

MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE STROUD AND DISTRICT FOOTBALL LEAGUE HELD ON THURSDAY 5 AUGUST 2021

OPENING OF THE MEETING: The meeting was held at Stonehouse Town FC, 7:55pm start. Many thanks to Mike Smith due to the fact that we were unable to gain access to the scheduled meeting room at Frampton.

Prior to the start of the meeting, a moments silence was observed following the untimely passing of Martin Bennett, a long standing member, player and manager of Sharpness AFC.

01/0213 ATTENDEES: Gary Chapman, Brian Cooper, Mark Cox, Jason Harries, Steve Marshall, Mike Smith, Keith Sparrow, Brian Stephens, Glynn Tandy, Jamie Thomas, Mike Wheatley, Jeff Willerton.

02/0213 APOLOGIES: Bob Warren, Kenny Smith, Colin Ward

03/0213 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS: The Management Committee meeting minutes from 13th May had been disseminated to the Committee prior to the meeting.

04/0213 MATTERS ARISING: None

05/0213 CHAIRMAN: Steve Marshall chaired the meeting in Bob's absence.

06/0213 TREASURER:

- Last season's accounts have now been fully audited following delays caused by the pandemic.
- The League's balance stands at around £30k
- A more detailed update will be presented at the General Meeting the following week.

07/0213 CORRESPONDENCE RELEVANT TO THE MEETING:

- As most will be aware, we are pleased to welcome Bateman's Sports and Kappa Teamwear as the league's sponsors this season, with options to extend in future seasons if mutually agreeable. There are a range of benefits to clubs through £4000 of Kappa vouchers available and redeemable through Bateman's Sports. These vouchers will be awarded to clubs during the season for:
 - a) Performance of the month (all 8 divisions) - all 24 winners every 3 months will enter a draw, and 8 division winners will be drawn and will win £100 of vouchers each
 - b) At the end of the season, all the teams in the top third of the disciplinary table (based upon yellow/red cards, plus sportsmanship marks from referees) will enter a draw and one team will win £500 in vouchers
 - c) All nine winners of the various cups/plates will also win a £100 voucher
- Chesterton, Hillesley and Dursley Town 4ths have withdrawn from the league. Chesterton were released as they were successful in their application to fill a casual vacancy in the GNSL. Hillesley and Dursley will both be fined under Rule 11.B as per the Fines Tariff.
- Due to the above, and also a written related request from Wotton Rovers, a standard review of the balance and make up of the divisions ensued. By majority vote, it was decided to leave the affected divisions (1, 5 & 8) as they were (with 13, 12 and 11 teams respectively in), and thereby not to create a vacancy in those divisions. The following individuals were required to abstain from the vote due to a possible conflict: Mark Cox, Jason Harries, Glynn Tandy, Jamie Thomas. Steve Marshall acting as Chair also did not register a vote, but would have in the event of a tie.
- As a result of this, Wotton Rovers request to be moved up to Division One was not accepted, as there was no vacancy ensuing.
- Should further teams withdraw before the start of the season, it may still be necessary to re-evaluate the balance of numbers across the divisions, although with the complex fixtures already set, it would only be possible to do this in extreme and under certain circumstances.
- Following Cam Bulldogs and Taverners withdraw of their First teams in the GNSL, their Reserve teams will now become their First team, and Cam's Third team becomes their Reserves. The Committee saw no reason to re-adjust their positions in the League's constitution, and wish both clubs a healthy future as they look to work their way up the football ladder in the future.

08/0213 REFEREES SECRETARY: Nothing to report in Colin's absence

09/0213 ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Nothing to report at this stage of the season

10/0213 REGISTRATION SECRETARY:

- Jamie ran through the various issues and problems of the new Player Registration System. This is causing a huge amount of workload for Jamie as he tries to work around many of the issues. Various "tickets" have been raised with the FA's IT team, but all of these have so far not been addressed.
- One of the issues that is causing Jamie significant problems is the associations to teams that were formerly "associated" to the SDFL, ie GNSL, County and Hellenic League teams through the League (Charity) Cups, and teams joining or leaving the league this season. It appears that the link has just not been "cut" at the point at which the league was integrated by the FA at the very start of the season in July. The fact that these associations still exist, means that players being registered for teams in other leagues are also come through to be registered in this league, causing a big problem to Jamie, potentially the other leagues, and certainly to the clubs involved. The ticket for this was raised 21st July, and there have been no FA updates to this since its submission.
- The other main issues will be further expanded upon at the General Meeting the following week, including dual FAN's and player email address issues. In the absence of real movement on some of these issues, we may be forced to look at alternative systems, including manual ones, to get all players registered for the teams that they need to register for.
- The GFA have also been inundated with requests for support, and they have been actioning most of these on a timely basis, which has been extremely helpful. Jamie will re-direct clubs to the GFA for any queries he receives that he is unable to resolve or assist from his end.
- It is important that all clubs try to progress submitting player registrations now, and not leave it up until the last minute, as we have already seen a slow down in the operation speed of the system, and this will only get worse as the deadline to register players in this and in other leagues gets closer.

11/0213 RESULTS SECRETARY: Nothing to report in Kenny's absence

12/0213 DISCIPLINARY OFFICER:

- Updates to the discipline process will be communicated to clubs at the General Meeting as Jamie has been maxed out with registration issues.

13/0213 GENERAL SECRETARY, incl FIXTURES

- There have been a few issues with clubs trying to access Full-Time recently. All clubs accessing Full-Time should now be doing so using their Whole Game email address, and not their "username". If clubs need access to Full-Time for certain individuals, then a request to Jeff needs to be made who will then issue a Full-Time "invite".
- Fixtures have been released up until the end of September, and have been provisionally set, but not released yet, up until mid-late November. These have been set so that virtually all teams will play each team once before the reverse fixtures begin. This has been done in light of the fact that we may have a disrupted season, and all efforts will be made for a balance of fixtures, rather than some teams having played others twice, but some not at all.

14/0213 LEAGUE CUP:

- The current League Cup charity money will now be distributed to a fund set up by Gloucester & Cheltenham hospitals for mobile digital scanners, which specifically detect heart problems earlier.
- As Shortwood, Stonehouse and Tuffley are unable to be used for the 2019-20 outstanding Finals, at least until the end of September, we are going to have to be creative when and how we fit these in, and Jeff or Gary will aim to squeeze these in asap.
- League Cups for this season will start for all teams during November. If the league schedule is severely disrupted before this period, then we will have the option of not holding the competitions and look to plough on, and possibly look to hold something at the end of the season as a backup.

15/0213 ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- COVID-related issues: A long discussion took place on the various issues that we, clubs and referees face as we try to get the season started on time. We are very keen as a league to get up and running this season, particularly with no post lockdown cups or tournaments held back in April/May. There needs to be a positive outlook from all clubs and officials in relations to this, and we therefore encourage all involved to take up the mantle of getting games played, especially early in the season when the pitches and weather is best.
- At the same time, we have to respect that this time last year, whilst the guidance from the Government and the FA was not clear, the general perception and agreement was of risk avoidance, and quite right too. There are less formalities in place now, and therefore the onus of management of situations, such as changing room usage, appears to be more club led.
- The basis of the league's framework for matches to be played will be based upon the most recent FA guidance and advice was issued ahead of England's move to step 4 of its roadmap in easing Covid restrictions on 19th July. The summary key points are:
 - a) On field adaptations for playing football are no longer required
 - b) No limits of how many people can meet
 - c) 1m plus rule removed
 - d) The definition of close contact remains the same, however the rules on self-isolation will be changing from the 16th August.
 - e) Face coverings no longer required by law, but recommended in crowded indoor settings and may be mandated by some clubs or facility providers.
 - f) Changing rooms can be used, however participants should use their own judgement and minimise use where possible to avoid close contact in a crowded area for a prolonged time.
 - g) No capacity limits for spectators but good practice is encouraged
 - h) Hospitality is permitted without restrictions.
 - i) NHS Test and Trace QR codes not required by law but encouraged
 - j) Free NHS lateral flow testing is available to clubs and The FA encourage clubs to take this up.
 - k) No domestic travel restrictions. Participants should continue to follow Government advice on international travel for any fixtures/ tournaments
 - l) This guidance document applies to all youth and adult football and futsal, including all formats of the game, both indoors and outdoors.
- Additional to this, we intend to maintain a spreadsheet of changing room availability and conditions, which is viewable and downloadable from the League's website homepage
- There will not be any formal need to maintain/update COVID Assessments, but all clubs should consider their own circumstances, and if there are particular issues relating to the usage of their ground and facilities, then this should be communicated to visiting teams prior to matchdays.
- Referees will now be asked to revert to bringing their own set of flags, but teams should be prepared to use their own flag if necessary.
- The issues raised here will also be raised at the General Meeting, giving clubs an opportunity to input their thoughts.

16/0213 DATE OF NEXT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING – Thursday 9th September 2021

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 9:45pm