

Christian Wakeford MP
Bury South Constituency

Letter sent via email to: christian.wakeford.mp@parliament.uk

Dear Mr Wakeford,

Reference: Council Motion on Making Football a Fair Game

Bury Council at its Full Council meeting on 16 March 2022 debated a notice of motion in relation to making football a fair game.

The Council recognised that:

1. Football, the national game in the UK, is currently in crisis. COVID-19 has devastated the revenue of many lower-league clubs, with the loss of some notable names, and dozens more clubs teetering on the brink of survival.
2. Too frequently, bad management has gone unnoticed or ignored and clubs are run unsustainably, putting at risk all the history, heritage, and economic benefit they bring to an area – often in pursuit of short-term gain.
3. Football clubs are not ordinary businesses; they are historic sporting institutions that are both a civic and community asset, and a source of pride and unity, in their hometown or city.
4. Bury has its own experience at the forefront of this crisis, losing our 134 year-old league football club, and the efforts of fans, the Council and the Government to return league football to the town.

The Council resolved to:

1. Put on record its support for 'Fair Game', a national campaign that seeks radical reform of the way football is managed and run, specifically its call for an independent regulator for the sport, and a refocus on 'values' rather than profit.
2. Support Fair Game's calls for an establishment of a Sustainability Index, which will reallocate the payments made to clubs to reward those which are run well, respect equality standards and properly engage with their fans and their community.
3. Declare its support for the Fair Game manifesto, 'Solutions for our National Game', and call on other Councils to join us in our support.
4. Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Minister for Sport, our local Members of Parliament, and the Chair of the Local Government Association Culture, Tourism and Sport Board, asking them to support and work towards implementing Fair Game's manifesto and the findings of the fan-led review led by Tracey Crouch MP
5. Ask the Council's representatives to encourage other Authorities to support Fair Game.

Accordingly, I am writing to you in relation to this matter. I have written in similar terms to the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, the MP for Bury North and the Chair of the Local Government Association Culture, Tourism and Sport Board.

I look forward to your response so that an update can be provided to Members of Bury Council.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "G P Little." The signature is written in a cursive style.

Geoff Little OBE
Chief Executive