

MARK MENZIES MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr Shaun Harvey
Chief Executive
EFL Operations Centre
EFL House
10-12 West Cliff
Preston
PR1 8HU

14 February 2019

Dear Mr Harvey,

I understand the EFL board will be discussing the matter of Blackpool Football Club at its next meeting, following the decision made on Wednesday February 13 in the High Court to place the club into receivership.

I also understand the EFL can deduct up to 12 points from any club which goes into receivership – but that this decision is also down to the discretion of the EFL.

I write to highlight the fact that Blackpool Football Club has been entirely solvent in recent years, and has been placed into receivership by Justice Marcus Smith not as a result of its overspending or poor financial management, but because of legal dispute between its owner Owen Oyston and his former business partner Valerie Belokon.

Many fans have contacted my office, Blackpool Football Club being in the neighbouring constituency, to highlight the injustice they would feel should the EFL impose a points deduction in relation to a matter which does not relate to the day-to-day running of the club.

Blackpool has in no way benefited unfairly as a result of overspending or poor financial management as is often the case when clubs are placed in receivership.

In fact, manager Terry McPhillips and his staff and squad have worked tirelessly on a so-far successful League One campaign despite the huge distraction of the legal action and ongoing fan boycott going on in the background.

It would be a terrible shame for the manager, players and fans if the Football League decided to take punitive and damaging action against the club, putting it into a relegation fight, through no fault of theirs.

I hope the EFL is able to see how difficult a time this has been for all Blackpool Football Club fans, and that the receivership action relates to a personal legal dispute between Owen Oyston and Valerie Belokon, and not in relation to its day-to-day management.

The poor relationship between the owner and the fans has caused much anguish over recent years, leading to a boycott of the club while it remains under Owen Oyston's ownership.

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Any decision to punish the club further would be a real blow, a huge burden, and a real threat to the club's future prosperity.

Blackpool Football Club has a distinguished history and a fantastic fan base which wants to re-engage with the club under new owners.

I hope the EFL does not further add to Blackpool's woes and instead decides not to deduct the club any points, giving it the best chance to prosper in future.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Menzies'.

Mark Menzies MP