

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOCAL BUSINESSMAN ROBERT SMETHURST ACQUIRES ASSETS OF MACCLESFIELD TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

Robert Smethurst, a local businessman, has today confirmed his recent purchase of the assets of Macclesfield Town Football Club Ltd.

Born and bred in Macclesfield and a former pupil of Fallibroome High School, Mr Smethurst has extensive football and commercial experience, running his own successful businesses for the last 20 years.

Rob states "This is an extremely exciting opportunity to rebuild a historic Football Club for Macclesfield and the surrounding areas and I want to ensure that we bring the footballing heartbeat back into the local community; combined with a firm financial business plan and with consideration for the fans. My vision over the coming months and years is to rebuild the Club, pitch & stadium facilities and re-invest the income generated from that back into creating a first team and into the Club overall. If we can move a new team into the North West Counties Football League next season, we'll have achieved one of our main goals. Over the coming years, our main aim is to move up through the leagues. I am passionate about building a secure business model and strong commercial foundation so the past issues the Club has experienced will not happen again.

He continues "My plans include changing the current pitch to 4G to ensure it is utilised as much as possible by local teams, schools and community sports events; adding a gym, creating classrooms for BTEC and other college courses and re-vamping the bars and hospitality/conference suites, but the key focus is and will always continue to be football, the fans and the community. Without the support of the fans, the associated ticket sales and hospitality; the Club will find it hard to progress through any leagues despite any financial backing it receives.

I'm very much aware of the deep feelings towards the Club and I will work closely with the Silkmen Supporters Trust and other interested parties to ensure they understand my commitment to the Club and its long-term future. The Club will maintain the historic brand and logo albeit under the new name of Macclesfield FC.

Building a strong first team is also paramount and I'm very happy to announce that Danny Whitaker has agreed to join us as first team Manager. Danny has a wealth of experience and says "I'm absolutely thrilled to be given this opportunity at Macclesfield FC. It is one of the proudest moments in my career to date and it is an absolute privilege.

I'd like to thank the new owner and the Board for putting their faith in me. I was so enthused by their vision for the Club, and their commitment to building a strong first team. It is a Club that is so close to my and my family's heart, and I can't wait to get started in this exciting new era for the Club"

Rob continues "I'll ensure I have the right calibre of staff throughout the organisation and I've created a new Executive Board to ensure the right levels of planning & budgets are achieved and sustainable for the club and players. The new Board consists of myself, Carlos Roca - founder of Pro Football Academy, Robbie Savage - ex-footballer and TV/Radio pundit, Andy Scott - ex Vice Chairman, Jon Smart - Former Silkmen Supporters Trust Chairman & current SST Board member and Lindsay Brown an experienced Commercial Operations Manager.

I will also be creating Club Ambassador positions for individuals who have a passion, knowledge and understanding of both the Club and the Town, and am delighted that Nick Bianchi, Director at Arighi Bianchi, has agreed to be a Club Ambassador for the new Macclesfield FC".

Carlos Roca adds "Following the request to come on board as Director of Football for the Macclesfield Football Club revival, I'm absolutely delighted to step up to the challenge alongside my business partner, Rob Smethurst.

I have a wealth of experience in first team football having come through the professional academy system myself, playing as a professional and semi-professional footballer for many years. I even made an appearance at the Moss Rose! After my career concluded, I pursued my coaching badges and subsequently founded a very successful Football Academy, to bridge the gap between grass roots and professional football and to develop young aspiring players.

I'm extremely excited to get to work and start rebuilding the new football structure for Macclesfield Football Club; creating a special football identity and philosophy to bring back attractive and exciting football to Macclesfield. My priority will be assembling the football management team for the rebirth of Macclesfield as a Club, which will quickly follow with preparations for building the first team playing squad for the 2021/2022 Season.

I've worked with a great network of contacts who will aid me in building a great team and I plan to implement a full development pathway and create opportunities to produce home grown players from the local area. I'm determined to lay down the appropriate foundations to revive football for Macclesfield".

Robbie Savage commented "I was devastated to see what happened here at Macclesfield. A Club steeped in history and worth more than any value in money to locals. I am privileged to be asked by the new owner to take up a role as Head of Football from the first team to grassroots and was genuinely surprised to get a call as I had no idea that Rob was looking to purchase the Club until we spoke and he asked if I was interested to bring an extra dimension to his ambitions.

I live within a stone's throw from the ground and have integral links to the Club as a local grassroots coach, a father who brings his sons here to spectate and a footballing professional who campaigns and lobbies for lower tier Football Clubs, who are the foundation of the game. In my retirement from playing, I have found a love for seeing kids develop and the satisfaction I get from that cannot be rivalled - so the role I have been asked to take up seems a perfect fit for me.

This is a Football Club that collapsed and has been resuscitated. But its more than that, it's about being something at the centre of a community that can create local jobs, bring social interaction and providing renewed hope for a local economy of associated local businesses who will benefit as a result - the suppliers of food, drinks, kit etc. And extremely important - the provision of a first-class sporting facility for local schools to use for sports development. If this was about money - rest assured, I wouldn't have become involved".

Andy Scott, the Ex Macclesfield Town Vice Chairman agrees, "Here we are at a new dawn for our Football Club. Only two weeks ago I genuinely feared for the Clubs future, we were in a perilous position. I would like to thank Rob Smethurst for inviting me on board to be part of the restructure and rebuild of our Football Club, and to establish the SILKMEN once again as a major player in non-league football and beyond.

We have no divine right to waltz our way up the non-league pyramid, we need to be patient, supportive and stick together, we "will" rediscover the true SILKMEN family spirit and enjoy the journey together. My father took me to my first game at the Moss Rose in 1964 and I was hooked. I have been privileged to wear the royal blue shirt back in the 70's and served on the Board.

We owe it to future generations to provide a legacy and rebuild the Macclesfield Town institution for people to enjoy and cherish for years to come". Our Football Club has given us all so many special memories, laughter and tears over the years. We must support Mr Smethurst and help take our wonderful Football Club forward for the community to embrace and enjoy".

“As someone who’s worked with Rob in several of his businesses, I’m delighted to be a part of the Board & the new Club says Lindsay Brown, Rob’s commercial acumen and drive is second to none”.

Jon Smart from the Silkmen Supporters Trust sums up with “I started watching Macclesfield Town Football Club in the mid-1980s and it has been a massive part of my life for the past 30 years I became the regular reporter on local radio in the mid to late 2000s and have continued to report every week during the football season since then, priding myself on attending games whenever I possibly can.

Like you all I was devastated by the recent relegation from League 2 and the subsequent liquidation of ‘Our Club’. But now is about the future, and whilst we should always celebrate our past and our illustrious history, which for a small town team we have had some incredible ‘Against All Odds’ successes, we must now look to our future and how we can work our way back to where we feel we should be.

I am privileged and honoured to have been asked by our new owner, Rob, to become involved in the renaissance of our Football Club and will do all I can to help us on our journey.

We have some fantastic people who love our Club and my goal is to make everyone feel welcome, included and have the desire to join us on the voyage back to where we should be. I will always be approachable and welcome your input, involvement and help in achieving our goal.

The journey may not be starting where we would like it to but let’s have some fun, and let’s enjoy it together!”

ENDS

If you would like more information about this release, please call Lindsay Brown on 07970 411960, or email lindsay@macclesfieldfc.com

Notes to Editors

Rob Smethurst is a local businessman and entrepreneur, married and with 3 football mad boys. He is a Director of Pro-Football Academy who also own Stockport Town FC, but these businesses will currently remain separate from this purchase.

Paul Raftery, Andrea Steventon and Oliver Nelson at Weightmans LLP advised Robert Smethurst on the acquisition.