

SPFL reiterate 'severe reservations' on ability of part-time clubs to complete 22-game season

The SPFL Board met yesterday at short notice to consider a number of requests from League 1 and League 2 clubs.

The requests were: To approve the recommencement of League matches on 20 March; to revisit the SPFL's concerns about a 22-Match Season including a 'split' after Match round 18; to schedule League 1 and League 2 League matches up to and including 15 May (i.e., two weeks later than planned); and to delay the start date of the Championship/League 1 and League 1/League 2 Play-Off matches from 5th May to 19th May.



The SPFL Board approved the recommencement of League 1 and League 2 League Matches on 20 March. However, the Board remains concerned regarding the realistic ability of League 1 and League 2 Clubs to complete a 22-match Season, including the introduction of a new 'split' in each Division.

Such a fixture schedule would mean one Club in each half of the 'split' sitting out one round of fixtures post-split, including the final day of the season. It would also severely constrain the flexibility of the SPFL to schedule fixtures in the event of future disruption from Covid-19 and risks part-time clubs being required to play Saturday-Tuesday-Thursday-Saturday. It is also guaranteed that a minimum of one League 1 or 2 club will reach Round 4 of the Scottish Cup, creating further fixturing challenges.

However, the SPFL Board respects the right of League 1 and League 2 clubs to determine how many League Matches they wish to play this season. The SPFL Board has therefore asked the League 1 and League 2 representatives to consider how they would wish the Board to deal with any Club unable to complete a 22-match programme in the time available. Only then will the Board be able to consider the requests to push back the dates of the Play-Offs.

SPFL Chairman Murdoch MacLennan commented: "We are pleased that League 1 and League 2 clubs have come together to propose a way forward for the resumption of their season. However, it's our duty to underline that the SPFL Board has severe reservations about the practicality of part-time clubs being able to complete a 22-game season, including a 'split', in time to compete in the end of season play-offs.

"In the Board's view, an 18-game season would have created far more flexibility but, that said, we respect the right of League 1 and League 2 clubs to determine how many games they will play this season."