

SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS FOOTBALL LEAGUE

MANAGEMENT BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING

Held on Tuesday 12 November 2019

At the Offices of the Bedfordshire FA commencing at 10.30am

Present; Messrs Pat Burns (in the Chair), John Chidley, Peter Clayton, Larry Corkrey, Bob Flight, Dave Henman and Tony Weight

Mike Appleby (General Secretary), Martyn Mitchell (Finance Officer and Company Secretary) and Louise Condon (Registration and Administration Secretary)

Mark Frost (Chairman, FA Leagues Committee) and Matt Edkins (National League System Manager) were also in attendance.

Before the start of the Meeting Chairman, Pat Burns, on behalf of the Board, welcomed Mark Frost and Matt Edkins to the Meeting.

12. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Messrs: Tony Forrester, Bill Hamilton, Mike Taylor and John Thompson

13. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 29 August 2019 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a true record

14. MATTERS ARISING

- a. There were no specific matters arising that were not covered elsewhere on the Agenda.

15. FA BUSINESS

- a. **National League System Structure Season 2020/2021** – The Chairman invited Tony Weight, Chairman of the Strategy, Planning & Development Committee, to take Messrs Frost and Edkins through a series of questions that had been forwarded to the FA in advance of the meeting. The issues highlighted were as follows: *Comments noted in italics*

- **Clarify how the process had been developed**

It was explained the process adopted and that the overall aim was to produce a “perfect pyramid” at Step 1 to Step 6 across the Country. An initial survey carried out by the FA had highlighted that travel times and the inequality of the number of clubs in different leagues to be an issue. It was felt that this final phase of the restructure would correct these issues. The aim remained to have 20 Clubs in all Step 5 Divisions and 18 – 20 clubs in all Step 6 Divisions for Season 2020/2021.

- **Confirm that there will be no further disruption for Leagues and Clubs**

There was no further restructure planned

- **Why was there a Tender process?**

The Tender Process had been carried out at the request of the FA Legal Department to ensure that an open process was applied

- **Had any consideration been given to the potential cost implication for both Leagues and Clubs following the proposed changes for next season**

It did not appear that any consideration had been given to this matter

- **When will the composition of the Leagues be determined**

There was to be a first draft compiled in January followed by a further draft in April. It was pointed out that it would not be possible to provide the final structure until the end of the current season although it was hoped that with each draft produced the structure would become clearer.

- **Explain the Play-off procedures at the end of the current season**
The process was confirmed that, as far as the Spartan South Midlands Leagues was concerned, the club finishing in 2nd place in the Premier Division would be ranked on points per game (then goal difference, then goals scored if required) with the four highest placed Clubs receiving automatic promotion. The remaining seven second placed Clubs will take part in the Step 4/5 Play Off matches against the seven Clubs finishing in bottom place in each of the Step 4 Divisions. These matches would be on a single match basis at the ground of the Step 4 Club they are drawn against and played to completion on the day. Where possible, the draw for the Play Off matches will be regionalised. The winners of these Step 4/5 Play Off matches will be allocated to Step 4. The Clubs to be promoted from Step 5 will be allocated to the most geographically appropriate division at Step 4. This game was likely to take place on Thursday 30 April or Saturday 2 May – dates to be confirmed. The FA to confirm the draw in due course.
- **Reliability of the current Maps**
The Maps were as originally produced and would remain as the template for the allocation of clubs for season 2020/2021. The only flexibility would be around the periphery of each of the Areas identified.
- **Why were the Step 5 and Step 6 geographical footprints not symmetrical**
This had not been possible. Early attempts had resulted in odd numbers of clubs in Divisions. Each Step was, therefore, treated separately.
- **Had any consideration been given to the potential impact on Referees, Referee Observers and Committee Members following the restructure.**
It was noted that the FAS Referees Committee are fully aware of the restructure and will be working to ensure that all the current and new Divisions will be supplied with the appropriate number of match officials.
- **Possibility of “pooling” referees with other Leagues i.e The United Counties League**
There did not appear to be any issues with this suggestion
- **Was there any possibility of making additional funding available to those Leagues that have a high proportion of new clubs joining next season i.e footballs, substitute boards etc**
There may be the possibility of applying for funding if these additional costs proved excessive.

The above is a reflection of the discussion which took place

Bob Flight also raised the following points which were addressed by the FA Representatives:

- The possibility of Reserve teams playing at Step 6.
- Effect of finding possible Sponsors due to the uncertainty of the geographical area to be covered.
- Have FA taken into account the effects on groundshares

The Chairman, on behalf of the meeting thanked Messrs Frost and Edkins for their attendance and for their open contribution to the discussion. At this point both left the meeting

b. Promotion to Step 6

The General Secretary advised that information regarding the promotion process from Step 7 (Division Two) had been received and would be distributed to all Division Two clubs. He also added that copies of the National League System Newsletter and information on the procedures to be applied regarding incidents of Racial or Discriminatory behaviour had also been received and passed to clubs and match officials/referee observers

c. Step 5 / Step 6 Leagues Meeting

The FA had advised that there was to be a meeting of all Step 5 / Step 6 leagues on Sunday 2 February 2020 at the offices of the Leicestershire & Rutland FA. Two representatives would be able to attend.

16. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Discipline, Respect & Referees Committee** – The Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 3 October 2019 were received and noted. There were no specific points to highlight.
- Strategy, Planning & Development Committee** - The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 29 October were received and the following issues highlighted.
 - **The League Development Plan** for season 2019/2020 had been submitted to the FA
 - **Future Structure of the League** – This matter would be kept under review throughout the season.

- **Reserve Team Football** – That clubs were to be contacted regarding the possibility of reintroducing a reserve team structure in the future.
- **Mid- Season Club Meetings** – Dates had been suggested but due to room availability at the Beds FA these would need to be rescheduled.

It was agreed, therefore to look at the following dates, subject to room availability:

Division Two – Monday 13 January 2020

Division One – Monday 10 February 2020

Premier Division – Monday 17 February 2020

- **Changes to Playing Kit** – That approval had been given to both Milton Keynes Robins FC and New Bradwell St Peter FC for changes to their “away” playing kits. This approval was confirmed.
- c. **Discipline, Respect & Referees Committee** – The following recommendations had been made at the meeting held the previous day:
- **Mursley United v Buckingham United** – This related to the abandonment of the Division Two fixture staged on Saturday 5 October. It was noted that both clubs had been fined the sum of £150 by the Berks & Bucks FA. The decision of the Committee that this match be declared null and void and that no points be awarded was confirmed. It was also noted that both clubs had been warned as to their future conduct.
 - **Milton Keynes Robins v St Panteleimon** – This related to the incorrect procedure that had been applied in the taking of kicks from the penalty mark following a League Challenge Trophy 2nd Round tie played on Tuesday 29 October. The decision of the Committee that the result of the tie should stand was confirmed. In arriving at this decision it was noted that advice on the matter had been received from the FA. It was also noted that the match could not be replayed as the issues had occurred after the completion of the original 90 minutes and that the taking of penalty kicks to decide the outcome of a match is a separate procedure and does not form part of the match itself.

17. FINANCIAL UPDATE

- a. **Financial Information** – Financial reports up to and including 9 November 2019 had been circulated prior to the Meeting. It was noted that current Bank balances were:
Barclays Bank Current Account £30,203 and Nationwide General Account £20,500.
The Finance Officer dealt with other issues raised by Members.
- b. **Club Issues** - The Finance Officer referred to an issue raised by Pitstone & Ivinghoe FC regarding a fine imposed for non attendance at one of the Temporary Suspension “Sin Bin” training sessions. It was agreed that, as attendance had been mandatory for all clubs, the fine imposed would remain.
- c. **FA Cup Prize Fund** – A schedule prepared by the General Secretary detailing the amounts paid from the FA Cup Prize Fund to Member Clubs this season was received. It was noted that a total of £64,670 had been paid to Member Clubs.

18. MONTHLY AWARDS

The following awards were formally approved:

- a. **Respect Awards** –
October – Hillingdon Borough FC
September – London Lions FC
August – Rayners Lane
A recommendation from the Discipline, Respect and Referees Committee that an additional Special Respect Award be made to any club that accrued no Respect points over a period of three consecutive months was agreed and the first Award to Old Bradwell United FC approved.
- b. **Team of the Month Awards** -

	October	September	August
Premier Division	Harpenden Town FC	Tring Athletic FC	Colney Heath FC
Division One	Winslow United FC	Shefford Town & Campton FC	St Panteleimon FC
Division Two	Old Bradwell Utd FC	Sarratt FC	Old Bradwell Utd FC

19. TEMPORARY SUSPENSIONS

Current statistics were received and noted. John Chidley explained the figures and how they were calculated. It was noted that up to 31 October 2019 there had been a total of 106 C2 "sin bin" cautions issued covering a total of 355 games played. This compared very favourably with 2018 when a total of 263 dissent cautions were issued in a total of 380 matches. Members agreed that these were very promising figures and that the process appeared to be working.

20. MEETING CALENDAR

The updated Meeting Calendar for season 2019/2020 was received and noted **(attached at Appendix A)**

21. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The General Secretary reported on efforts to locate a suitable venue for the 2020 Annual General Meeting in or around the Milton Keynes area which was thought as a central location for the Meeting taking into account the possible League Constitution for next Season.. After discussion it was agreed that the AGM would take place on Saturday 27 June 2020 at the Rufus Centre in Flitwick. Initial costs and arrangements were agreed.

22. OTHER BUSINESS MATTERS DISCUSSED

- a. **Supply of League branded footballs for Season 2020/2021** – The Chairman gave an update on the supply of footballs for Season 2020/2021. Further details will be made available when further discussions with possible suppliers had taken place. Issues were also noted regarding the storage and distribution of footballs going forward.
- b. **Reserve Team Football** – It was noted that a further survey was to take place with regard to the re introduction of a reserve team structure. There was a view expressed that it may be appropriate to await the restructure of the League before embarking on any further internal changes. It was agreed, however to go ahead with the survey to assess the views of current member clubs.

23. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 21 January at the offices of the Bedfordshire FA commencing at 10.30am..

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 12.45pm

SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS FOOTBALL LEAGUE

MEETING CALENDAR SEASON 2019/2020

Board/Sub Committee	Date	Location	Time
BOARD MEETING	Thursday 29 August 2019	Beds FA	10.15am
Discipline, Respect & Referees	Thursday 3 October 2019	Beds FA	10.30am
Finance & General Purposes	Friday 18 October 2019	Beds FA	10.30am
Strategy, Planning & Development	Tuesday 29 October 2019	Beds FA	10.30am
Discipline, Respect & Referees	Monday 11 November 2019	Beds FA	2.30pm
BOARD MEETING	Tuesday 12 November 2019	Beds FA	10.30am
Finance & General Purposes	Thursday 21 November 2019	Beds FA	10.30am
Strategy, Planning & Development	Tuesday 3 December 2019	Beds FA	10.30am
Discipline, Respect & Referees	Tuesday 17 December 2019	Beds FA	10.30am
Finance & General Purposes	Wednesday 18 December 2019	Beds FA	10.30am
Finance & General Purposes	Monday 13 January 2020	Beds FA	2.30pm
Discipline, Respect & Referees	Tuesday 14 January 2020	Beds FA	2.30pm
BOARD MEETING	Tuesday 21 January 2020	Beds FA	10.30am
Discipline, Respect & Referees	Tuesday 4 February 2020	Beds FA	10.30am
Strategy, Planning & Development	Tuesday 11 February 2020	Beds FA	10.30am
Finance & General Purposes	Monday 9 March 2020	Beds FA	10.30am
Discipline, Respect & Referees	Tuesday 10 March 2020	Beds FA	10.30am
BOARD MEETING	Tuesday 24 March 2020	Beds FA	10.30am
Finance & General Purposes	Monday 20 April 2020	Beds FA	10.30am
Discipline, Respect & Referees	Tuesday 21 April 2020	Beds FA	10.30am
Strategy, Planning & Development	Tuesday 28 April 2020	Beds FA	10.30am
Finance & General Purposes	Tuesday 26 May 2020	Beds FA	10.30am
Discipline, Respect & Referees	Tuesday 2 June 2020	Beds FA	10.30am
BOARD MEETING	Tuesday 9 June 2020	Beds FA	10.30am
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	Saturday 27 June 2020	Rufus Centre, Flitwick	10.30am

Mike Appleby
General Secretary