

English club finances of "significant concern" to Uefa

Matt Cutler

David Taylor, general secretary of Uefa, European football's governing body, said he is "significantly concerned" about the financial state of English Premier League clubs, warning that some are in danger if they keep living beyond their means.

Taylor was speaking to a BBC Radio 5 Live special report on debt in English football, broadcast tonight at 2100 BST.

"There are stories concerning some English clubs that are of significant concern," he said. "There are a number of English clubs where the value of the club itself has fallen significantly and they are effectively on the market."

"We hope that the clubs themselves will not suffer in any significant way from this but who knows? We've seen what has happened in recent years with a number of very high-profile clubs, Leeds United for example. They fell into serious financial difficulties by over-extending themselves."

Leeds reached the semi-finals of the Champions League in 2001 but suffered a loss of television revenue after failing to qualify for the competition, leading to players being sold and ultimately relegation to the Championship in 2004. The club went into administration in 2007 as they were relegated to the third-tier of English football.

Taylor also said that Uefa is alarmed by the huge transfer fees paid by Spanish side Real Madrid and the Premier League's Manchester City during this summer's transfer window.

"It is certainly raising the ante in terms of the player costs, in terms of the general market place, which is not a thing that gives us a great deal of comfort in these difficult times. There is certainly disquiet in the corridors of power here," he added.

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