



ND/MS

24 June 2019

Margaret Mitchell MSP
Convener, Justice Committee
c/o Justice Committee Clerks
Room T2.60
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

by email only: Stephen.Imrie@parliament.scot

Dear Ms Mitchell

SPFL data on Unacceptable Conduct at SPFL matches

Many thanks for your letter of 21 June 2019.

For the avoidance of doubt, the data that we compile on SPFL Matches relates to Unacceptable Conduct at such matches.

Unacceptable Conduct is a wide term, which is defined in SPFL Rules on the subject at Rules H25 to H32 inclusive, as follows:

H25 A person present at or in a stadium where an Official Match is being played engages in Unacceptable Conduct where their conduct is violent and/or disorderly.

H26 Conduct is violent where there is (i) actual, attempted or threatened physical violence against a person or persons; or (ii) intentional damage to property.

H27 Disorderly conduct includes

H27.1 conduct which stirs up or sustains or is likely or designed to stir up or sustain, hatred or ill will against or towards a group of persons based on their membership or presumed membership of a group defined by reference to a category mentioned in Rule H29 or against an individual who is or is presumed to be a member of such group;

H27.2 using threatening, abusive or insulting words or conduct;

H27.3 displaying any writing or other thing which is threatening, abusive or insulting; and

H27.4 using words or conduct or displaying any writing or other thing which indicates support for, or affiliation to, or celebration of, or opposition to an organisation or group proscribed in terms of the Terrorism Act 2000.

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H28 *Presumed in the context of Rule H27.1 means presumed by the person or persons engaged in the conduct.*

H29 *The categories referred to in Rule H27 are:-*

H29.1 *female or male gender;*

H29.2 *colour, race, nationality (including citizenship) or ethnic or national origin;*

H29.3 *membership of a religious group or of a social or cultural group with a perceived religious affiliation;*

H29.4 *sexual orientation;*

H29.5 *transgender identity; and*

H29.6 *disability.*

H30 *In Rule H29.3 religious group means a group of persons defined by reference to their religious belief or lack of religious belief, membership of or adherence to a church or religious organisation, support for the culture and traditions of a church or religious organisation and/or participation in activities associated with such a culture or such traditions.*

H31 *In Rule H29.5 transgender identity means any one or more of transvestism, transsexualism, inter-sexuality or change of gender.*

H32 *In Rule H29.6 disability means physical or mental impairment of any kind.*

SPFL Rules can be found at our website at www.spfl.co.uk. Detailed Guidance for Clubs on Unacceptable Conduct is set out at Annex 7 of that document.

We have recorded all reported incidents of Unacceptable Conduct at all SPFL Matches at which an SPFL Match Delegate is present (which includes all Ladbrokes Premiership Matches) for the last two Seasons, 2017/18 and 2018/19 and have compiled regular reports on the same, which we have shared with the Cabinet Secretary for Justice on the basis that they are confidential and are not published.

I spoke with the Cabinet Secretary for Justice on Tuesday 18 June. In that telephone conversation, he requested that the SPFL reconsider its stance and publish reports on Unacceptable Conduct at SPFL Matches and followed up his call with a formal written request.

I have agreed that the question of whether the SPFL will agree to publish reports on Unacceptable Conduct at SPFL Matches will be discussed at the next meeting of the Board of the SPFL.

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I trust that the above is helpful. If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'ND', with a large, sweeping flourish extending upwards and to the right.

Neil Doncaster
Chief Executive

cc Humza Yousaf MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice