

**IN THE MATTER OF A REGULATORY COMMISSION OF THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION  
BETWEEN:**

**THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION**

**-and-**

**JOSHUA HAIGH**

Regulatory Commission:

David Casement K.C. (Chairperson) – Independent Specialist Panel Member

Sally Davenport – Independent Legal Panel Member

Bradley Pritchard – Independent Football Panel Member

Paddy McCormack – Judicial Services Manager – Secretary

Rebecca Turner – Head of Regulatory Legal

The Complainant - Witness

Witness A – Witness

Witness B – Witness

Anna Benjamin – Observer

Joshua Haigh – Rochdale A.F.C., Head Groundsman

George Delves – Rochdale A.F.C., Chief Operating Officer

## WRITTEN DECISION OF THE REGULATORY COMMISSION

### Introduction

1. This case involves a serious case of alleged Misconduct by a Head Groundsman towards a member of the media after a football match. By charge letter dated 15 June 2023 The Football Association charged Joshua Haigh with Misconduct namely conduct that was abusive and/or insulting and/or improper contrary to Rule E3.1. It was further alleged that Mr Haigh acted in breach of Rule E3.2 in that he used words that included a reference, whether express or implied, to race and/or colour. The burden of proof rests upon The Football Association to prove the charge brought on the balance of probabilities.
2. Mr Haigh is one of the Head Groundsmen at Rochdale Association Football Club (“Rochdale”), a club that was playing in League 2. It is not in dispute that on 21 February 2023 after the match between Rochdale and Stockport County Football Club (“Stockport”) there was an altercation between Mr Haigh and the Complainant, a [REDACTED] presenter. It is alleged that during the course of the altercation Mr Haigh said to the Complainant “Look at your fucking shit trainers. It’s exactly the same as your fucking shit hair and your shit skin. I see all of it. I see everything that’s about you.”
3. On 20 June 2023 Mr Haigh filed a response form denying the charge and requesting a personal hearing. In further response to the charge letter Mr Haigh wrote to The Football Association on 4 July 2023 stating “whilst I can accept that my conduct in terms of the general confrontation may potentially be deemed improper as per The FA Rule E.3.1, I continue to contest the alleged “aggravated breach” as per The FA Rule E3.2 in the strongest possible terms, as I did not make reference whether express or implied, to race and/or colour.”
4. The issues before the Commission were as follows:
  - 4.1 Whether Mr Haigh use the words alleged;
  - 4.2 If those words were used by Mr Haigh, on an objective interpretation of those words, do they amount to an Aggravated Breach contrary to The FA Rule E3.2;

- 4.3 If the breach is made out what is the appropriate and proportionate sanction in respect of the breach.
5. The hearing of the case before the Regulatory Commission took place by way of video-conference with the consent of the parties on 19 September and 5 October 2023.

### **Background**

6. The evening match on 21 February 2023 was hosted by Rochdale who lost by two goals to one. After the match had concluded it was anticipated that there would be post-match interviews conducted with the managers of the respective teams. The Complainant was working as a presenter [REDACTED] and had been working in the gantry area along with other members of the media and cameramen including those working for the clubs that were playing and the English Football League. The gantry at the Crown Oil Arena is located on the opposite side of the pitch to the dugout and the tunnel. This was the first time that the Complainant had attended this ground and although he had worked at other grounds in the North or England he usually worked in the South of England. That may be relevant to the extent of the Complainant's knowledge of the precise layout of the ground including its exits as well as the approach taken at Rochdale to a member of the media walking on the pitch to attend a post-match interview.
7. The CCTV footage shows that at 9:51pm the Complainant stepped onto the pitch carrying his bags and made his way walking parallel to the halfway line directly towards the dugout on the far side where he expected to conduct interviews. The footage shows that two other people had already crossed the pitch in the same way a minute before. It was unclear if they were analysts and/or other members of the media. Several other people were on the pitch at the time, who may have been children playing.
8. As the Complainant was on or near the centre circle he was approached by Mr Haigh, who along with other groundsmen, had been working on the pitch. Unfortunately the CCTV did not have audio and therefore the Commission has to rely upon the video footage as supplemented by the evidence of the witnesses to understand what was said

and when it was said. Another practical difficulty is that that the CCTV footage cut off at 10pm in accordance with Rochdale's usual practice. The actual incident giving rise to the charge is said to have occurred just after that cut-off point.

9. Mr Haigh's account given in interviews with The Football Association that took place on 28 and 29 March 2023 is that in his capacity as a Head Groundsman he approached the Complainant and politely asked him to get off the pitch and told him that he was not allowed to be on it. The Complainant was said to be aggressive in response and told him he worked for [REDACTED]. Mr Haigh informed him politely that it did not matter who he worked for, he was not allowed to be on the pitch and should get off it. The Complainant contends that Mr Haigh was extremely aggressive towards him and shouting at him during this encounter. The Complainant says there was no racist abuse at that stage, only shouting and aggressive language from Mr Haigh. Although there is no audio with the CCTV it can be seen that the exchange was likely to have been heated.
10. The Complainant can then be seen continuing to walk across the pitch towards the dugout, after this exchange with Mr Haigh, and then entering the tunnel. At about 21:55pm the Complainant emerged from the tunnel. Around this point the Complainant was phoned by his [REDACTED] cameraman Witness A to be told there would be no post-match interview. After the Complainant emerged from the tunnel Mr Haigh walked from the goal where he was working over to the Complainant at the dugout. Mr Haigh said he went over because the Complainant was shouting at him and he wanted to know what his issue was. He was followed by two other groundsman. The Complainant on the other hand says Mr Haigh was shouting at him while walking towards him.
11. It is then common ground that the Complainant walked along the touch line towards the corner. The Complainant says this was to meet his cameraman Witness A who was on the far side. It is also common ground that Mr Haigh and at least one other groundsman walked alongside the Complainant albeit a few yards away, stride for stride. Mr Haigh says that the Complainant was walking partly on the pitch and partly off the pitch. In interview Mr Haigh was clear that at all times he kept his composure and was polite in asking the Complainant to remain off the pitch. He did not make any reference to the Complainant's skin colour or his appearance or trainers. Mr Haigh asserted that at

one point the Complainant said he was an MMA champion and was from Camden. It was at that point Mr Haigh called for stewards to escort the Complainant out of the stadium as he perceived that as a threat. The Complainant denies ever making that statement which he maintains does not make sense in any event because he was neither involved in MMA nor was he from Camden.

12. On the contrary, the Complainant contends that there was a continuation of the aggression and abusive language that he was met with when he encountered Mr Haigh on the pitch. In his witness statement the Complainant said “The groundsman followed me, hurling abuse, saying, “You’re a fucking this and you’re a fucking that. I’m sick and tired of your shit.” He said to me ‘I don’t even want you on the pitch, you need to be walking on the track or on the side. You need to be nowhere near my pitch. People like you shouldn’t be anywhere near the pitch.’ This is when he tapped me and said to me, ‘Look at your fucking shit trainers. It’s exactly the same as your fucking shit hair and your shit skin, I see all of it. I see everything that’s about you’.”
13. The stewards arrived after being called by Mr Haigh. There is a dispute about what if anything was said to the stewards. The Complainant says he indicated to one of the stewards who was black that a line had been crossed by Mr Haigh. The stewards have not provided evidence in these proceedings. In any event the Complainant was able to leave the stadium together with Witness A without being touched or escorted off by the stewards.

*Email sent at 10:58pm*

14. After he returned to his hotel in Manchester the Complainant wrote an email to senior personnel at [REDACTED] timed at 10:58pm. That email recounts that at the first encounter on the pitch Mr Haigh “proceeded to walk past both of the gentlemen walking with me and come over to me as an individual and start screaming and pointing in my face to ‘get off this f\*\*\*ing pitch’.” It appears the two gentlemen referred to by the Complainant were the two analysts and/or media people who had crossed the pitch a minute before. The email goes on to refer to Mr Haigh screaming “we all know who you are -that f\*\*\*\*\* fool off tv. You think you are special” and that Mr Haigh took

out his phone to record the Complainant. The email also stated that when the Complainant was leaving the stadium “[Mr Haigh] shouted more abuse about ‘my black converse resembling me and my appearance.’” The Complainant said “Honestly, this is by far the most disrespected and hurt I’ve ever felt at any ground in football...But at no point when I’m at a working environment do I expect to have four men surrounding me, be sworn at, squared up to and abused while I’m at work and profiled while I’m just trying to do my job. I feel sick to my stomach and to be honest in shock that this still happens.” During the course of his evidence before the Commission the Complainant was asked how he felt when he was writing that email. He said he was deflated.

### *Transcripts of Interview*

15. Mr Haigh was interviewed by The Football Association on 28 and 29 March 2023. His account of the incident some five weeks earlier could hardly be more different from that of the Complainant. He denied ever swearing at the Complainant and insisted he only ever made polite requests of the Complainant that he did not walk on the pitch. Mr Haigh said it was only the Complainant that was doing any shouting and that he felt threatened by the Complainant, in particular when he said he was a champion in MMA from Camden.
  
16. Mr Haigh accepted he brought out his phone at one point during the first encounter with the Complainant in the middle of the pitch but denied this was to record the Complainant. He said it was only to take a photograph as evidence of the Complainant walking on the pitch. Mr Haigh said “...I just didn’t know the [CCTV] cameras were going to be there, I just felt threatened, and then I wanted some kind of evidence on my phone to say I don’t want this person to come in again because he’s walked across my pitch, he’s ...made me feel threatened.” When pressed as to whether the photograph was to identify the Complainant, Mr Haigh said “No, it was just in case, because my point of view, once he continues to walk across the pitch after the way he spoke to me, I didn’t want him to be in the stadium again because the way he made me feel and the way he was shouting at me.” This is potentially significant because this provides some insight into Mr Haigh’s state of mind at the time of the first encounter with the Complainant, in the middle of the pitch. At this point Mr Haigh says he felt threatened

and did not want the Complainant to be allowed back into the stadium again, as a result of what transpired in that first initial encounter.

17. Mr Haigh maintained throughout interview that he remained calm and polite throughout: “Do you shout towards [the Complainant] at any point? No.” Mr Haigh denied swearing at the Complainant and when asked if the Complainant swore at him at any point he replied “I wouldn’t say he swore at me, he just threatened me with abuse.” Apart from the alleged reference to being an MMA Champion from Camden, which is denied by the Complainant, there was no particularity to this generalised allegation of abuse as opposed to shouting, and the Complainant asking why he, a [REDACTED] presenter, should have to walk around the pitch after a game when others had walked across it and there were children playing on it.
18. The charge brought by The Football Association against Mr Haigh is a serious allegation. Likewise the gist of the defence involved a serious allegation against the Complainant, namely that he had invented a false allegation. Mr Haigh maintains at no time did he shout nor was he impolite to Mr Haigh and he denies saying anything at all about his trainers, hair, skin or indeed anything about his appearance. This is not a case in which there is any real possibility of a misunderstanding or partial mishearing of actual words used by Mr Haigh.

### **The Rules**

19. The relevant rules in respect of breach are those as set out in The FA Handbook 2022/23 although the wording is the same as the current rules.

E3.1 A Participant shall at all times act in the best interests of the game and shall not act in any manner which is improper or brings the game into disrepute or use any one, or a combination of, violent conduct, serious foul play, threatening, abusive, indecent or insulting words or behaviour.

E3.2 A breach of Rule E3.1 is an “Aggravated Breach” where it includes a reference, whether express or implied, to any one or more of the following :- ethnic origin, colour,

race, nationality, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation or disability.

20. The Football Association drew attention to page 180 of The FA Handbook 2023/24 Appendix 1 which sets out the Standard Sanctions and Guidelines for Aggravated Breaches. This provides for a sanction range in respect of an Aggravated Breach against a Player, Manager or Technical Area Occupant will attract an immediate suspension of between 6 Matches and 12 Matches. Mr Haigh is not a Player, Manager or Technical Area Occupant.
21. Under the heading of Time-Based Suspension it is provided that a Regulatory Commission may assess that a Match-based suspension is not appropriate due to the specific circumstances of a case; the nature of the role of the Participant, and/or whether they are currently engaged by a Club. The Appendix also provides for a mandatory education programme. Further the non-exhaustive aggravating and mitigating factors are set out for consideration by the Commission.

### **Findings on the Evidence**

22. The Commission heard evidence from Mr Haigh and the Complainant. The Football Association also called Witness A, [REDACTED] cameraman, and also Witness B, an analyst and camera operator for Stockport. In addition The Football Association adduced the witness statement of Witness C, a commentator for Stockport County who had made himself available to give evidence on the first day of the hearing but was unable to attend on the second day. On behalf of Mr Haigh the following witness statements were adduced although the witnesses did not attend the hearing: Ben Ekins (Head of Physical Performance at Rochdale), Chris Bell (iFollow Commentator at Rochdale), Drew Duffy (Head Groundsman at Rochdale), Greg Jones (Head of Media at Rochdale), Harry McGuire (Freelance Photographer) and Sean McQuillan (Matchday Volunteer/Groundsman).
23. Each of the witnesses who attended to give evidence was the subject of cross-examination on behalf of the other party to test their evidence as well as questions



from the Commission. In respect of witnesses who did not attend, their statements are admissible and it is for the Commission to give them such weight as is deemed appropriate bearing in mind there has been no opportunity to test that evidence at the hearing.

24. The Commission has taken into account all of the evidence. The Commission bears in mind that recollections of what was said almost eight months ago may not be as reliable as accounts given nearer the time and in particular near contemporaneous recordings, written or otherwise. Allowances should also be made for the fact that in the heat of a stressful situation or altercation precise recollections about words used, timing and the order of events may not be entirely accurate. It is also important to bear in mind that just because a witness did not hear something being said, does not mean it was not said. There can be many reasons why a witness may not have heard or say they have not heard something that was in fact said.
25. In the present case the Commission is faced with a stark contrast in the two accounts given. The Commission must decide which of those two accounts is correct or whether there is any alternative more likely version of events. At different points during the hearing reference was made to this being one person's word against another. It is not as simple as that. There are pieces of evidence that are corroborative of certain aspects of the accounts and there is some evidence from third parties.
26. Mr Haigh sought to give the impression in interview that in his conversation with the Complainant near the middle of the pitch he was nothing other than polite and calm, merely asking the Complainant to get off the pitch without shouting at him. The Commission rejects that account by Mr Haigh as false. In cross-examination Mr Haigh admitted that "It escalated into an argument between us because he said he worked for ■■■." In answer to a question from the Chair as to how he felt at that point when the Complainant said he worked for ■■■, Mr Haigh said "He gave the impression he was ■■■ and too big for this place – we were bottom of League 2. It was hurtful. The disrespect was the worst." When asked why, if he was so polite and well mannered, he had accepted in his letter to The Football Association that his conduct may have been

improper he said, "The shouting was probably improper. When he said he worked for [REDACTED] I should not have shouted 'I don't care'. I should have carried on."

27. The Complainant clearly argued his position, namely that others had walked across the pitch after the match and there were children playing on the pitch and therefore why as a [REDACTED] presenter was he being stopped from walking across the pitch to do interviews. It is likely that the Complainant raised his voice, as confirmed by Witness B, but as Mr Haigh admitted in interview, the Complainant never swore at him. Mr Haigh describes the Complainant as abusive and threatening at his stage. The Commission finds there was nothing abusive or threatening in the Complainant's conduct. What occurred was that Mr Haigh took personal exception to being challenged by someone who was clearly articulate and his words in interview sum up Mr Haigh's personal feelings after this exchange:

"JG: So was the photo to identify him as well, possibly?

JH: No, it was just in case, because my point of view, once he continues to walk across the pitch after the way he spoke to me, I didn't want him to be in the stadium again because the way that he made me feel and the way he was shouting at me.

AB: Even at that initial part of the interaction?

JH: Yes yes, yes. Because he raised his voice at me..."

28. In short, Mr Haigh's personal reaction was so strong that he wanted to ensure that the Complainant did not enter the stadium again. That was an extraordinary over-reaction by Mr Haigh. That degree of personal animosity towards the Complainant was unjustified.
29. The Commission also finds that during the course of this initial interaction Mr Haigh did swear at the Complainant as part of the demonstration of his anger. The Complainant's account in his witness statement of what was said by Mr Haigh is more likely to be correct: Mr Haigh shouted a number of times "get off my fucking pitch."
30. What is described above was the initial interaction between Mr Haigh and the Complainant. The second interaction which we come on to address is when the incident which is the subject of the charge is said to have occurred. The initial interaction, as above, is the context for the second interaction.

31. The Complainant went into the tunnel area and greeted members of staff in the usual way as can be seen from the internal CCTV footage. He emerged from the tunnel at about 21:55pm. It can be seen that Mr Haigh then made his way from the goal mouth where he was working to the tunnel/dugout area where the Complainant was standing. Mr Haigh says the Complainant was shouting at him and waving his mobile phone at him and he merely wanted to find out what his issue was.
32. The Commission rejects Mr Haigh's account of why he went over to the Complainant. Mr Haigh walked over to the Complainant to continue the altercation. This time he was accompanied by two other groundsmen including one he described as "the meat". If Mr Haigh had genuinely wanted to avoid a "confrontation" (to use Mr Haigh's own word in his letter of 4 July) he would have carried on working and ignored any shouting from the Complainant. It is likely there was no shouting from the Complainant at that stage given that he wanted to meet with his cameraman and leave the stadium. The events which followed further reinforce the Commission's view that Mr Haigh was seeking confrontation with the Complainant and/or to provoke a reaction from the Complainant.
33. The Complainant walked toward the corner along the touchline. During this Mr Haigh was several yards away with one or possibly two other groundsmen walking in parallel with the Complainant, side by side, as explained by Witness A. When asked why he did this and did not just walk away, Mr Haigh said he was shouting at him to get off the pitch because he was walking at times on the line but at times over it: "I shouted because he was disrespectful. He was walking on and then off the pitch." As to why he did not just walk away after telling the Complainant several times to stay off the pitch, Mr Haigh said "It was hard to back down and walk away if someone is being disrespectful. I was that stressed. It was a long shift that day. He was taking the mick out of me."
34. This was the immediate prelude to the alleged incident. Mr Haigh's account in oral examination was very different from the picture of calmness and politeness that he sought to give of himself in interview.

35. In respect of the first issue the Commission finds on the balance of probabilities that at some point when the Complainant was walking along the touchline towards the corner, with Mr Haigh and one or two other groundsmen walking alongside him, Mr Haigh said “Look at your fucking shit trainers. It’s exactly the same as your fucking shit hair and your shit skin. I see all of it. I see everything that’s about you.”
36. Mr Haigh admits he felt personally disrespected by the Complainant, even though the Commission finds he had no justification for such. By his own admission he felt stressed and disrespected and had already formed the view he did not want the Complainant to be back in the stadium. It is clear that Mr Haigh had lost his composure during the first interaction while on the pitch and he was thereafter intent upon confrontation. He wanted to intimidate the Complainant by walking to the side of him in relatively close proximity along the touchline with one or two other groundsmen that included the one he referred to as “the meat”. The Commission is satisfied on the evidence that Mr Haigh used the words that are the subject of the charge to vent his clear anger and/or to provoke a reaction from the Complainant.
37. Mr Haigh did not get the reaction he wanted therefore he called the stewards to eject the Complainant. It is unclear what explanation Mr Haigh gave the stewards for requesting their help but if Mr Haigh said there was a threat from the Complainant or that he said he was an MMA Champion from Camden, the Commission finds that was a fabrication designed by Mr Haigh to have the Complainant removed from the stadium which was his objective.
38. The Commission is fortified in its finding that Mr Haigh used the words that are the subject of the charge by reason of the following:
- 38.1 The Complainant was a compelling witness at the hearing who in respect of the central allegation of the words allegedly used, was clear in his account;
- 38.2 Witness A was clear that when he met up with him at the corner, the Complainant was “shaken”. This is consistent with what had been said to him by Mr Haigh and the behaviour of Mr Haigh and the other groundsmen

walking alongside him. It is not consistent with Mr Haigh's version of events where the Complainant was the one who was making implied threats. As Witness A said in his statement: "The groundsman's behaviour was very strange. I have been doing this job for about 15 years, every now and then you will come across a groundsman who will say, 'get off the pitch'. I have never seen any groundsman be aggressive like the Rochdale groundsman was that day though.";

38.3 Mr Haigh was not a credible witness. His evidence at the hearing showed he had falsely given the impression in interview that he did not shout, was polite at all times and did not get angry. That account in interview was inconsistent with the evidence of the other witnesses and even Mr Haigh's own oral testimony;

38.4 It is noted that none of the witnesses relied upon by Mr Haigh, in particular the two other groundsmen, were called by Mr Haigh to give oral evidence so that their accounts might be tested;

38.5 The email of 21 February was sent by the Complainant only an hour after the incident. It does not go into the same level of detail of the Complainant's witness statement of 1 March 2023 but it is clear in saying that Mr Haigh "shouted more abuse about 'my converse resembling me and my appearance.'" The Complainant also referred to being "profiled while I'm just trying to do my job." He concluded by saying "I feel sick to my stomach and to be honest in shock that this still happens." The Commission is satisfied to the requisite standard of proof that the email referred to the statement which is the subject of the present charge. The email provides near contemporaneous support for the Complainant's version of events;

38.6 The Complainant's conversation with Witness B as set out in the latter's witness statement, although in general terms, alluded to the fact that the situation had arisen because the Complainant was black;

38.7 Mr Haigh's defence was in effect that the Complainant had concocted the whole story, which is a very serious allegation. Mr Haigh provided no reason why the Complainant would do that or, if he was prepared to concoct a story, why he would not have alleged a more express reference to race or colour.

39. Much was made on behalf of Mr Haigh as to why the Complainant did not provide greater particularity in his email or why he did not report matters to the stewards or to the police on the night of the incident. The Commission finds that the Complainant was in a state of shock as a result of what was said to him and the general behaviour of Mr Haigh. When he returned to his hotel room that night the Complainant was deflated. Nonetheless the email was clear that Mr Haigh had made statements about his trainers and appearance and that he had been profiled.
40. The second issue is whether the words used amount to an Aggravated Breach of The FA Rule E3.2. During interview Mr Delves suggested that the words alleged to have been used were not a clear reference to colour or race. After all, reasoned Mr Delves in interview, the reference to hair and to skin could equally have been said to someone who was a different colour. That point was maintained by Mr Delves on behalf of Mr Haigh at the hearing. The Commission has no hesitation in rejecting that argument. The objective meaning of the words understood in context are clear. The Complainant was wearing black Converse trainers, his hair is black and he has black skin. The insulting words used by Mr Haigh were clearly an implied reference to colour and race. It is notable that in the course of denying the use of those words in interview, Mr Haigh himself described the words as “barbaric” and “disgusting”. The Commission finds Mr Haigh to have committed an Aggravated Breach pursuant to The FA Rule E.2.
41. On the third issue, namely sanction, the Commission has considered the Standard Sanctions and Guidelines for Aggravated Breaches as referred to above. Mr Haigh is not a Player, Manager or Technical Area Occupant in respect of whom a match-day ban has serious consequences for the individual and for their club. In the Commission’s judgment a match-day ban would not be appropriate in this case given the seriousness of the offence and the role played by Mr Haigh namely that of a Head Groundsman. The appropriate sanction is a period ban for a duration that reflects the aggravating features in this case, including the seriousness of the breach, Mr Haigh’s lack of remorse, and also the false account given by Mr Haigh in interview which sought to depict the Complainant as making threats. The appropriate sanction also reflects the mitigating factors, including Mr Haigh’s previous good record and his relative youth.

42. The Commission finds that the appropriate and proportionate sanction is a six week ban from all football and football-related activity up to and including 20 November 2023. There shall also be a ground ban in respect of Mr Haigh whereby he shall be prohibited from entering, at any time on the match day, the Ground/Stadium or the land immediately surrounding the Ground/Stadium where any Rochdale AFC team are participating, whether home, away or a neutral venue.
43. There will also be a mandatory education course requirement which must be completed by Mr Haigh to the satisfaction of The Football Association.
44. Mr Haigh is also ordered to pay £1900 as a contribution towards the costs of the Regulatory Commission. The personal hearing fee of £100 is also payable.

## **Conclusion**

45. The Regulatory Commission finds Joshua Haigh to be guilty of an Aggravated Breach pursuant to The Football Association Rule E3.2. Mr Haigh's behaviour towards the Complainant on 21 February 2023 was appalling and totally without justification or excuse. The Commission takes this opportunity to make it clear, once again, that there is no place in football for discriminatory behaviour such as this.
46. The sanction imposed by the Commission, having taken into account all factors in mitigation and aggravation, is as follows:
  - 46.1 Mr Haigh is immediately suspended from all football and football-related activity for six weeks which shall run up to and include 20 November 2023.
  - 46.2 For the entirety of the six-week suspension, Mr Haigh shall be prohibited from entering, at any time on the match day, the Ground/Stadium or the land immediately surrounding the Ground/Stadium where any Rochdale AFC team are participating, whether home, away or a neutral venue.
  - 46.3 Mr Haigh must undergo and complete to The FA's satisfaction, within four months of notification of this decision, a face-to-face FA education programme, the details

of which will be provided to Mr Haigh by The FA. Failure to do so within the relevant timeframe, by 9 February 2024, shall result in Mr Haigh's immediate indefinite suspension from all football and football-related activity, until such time as the course is completed to The FA's satisfaction.

46.4 Mr Haigh is warned as to his future conduct.

46.5 It is ordered that Mr Haigh shall pay a £1,900 contribution towards the costs of the Regulatory Commission.

46.6 The £100 personal hearing fee is payable.

47. Both parties have the right to appeal pursuant to Disciplinary Regulations C Appeals – Non-Fast Track within the time limits set out in Regulation 5 thereof.



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David Casement K.C. (Chairperson)

Signed by the Chairperson on Behalf of the Regulatory Commission

9 October 2023