expectation is that the relationship between fans and those that own clubs will grow over time as trust builds; clubs feel more at ease at sharing information and fans realise the many facets involved in running a club.

We are aware that the EFL have announced they will issue an invitation to meet Blackpool FC supporters' groups and stakeholders to discuss ongoing concerns regarding the Club. It is our hope that supporters will be able to air their concerns and obtain the answers to the questions they are seeking.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Pointon
Ministerial Support Team



