

LETTER

It's a gamble not an investment

SO the big WWFC sell-off debate has started, and the red herrings are flying left, right and centre.

The debate is a huge and complex one which I could not hope to cover fully in this letter, especially as we have no idea what the Board of Directors are even proposing yet.

I can fully appreciate that Ivor Beeks, Graham Peart and their fellow directors feel that they have reached the limit of what they can achieve within the current constraints and they have done a marvellous job getting us this far. However, I would like to point out a few vital things to those fans who think that simply throwing money at the problem will solve things.

All clubs in the Nationwide League lose money. Therefore to refer to these who may inject £8 million into the club as 'investors' is strange. Hopefully some

of the cash will be used improving the youth system, but most of it will go, like other clubs, into the team. It will go on better players, on inflated wages, on a big push for Division One.

It may work, it may not, there are many examples of both. However, £8 million will not last long, then what? How do we maintain these salaries, and buying replacements at Division One prices? And what if it fails, and we have the inflated wage bill, but are still in Division Two?

The fact is, in the longer term, every club has to live within its means, and whilst we are stuck with very poor access, very poor parking and an apathetic public with no history of watching football, we are always going to have limited crowds. If the plan works, we may have a brief spell in Division One, but we will then sink back to our natural level.

The only way that you can maintain an existence at a higher level than your attendances and social income allow, is to have a constant injection of cash, like

at Reading, Wolves and Blackburn, where no cash-return is demanded, and that is not what is being proposed for WWFC. Even Mr Madejski may wonder how much longer he can go on.

I very much trust Ivor Beeks to ensure that those who buy into the club will be those people who genuinely care. However, when the money has been spent, and it doesn't look like an investment any more, then those people will look to get out. They will then try to recoup their losses, which means selling to the highest bidder. You are then in the same situation as many clubs, you are at the mercy of the money men.

Once control is in the hands of one, or a few, then the rules change. Look down the clubs in the third division and almost every single one has the same story to tell.

Unfortunately you can also look to the more extreme examples of Doncaster, Carlisle, Brighton, Maidstone and Dartford.

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