

Rod Petrie says fixture postponements ‘deeply regrettable’ but ‘unavoidable and uncontestable.’

Rod Petrie has described the postponement of Celtic and Aberdeen fixtures following breaches of COVID-19 protocols as ‘deeply regrettable’ but ‘unavoidable and uncontestable.’

During further discussions with the Minister and government advisers, the SFA’s Joint Response Group (JRG) has offered to work on a range of measures which will involve the whole of professional football in Scotland to underpin a commitment to raising public health awareness and reaffirm the collective responsibility of the national game.

Petrie said: “The Joint Response Group has acted swiftly and decisively in addressing the latest concerns raised by the minister on behalf of Scottish Government. While the decision to postpone these games is deeply regrettable nevertheless in the circumstances it is unavoidable and uncontestable.



The Lord Provost Donald Wilson with Sir Tom Farmer, Alan Stubbs and Rod Petrie at the civic reception for Hibs in 2016
“The JRG members were astounded to learn of the recklessness demonstrated by Boli Bolingoli-Mbombo in his breach of government public health guidance and football protocols. We echo the sentiments of Celtic FC in their condemnatory statement and commend the club’s swiftness in opening a

disciplinary investigation.

“That this comes on the back of eight Aberdeen players showing similar disregard for public health is disrespectful not just to every football team-mate, fellow player and colleague but also to every fan in this country. It is also hugely damaging to the image, reputation and sustainability of the game.

“We sympathise with the position this puts the Scottish Government in as the country is tentatively easing its way out of lockdown restrictions.

“We agree wholeheartedly with the unequivocal message relayed to managers and captains by the National Clinical Director for Scotland, Professor Jason Leitch, last night. Clubs and players are in no doubt that there is now no more margin for error and no more scope for further breaches.

“Since March, the Joint Response Group has worked hand-in-hand with government advisers and medical experts to ensure a safe return for the professional game, with clubs undertaking to fulfil their obligations.

“Players must heed the warning of the First Minister that this is a yellow-card moment for Scottish football.

Neil Doncaster, SPFL Chief Executive added: “We have only been able to restart matches thanks to the enormous efforts and sacrifices of literally thousands of people across the Scottish game. For anyone to put that in jeopardy in such a thoughtless and selfish manner is just beyond belief.

“The vast majority of players and officials who have strictly observed the necessary restrictions will rightly see this as a real kick in the teeth.

“Everyone knows that this season’s fixture schedule is already horrendously tight without having to reschedule matches because of the irresponsible actions of a handful of players.”