



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Joe FitzPatrick MSP
Minister for Public Health, Sport
and Wellbeing

Via email only

Health and Sport Committee
T3.40

The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Tel: 0131 348 5410

Calls via RNID Typetalk: 18001 0131 348 5224

Email: healthandsport@parliament.scot

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Dear Joe

Health and Sport Committee consideration of the impact of COVID-19 on sports clubs and other local recreational facilities

The Health and Sport Committee have agreed to hold a short inquiry looking at the impact on local communities across Scotland as a consequence of COVID-19 restrictions on sports clubs and sport and leisure venues. As part of that work the Committee are interested in impacts upon Scottish Professional Football clubs given the linkage many have to community hubs and the delivery of other types of community support.

The Committee have noted recent publicity surrounding the finances generally of the 42 member clubs of the Scottish Professional Football League I am writing to ask for details of any current government financial support schemes that are available to those clubs, and other sporting organisations. Details of any further schemes being considered would also be welcome.

In addition to the above the Committee would welcome detail of and the appropriate supporting data which underpins the current restrictions on spectators attending matches in person.

Following announcements that limited numbers of spectators will be admitted to professional football matches in Tier 1 areas, can you advise if similar permissions for other events in Tier 1 areas are likely to follow? Could you also provide detail of any plans the Scottish Government have to increase the numbers of fans admitted to matches in Tier 1 areas over time, and also indicate how and when admission will be

extended to fans at matches in Tier 2 areas. In respect of Tier 3 areas what consideration has been given to enabling the return of fans to matches in future?

With the end of the furlough scheme, many clubs are having to make decisions regarding staff –including, staff who play key roles in their respective clubs' place at the heart of communities such as catering and community development staff. We note for example this occurred in the last week with Peterhead FC being forced to cut 29 jobs. These impacts and the effect of any dissolution of clubs will have a hugely detrimental effect on communities across Scotland. In addition to the sport that brings people together, SPFL clubs play key roles both as employers and in working with vulnerable people within communities. Does the Scottish Government have any plans to provide support in such cases?

To tie in with our wider work on this inquiry, as part of which we will be seeking comment from the public on how the restrictions are impacting them, I would appreciate this information by 30 November.

Yours sincerely



Lewis Macdonald
Convener, Health and Sport Committee