

For Immediate Release

We have today issued legal proceedings for defamation on behalf of our client Roman Abramovich.

The legal proceedings relate to a number of false and defamatory claims made about our client in the book *Putin's People* published by HarperCollins. The book falsely alleges that our client has acted corruptly, and makes false claims about our client's purchase, and the activities, of Chelsea Football Club. Such claims are totally unacceptable and are without foundation.

Our client's statement on this matter is set out below. In view of the legal proceedings issued we will not be making a further statement at this time.

Harbottle & Lewis LLP 22 March 2021

Statement

Today my legal representatives have issued legal proceedings in England in relation to a book that was published in the UK. The book contains a number of false and defamatory statements about me, including about my purchase, and the activities, of Chelsea Football Club.

Today's action was not taken lightly. It has never been my ambition to gain a public profile and I have always been reluctant to provide commentary on any matters, including any false or misleading statements about me or Chelsea Football Club.

However, it has become clear that the false allegations in this book are having a damaging effect, not only on my personal reputation, but also in respect of the activities of Chelsea Football Club.

My objective has been to avoid a legal case and my legal team has engaged with the publishers to try to find an amicable resolution. We have provided them with detailed information addressing the various false allegations about me in the book, including the repetition of allegations that have already been held to be false in the English High Court during previous legal proceedings. Unfortunately, these engagements were not successful, and the publisher has not corrected the false statements in the book.

On the subject of Chelsea Football Club. In contrast to the portrayal in the book, my ambition with Chelsea Football Club has always been to create world class teams on the pitch and to ensure the club plays a positive role in all of its communities. I believe our successes and activities over the years speak for themselves, including the trophies won, expansion of the Chelsea Academy, development of the Women's team and the Chelsea Foundation becoming the largest charitable organisation within the Premier League.

It is my hope that today's action will not only refute the false allegations in regard to my own name, but also serve as a reminder of Chelsea's positive footprint in the UK. I have every belief that the courts will give me a fair hearing, as they have in the past.