

# Ron Gordon says that season ticket sales will be crucial for Hibs' success

Hibernian FC chairman Ron Gordon issued a rallying call to everyone associated with the club as it looked to the future during the Annual General Meeting.

Ongoing Covid restrictions prevented this year's meeting from being held in person at Easter Road, but hopes remain high that the outlook for football in general and fans being able to return to grounds is much brighter.



Scottish Premiership – Hibernian v Kilmarnock.  
Easter Road Stadium, Edinburgh, Midlothian, UK.  
16/01/2021

Hibs play host to Kilmarnock in the Scottish Premier League at Easter road, Edinburgh.

Pic shows: Hibs' Cypriot midfielder, Alexander Gogic, is mobbed by teammates after scoring the home side's 2nd and decisive goal.

Credit: Ian Jacobs

During a wide-ranging and varied AGM via Zoom, the chairman put on record his heartfelt thanks to season ticket holders, the players and coaching staff, and the entire team at Hibernian FC for their tireless work behind the scenes to help the club navigate the public health and financial challenges of the ongoing pandemic.

Building on that platform, and against the backdrop of finances being severely impacted by Covid-19, the importance of a successful season ticket campaign for the upcoming

2021/22 season cannot be underestimated as the club strives for further success on and off the pitch.

“It has been a challenging year but a very exciting and promising year,” the chairman said.

“At the end of the day, we’ve built a very solid foundation and we have some very good momentum.

“But I want to stress the importance of all of us working together to keep the club moving forward.

“Season tickets will therefore be crucial to our success – it’s the base on which we are built, and I would love to see if we can break some records in that respect.”

With over 11,000 season tickets sold last season, fans learned that next season’s ticket prices will be frozen at current prices, while there will also be a number of benefits for those who renew.

The chairman revealed that the year ahead promises to be an exciting one, with the prospect of European football and further investment planned to improve the first team squad and the Development Squad.

Off the field, the club is progressing with its appointment of a new chief executive, while plans for an enhanced matchday experience are also in the pipeline.

“We think matchdays should be a celebration of the club and football, and we want to make sure that’s reflected in our matchday offering,” he added.

Kiosks at Easter Road are to be rebranded and upgraded, content on the website and social media platforms will be enhanced, and a new Hibs membership programme will be developed over the coming months.

Meanwhile, capital investment will also be made at Easter Road

and at the Hibernian Training Centre.

Big HD screens, hospitality investments and other work will all contribute to an “enhanced stadium look and feel” moving forward, while long-awaited pitch refurbishments will be carried out in the summer.

In terms of HTC, pitches there will be refurbished, and both player facilities and indoor training areas will also be improved as the club looks to maximise HTC’s potential by developing a masterplan for the resource.

“I think we feel that this is one area that is under-utilised, but I think this would take the club to another level,” the chairman continued.

“We want to be a leading club in Scotland and having an infrastructure that supports that commitment is crucial.

“The club is going to continue to improve and perform at the highest level we can.”

Manager Jack Ross would have been delighted to hear money will be available to spend in the summer, and he is hoping fans will be back in force sooner rather than later.

“The support we’ve had has been absolutely incredible, and it’s been a significant driver for us as a group this season,” he said.

“Hopefully we can reward that by giving them something exciting to look forward to next season.”

The AGM came after the club last month revealed that Covid-19 had had a negative impact on finances, with turnover down 17% to £8.9m from £10.8m the previous year. Although some operating costs were cut due to the early conclusion of last season, the club still recorded an operating loss of £1.4m, and ultimately a net loss of £1.2 million in the year.

However, while the loss during the year was significant, the club held a cash position at June 30, 2020, of approximately £5.3m, a slight decrease from the previous year end position of £5.5m, with cash received from historical player sales and season ticket revenue during the final three months of the season boosting this position.

Asked about bids for key players in January being rejected because the club was financially sound or because the bids were derisory, the chairman revealed it was a "little bit of both".

"The club is in a good position to be the master of its own destiny," he added.

The chairman also revealed that all of the clubs in the Scottish Premiership have been collaborating as best as they can to meet the challenges of the pandemic and bring about the safe return of supporters as soon as possible.

He noted: "We all need to work together to help the game and help our product as a league.

"At the same time, there is no club that has not gone unscathed by the pandemic.

"I'm encouraged by the pacing of the vaccinations and the work that's being done, and leagues around Europe are starting to see fans back.

"It's all moving in the right direction and I would hope that by the beginning of the season we will be able to allow some supporters back into Easter Road."