

JS



DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT  
2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB

01-212 3434

My ref:

Your ref:

*4* July 1985

*Dear Mr Addison*

FOOTBALL LEAGUE SURVIVAL PLAN

In case the Prime Minister is asked today about the Football League's announcement yesterday of their "survival plan", I attach a background note and line to take. We had no advance warning of this announcement; there have been no discussions of any such "plan". A DOE Official met the President of the League Mr Jack Dunnett, and FA and other football representatives, at The Football Trust on Tuesday but there was no reference to yesterday's meeting or to any announcement; nor have we had anything as yet from the Gen. Sec of the Football League.

*Yours sincerely*

*Paul Heron*

PAUL HERON  
Private Secretary

Mark Addison Esq MP

BRIEF FOR PRIME MINISTER'S QUESTIONS

FOOTBALL LEAGUE'S "SURVIVAL PLAN"

LINE TO TAKE

We have not formally received the so called 10 point Football League Survival Plan, and it has not been mentioned in our many discussions with the football authorities. The Minister for Sport has another meeting of his Working Group next week (11 July) when this Plan may be put forward. I would merely note that 7 of the 10 points appear to be for Government; we are, of course, looking for action from football itself, to restore its good name and public confidence.

Membership Cards

I understand that the Football League Chairman came to the view that a national scheme could not be ready by the new season. A number of clubs are setting up their own schemes. The Football League has established a Working Group to examine a possible system in detail.

## BACKGROUND

Football League Chairmen met in London yesterday under the Chairmanship of Mr Jack Dunnett to discuss progress so far on crowd control and safety measures and on the TV negotiations. The meeting had before it a paper from Jack Dunnett on membership cards. A press announcement was made at the close of a 10 point "Survival Plan" for the League and of Chairmen's rejection of a national membership card scheme, at least in time for the new season.

A note of the 10 points in the "plan" is attached. Seven of them concern action by Government. There is an emphasis upon finance; the "plan" is obviously concerned with "survival", as clubs fear that a further drop in attendances combined with increased costs on crowd control and safety will lead to some closures. They expect Government action and financial help with their problems.

On membership cards, the Dunnett paper argued against a national scheme. Chairmen were in agreement, but on Dunnett's advice agreed to the Management Committee's proposal that a Working Group should be established with the Football Trust to examine the option in detail. So the proposal is not rejected in principle; but the League hope that the Government will eventually be persuaded, by the Working Group's report, that a national card scheme is not viable.

2.

The FA/FL solution for crowd control in the short term is more policing - for which they will expect HMG to pay. They want more police inside the ground and to secure the effectiveness of making away matches for problem clubs all ticket. DOE and Home Office officials are considering the practical and financial implications of this proposal, ready for discussion with the FA/FL in the Minister's Working Group next Thursday 11 July.

It must be regretted that the Football League should announce plans to the Press without warning or consultation. They feel under pressure on membership cards, from the Government and the media (they appear to fear a major change of this kind in their routine). There is evidence too of disagreement between the two bodies and with some of the main clubs. These arguments may come out into the open.

## FOOTBALL LEAGUE'S "10 POINT SURVIVAL PLAN"

1. Individual club membership card schemes, instead of a national scheme
2. Executive boxes to be exempted from the alcohol ban
3. More morning kick-offs
4. More all ticket games
5. Support Government's Public Order Bill
6. Convicted hooligans to be banned from matches for 5 years
7. More police in grounds, cost to be met by the Government
8. More surveillance inside grounds
9. Severer sentences
10. Reduction in Pools Betting duty of 2½%.