

City Comment: Football should help fans to eat, heat and keep their seat

A SPORTS entrepreneur pal of mine has been bending [Liz Truss's](#) ear (gently).

If we assume that the next few months are going to be dark, in some cases literally, for a large number of people, [sport](#) has a large role to play in keeping our spirits up, keeping consumers spending whatever little they have spare to help [pubs](#), restaurants and [gyms](#) stay alive.

The big solution, or at least plaster-cast, for the broken energy market has to come from the [government](#).

But businesses including our now enriched football clubs are surely part of how we all get through.

Jon Smith, the football agent who set up First Artist in 1986 and went on to have Gary Lineker and Diego Maradona as clients, agrees.

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For some the brutal choice might be between heating and eating. For others, already stretched football fans, it might be more like: can I eat, heat and keep my seat?

The new PM is already going to have to intervene in more industries than her Conservative philosophy is comfortable with.

So she shouldn't order football to do the right thing by its customers.

But the Premier League clubs should do whatever they can to keep stadiums full. Cheap or free tickets for school-children. A warm training hall and hot soup for those really on the breadline on non-match days.

Smith makes the point that sport and football in particular "will be the repository of our emotional outlet this winter" and moreover two or three hours that fans won't need heating. He has been saying so to the new PM.

As an industry, football likes to think it has grown up. That it is responsible and properly business-like in its dealings.

Now would be a good time to show it.