

Proposed Football (Strict Liability) (Scotland) Bill

Page 2: About you

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

an individual

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

Member of the public

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

No Response

Please choose one of the following; if you choose the first option, please provide your name or the name of your organisation as you wish it to be published.

I would like this response to be anonymous (the response may be published, but no name)

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number. We will not publish these details.

[REDACTED]

Page 7: Your views on the proposal

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposal to introduce strict liability for football clubs in Scotland?

Fully Supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response

As you know Sectarianism is an extremely divisive, corrosive issue in Scottish society. Unfortunately bigotry seems to sell so some clubs have not addressed sinister and malevolent aspects of their support. The Scottish Football Association and SPFL are completely useless in this and many other areas. Unless strict liability is imposed on two or three clubs they will have no reason to reduce bigotry and racial hatred within their support. Once clubs are docked points for the unacceptable behaviour of their supporters the true fans will self police, much in the way that the Tartan Army controls its image and the behaviour of Scottish Supporters. This is not the only thing that should be done to reduce sectarianism, but it would be an important start as some teams are used to generate and inculcate sectarianism. One club in particular has some followers who cause crime, associate with Westminster government death squads and

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposal to introduce strict liability for football clubs in Scotland?

perpetuate attitudes that are totally unacceptable in a modern country. Unfortunately UEFA and FIFA have also completely failed to combat sectarianism in Scotland. Strict liability is a necessary precondition to reducing "Scotland's Shame" and ridding the beautiful game of the "wreckers".

Q2. Could the aims of this proposal be better delivered in another way (without a Bill in the Scottish Parliament)?

Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response

Perhaps UEFA and FIFA could be persuaded to take their responsibilities on combating sectarianism seriously.

Q3. What do you think would be the main advantages, if any, of holding clubs responsible for the behaviour of their supporters?

To make it common knowledge amongst sometimes very dim people that some aspects of "culture" are not acceptable in Modern Scotland. i.e singing songs about beeing up to knees in the blood of Catholics and strike breaking. There is an extremely corrosive and damaging subculture in Scotland that draws on these "90 minute bigots" as a well of support. They would never get away with their crimes if expressing bigotry was demonstrated as damaging to the clubs involved. This would become normalised attitudes within a generation I hope. These institutions desperately need to cleanse themselves of the toxic baggage of the past. When I was in the USA in the nineties people there were very clear in telling me that one football match in particular was used to divide Scotland and Ireland.

Q4. What do you think would be the main disadvantages, if any, of holding clubs responsible for the behaviour of their supporters?

This should not be used to criminalise supporters, but should be focussed on changing attitudes towards sectarianism.

Page 11: Behaviours and sanctions

Q5. If there is to be a system of strict liability, which of the following behaviours do you think should be covered (choose all that apply)--

The lighting of fireworks or any other incendiary objects

The use of laser pointers or similar electronic devices

Abusive or offensive language or messages (including verbal abuse of any person by reference to their race, sex, sexual orientation, religion or belief or disability)

Q5. If there is to be a system of strict liability, which of the following behaviours do you think should be covered (choose all that apply)--

Please explain the reasons for your response Singing the "old" disgraceful songs anywhere.

Q6. If there is to be a system of strict liability, which of the following sanctions do you think should be available (choose all that apply)--

Warning/reprimand

Fine

Match-specific penalties (e.g. annulment of result; requiring a match to be replayed; forfeiting a match)

Competition-specific penalties (e.g. deduction of points; withdrawal of title; disqualification/exclusion)

Playing of a match behind closed doors (i.e. fans not able to attend)

Partial stadium closure (i.e. certain sections of a stadium closed to fans)

Please explain the reasons for your response Banning Individuals from all Scottish Football.

Page 13: Financial implications

Q7. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:

	Significant increase in cost	Some increase in cost	Broadly costneutral	Some reduction in cost	Significant reduction in cost	Unsure
(a) Football clubs		X				
(b) Football supporters and other individuals		X				
(c) Scottish Government and public sector bodies (such as Police Scotland)		X				

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Fines should be used against clubs and persistent offenders. There would be some costs in legislating, processing and enforcing strict liability for Scottish Govmt and public sector. However, hopefully it would lead to less assaults and domestic abuse on the day of the old firm.

Page 14: Equalities

Q8. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected characteristics (under the Equality Act 2010): age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation?

Positive

Please explain the reasons for your response

There is a minority of people in Scotland who think it is ok and even admirable to display anti-catholic or anti protestant behaviour. As few of these people go to church or chapel the religious insults, hatred is less about religion and more about fitting in with their own social groups. As such if these groups can be encouraged to look upon such behaviour unfavourably because of the effect on the team they love e.g fines points deductions then this behaviour will be seen for what it really is: toxic bigotry that causes harm to innocent members of society.

Q9. In what ways could any negative impact of the proposed Bill on any of these protected characteristics be minimised or avoided?

This should be focused as an anti-sectarianist Bill. Anyone opposing it would therefore be condoning bigotry.

Page 16: Sustainability of the proposal

Q10. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably, i.e. without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impacts?

Yes

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Fines can be put towards youth football or admirable initiatives, such as Calton Athletic.

Page 17: General

Q11. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal to introduce strict liability for football clubs in Scotland?

FIFA and UEFA, THE SFA and SPFL have shamefully failed to address this for decades. They should be held to account on the damage that sectarianism causes to Scottish Society. I have a feeling that UEFA especially would be supportive at the moment. The SFA and SPFL need to be looked at as I have been closely monitoring them for many years and they add little to the Beautiful game in Scotland, but cost a lot and largely entrench the sectarian hatred generated by the old firm.