

Rod Petrie apologises to Hibs' fans



Hibernian Football Club last night issued an apology to supporters via the club's official website. The statement reads:

“Chairman Rod Petrie, the Board, Manager Terry Butcher and the coaching and playing staff understand that supporters have suffered for most of the season.

Manager Terry Butcher, speaking on behalf of the coaching staff and players, said: “We are devastated that our season has ended in this way, and we can only apologise to supporters for letting them down.

“I knew when I took on this role that it would be a challenge, and I remain determined to work to rebuild a team to get this Club to where it belongs at the top of Scottish football. I can assure supporters they will see very different performances and results next season.”

Chairman Rod Petrie, said: “Let me start by saying that I am sorry for a dismal season on the pitch. The season started badly last July against Malmo in the Europa League and has finished even worse with relegation to the Championship. The Manager and Players know that performances on the pitch have not been good enough. To lose the play off at Easter Road Stadium after extra time and penalties having put ourselves in a great position after the away tie at Hamilton is a bitter pill for everyone to swallow.

“Supporters have turned up in numbers to support the team – 16,108 against Malmo and 18,031 here for the second leg of the play off match. Supporters are suffering. All we can do is

apologise and thank them for backing the team. Supporters are also quite rightly asking what we are going to do about it?

“We recognise that change is needed. The Board and supporters agree that all of the work that has gone into creating an infrastructure unrivalled outside Glasgow needs to be matched by consistent sporting success.

“Some supporters have suggested that I should resign as Chairman. I take responsibility for the position that the Club finds itself in. However, it would be wrong for me to abdicate that responsibility at this time and walk away and it would be wrong for the Club. Having already announced a few weeks ago that I am handing over my executive responsibilities, it is in the best interests of the Club for me complete that transition to our new Chief Executive and to oversee the other far reaching changes at the Club as non-executive Chairman.

“Leeann Dempster has already been appointed as Chief Executive to lead the Club forward. She will join us in the next few days. Leeann achieved sporting success at Motherwell and will work closely with Terry Butcher as the Club begins the task of assembling a competitive squad for next season. Leeann’s arrival is the first of a number of planned changes in the coming weeks and months ahead at Hibernian.”

The Chairman added: “In essence, this summer will be a pivotal point in the long history of Hibernian, creating a new platform to take the Club forward in a positive, energetic and sustainable way.

“In the meantime I can only thank you for your unwavering support for the team and for your continued patience as we work towards implementing change.

“Without its supporters, the Club is nothing. With its supporters, the Club can again achieve great things.”