

CLUB UPDATE: Statement from the Board of Directors 02/05/2020

Dartford Football Club has seen a number of milestones in its long history but recent weeks since lock down have seen the Board chalk up another when it began holding Board Meetings online.

The Board have discussed a whole range of subjects including both the outcome of this season and the preparation for the next, maintaining the financial stability of the club and how our facilities might be used to help both residents and the authorities as our local community wrestles with the Coronavirus outbreak. We also recorded the amazing response from supporters and sponsors who have helped finances by increasing their shareholding and committing financially to the club.

We will be making announcements about the future of the current Vanarama season as soon as we are able but we can confirm that the Board has continued to press for a sporting outcome and to prepare for playoffs and promotion should the league decide to take that route.

Clearly, whilst football is important to all of us at the club, the number one priority is the safety and wellbeing of supporters, staff and players alike. These are unprecedented days and we will respond flexibly to any decision the league takes.

I thought you might like to know about a decision taken by the Board in relation to contracted players and our non-playing staff.

It's no exaggeration to say that one of the things that differentiates Dartford Football Club from some clubs is that we consider ourselves to be a family. When we celebrate success we celebrate together and we have a setback we support each other. There has been much talk of higher league clubs asking players to accept reductions in pay and other clubs further down the pyramid offering only the Government's 80% guarantee to support furloughed players and staff.

Dartford Football Club supports our family of staff and players. There are no lavish pay deals at our level and the relatively modest rewards our players and staff enjoy are crucial to supporting their families. The Board therefore had no hesitation in agreeing to meet the full pay of playing and non-playing staff in line with their contracts. We know this has been appreciated by members of the DFC playing and backroom staff and we are pleased to have made this decision.

The extraordinary situation now facing our club, community and country could never have been anticipated but it does shine a spotlight once again on the wisdom of ensuring that DFC is well managed and lives within its means. Because of that approach to everything we do, I am able to say with confidence that the issues now facing the club relate not to survival, but to recovery. The decisions we face are not concerned with 'if' we play and compete next season but 'how' and 'when'.

We are also looking outward to help the community. Although the stadium remains closed to visitors it continues to be used for the ambulance patient transport and we are now accommodating more vehicles to help them at this time, their staff are also using our facilities for important training and meeting requirements in support of the health service. We have also held preliminary discussions with authorities about the future use of Princes Park as a centre for testing or immunisation and whilst the outcome of those discussions is a matter for the relevant authorities, we stand ready to help and will put the stadium at the disposal of the community should it be needed.

Football is embedded in the character of our society and we have a major role to play in helping our supporters and community return to a sense of normality as soon as it is possible. Today, nothing matters but the health, safety and wellbeing of local people but in the months ahead we will be playing our part in helping get our community back on its feet and able to benefit again from everything that football has to offer. As soon as we are able to do so, we will open the doors again and welcome everyone back to Princes Park.

As soon as we have an outcome of this season from the league, we can start to let all supporters know plans for next season and information regarding Season Tickets and Players will be announced in due course.

In conclusion, all of us at Dartford Football Club hope that you and your family and close friends, keep safe and well. We look forward to be able to meet up again at our magnificent stadium as soon as is possible, to be able to support the club and each other once again.

Steve Irving

Co-Chairman

On behalf of everyone at Dartford FC.

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