

Ann Budge says Hearts will not vote for SPFL proposal

Hearts owner

Ann Budge has said the club will not be voting in favour of the SPFL's proposal

to end the 2019/20 season now saying "surely it cannot be impossible for

Scottish Football's Governing bodies to modify rules to get things done"

Hearts are four points adrift at the foot of the Ladbrokes Premiership. The SPFL's proposal is for the season for the Championship and Leagues One and Two to be curtailed now with teams promoted/relegated on their present league standings. If the proposal is approved it is likely a similar decision on the Premiership will follow.

Hearts last

night issued the following statement from Mrs Budge on the club's official website:

"Following the SPFL briefings held today and having now had the opportunity (post meeting) to read the written resolution being proposed, I can

confirm that Heart of Midlothian will not be voting in favour of the proposal as it stands.

Over the past 24 hours, in advance of today's meetings, a number of Clubs have been discussing possible options and sharing ideas. Many of those Clubs believe, as we do, that a decision of such magnitude requires significantly more discussion and debate than has been made available to us.

I absolutely understand that finding an equitable outcome for all will not be easy. However, I firmly believe that we must try to find a solution which ensures that no Club should be penalised as a consequence of these exceptional circumstances.

It was emphasised today that some clubs, particularly those in the lower Leagues, need funds to be released to help them navigate their way through this exceptional situation. I do not accept however, that this resolution needs to be passed in order to release those funds. If the Government can change the Laws of the Land, within 24 hours, to cope with this crisis, then surely it cannot be impossible for Scottish Football's Governing bodies to modify rules to get things done. This is a time for pragmatism, not rules. There are other ways of addressing the current financial challenges and as such we will be supporting the Members Resolution being put forward by Rangers.

I wrote to the SPFL on the 15th March, asking that all 42 clubs be given the opportunity and time to discuss this situation fully. That has not happened, and we now find ourselves once again in apparent disarray. For the avoidance of doubt, I am not pointing fingers at the SPFL Executive, nor indeed at the Board, as I know how much effort has gone into trying to find a way through this totally unprecedented situation. However, an issue of this scale was always going to demand full involvement of the member Clubs.

I also asked that we try to see this as an opportunity to look at whether a league restructure, so often talked about, could help us through this difficult time. I was disappointed to read in the papers issued today that it will be considered, but it was also stated that "...it is very difficult to achieve consensus behind any restructuring proposal, let alone quickly". This is an emergency situation, and Clubs acknowledge, and many accept that it needs actions befitting an emergency situation. Decisions taken to see us through this emergency do not have to be cast in stone. We need to look at the restructuring option with belief that it will help and not with negativity.

This is a time for all Clubs and SPFL partners to pull together to find an equitable solution for all. If something is right, it

is right: if it is wrong, it is wrong. We will continue to lobby for doing the right thing, both for Clubs and for Scottish Football.”