

Chelsea Football Club

# Rent Boy Briefing



# Meaning and history



- The term rent boy is a homophobic insult that has no place in football, or society.
- It originates from the 1960s, where the Earl's Court area near Stamford Bridge, which was well-known for its gay scene and concentration of male sex workers.
- From the 1980's onwards, its use at Chelsea matches became disappointingly commonplace.



# Context



- The term's use has increased significantly since Covid, with not only Chelsea players, but those out on loan, subject to abuse.
- 'Chelsea rent boy' was defined as a homophobic insult by the CPS in January 2022, meaning its use is now a criminal offence.
- The first fan charged was for its use before the 2022 FA Cup final, with his ticket being seized under Section 5 of the Public Order Act 1986.
- *'This is vile and disgusting behaviour, and the CPS stands with the.. public who want to see this stamped out' – Director of Public Prosecutions, Max Hill, after the CPS ruling.*



# Context



- After years of campaigning by Chelsea Pride and other LGBTQI+ groups, the FA added it to their list of banned chants in January 2023.
- This means that both fans and their clubs can be held responsible if it is heard being used, and those found guilty can also receive a football banning order.
- A club was subsequently fined £100,000 later that season after a home match against Chelsea.
- *'Ending these chants is essential for fostering a safe, welcoming and respectful environment' – Tracy Brown, Chair of Chelsea Pride.*



# Why is it a crime?



- The term 'rent boy' is a hate crime.
- Hate crimes are defined by the CPS as “... an offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice” based on characteristics including **sexual orientation or transgender identity**.
- The Equality Act 2010 also protects people from discrimination for the above.
- Those found guilty of using the term can be charged against the Public Order Act 1986.
- In short, the term 'rent boy' is homophobic and hurtful, and its use is therefore a criminal offence.



# What can you do?



- If you hear it being used, please report it to your nearest senior steward or police officer.
- Take a note of the location and perpetrators (where possible) for future reporting of evidence.
- Encourage fans to use the in-venue text reporting service.

