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Dear Neil,

The disorder that marred the 2016 Scottish Cup Final highlighted the importance of football taking action to address unacceptable conduct. I note the rule changes and associated guidance put in place by the SPFL and Scottish FA following those shameful scenes, obliging clubs to ensure all reasonable measures are taken to prevent and address issues. I also note the revised SPFL mechanism which will be put in place to deal with any cases of unacceptable conduct, ensuring club representatives are no longer involved.

You have confirmed that information on instances of unacceptable conduct across the SPFL – and appropriate Scottish Cup fixtures – will now be collated and shared with the Scottish Government on a regular basis. This data should be robust enough to shape any possible future policy and actions taken to eradicate offensive and abusive behaviour.

Data gathered over the course of the 2017-18 season will need to be evaluated to assess if the new measures introduced are sufficient. If that is not the case, I would expect further action to be identified and implemented by the football authorities. As part of that assessment, I expect the football authorities to give particular attention to any repeated offences, regardless of what reasonable measures have been taken by clubs in mitigation.

Unacceptable conduct should not be tolerated in any area of society, including football. Communities rightly expect all possible action to be taken to prevent and address it, and transparency and openness is crucial to strengthening public confidence. It is difficult to see how the building of public confidence can be achieved without being open and transparent with the data gathered. I am therefore disappointed that the data gathered will not be publically available and I hope that you will reconsider this decision.

I am copying this letter to Scottish FA chief executive Stewart Regan.

**MICHAEL MATHESON MSP**