

# SPORT

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## NATIONAL League holds back on making decision Sport bosses worried



Wealdstone will have to wait longer to find out if they have been promoted or not

Picture: MontImageMedia

### FINANCIAL IMPACT OF VIRUS CAUSING GREAT CONCERN



Picture: John Walton/PA Wire

SPORTS bosses have outlined the potential for huge financial losses due to the coronavirus pandemic in evidence given to the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport committee on Tuesday.

English Football League chairman Rick Parry, England and Wales Cricket Board chief executive Tom Harrison and Rugby Football Union chief executive Bill Sweeney were among those questioned by MPs.

Parry has warned EFL clubs face a £200million financial hole by September while Harrison said the impact of the pandemic could cost the ECB £380m.

Sweeney revealed the RFU, which has already lost £15 million due to the crisis, will lose a total of £107 million if the autumn internationals are cancelled.

Asked in a worst-case scenario how many EFL clubs might go out of business, Parry said: "That's a difficult one to answer."

"We are heading for a financial hole of about £200m by the end of September that we will need to fill. Clubs are stacking up creditors as well."

"We have a great deal of uncertainty around next season of course, the great undetermined matter being when we're going to return to play in front of crowds, which for the EFL is absolutely critical."

"We're much more dependent on revenue - and indeed much more dependent on the atmosphere generated by crowds potentially than the Premier League."

Parry also said the EFL expected three clubs to be promoted from the Championship to the Premier League, or "the lawyers are going to get wealthy."

# League to wait for EFL

By Ryan Gray

THE future of the National League will remain unclear until next week at the earliest, following a meeting on Tuesday at which it was decided that the outcome of the English Football League would guide any decisions made on how the season should be ended.

The meeting saw 65 of the 68 clubs involved in the three National League divisions discussing possible ways in which the season could be concluded, after it was decided last week that all remaining games would be cancelled due to the unpredictable nature of the coronavirus outbreak.

The league is understood to be keen to keep its two promotion places to the EFL and are happy enough to wait for them to come to a conclusion about the best way to sort out their leagues before making any decisions of their own.

Teams in the National League remain divided on the best way to sort out the remainder of the season, with those in play-off places still keen to try and push for promotions, while others are happy

for this season to be scrapped and to start again with the 2020/21 season, once it is safe for teams to return.

If the EFL chooses to cancel all its remaining fixtures, then it could be that no one is relegated from League Two, but one team from the National League is still promoted, with Bury's departure from League One leaving a spot open.

Currently the National League have until June 1 to complete any matches, should they allow play-off games to go ahead, as they are yet to apply to the FA Council for an extension to the deadline.

Whether or not they apply for one, will depend on the EFL's decision to either complete their remaining matches or cancel them.

The National League has left all options on the table and is also believed to have discussed the possibility of expunging all results.

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