**WEARSIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE**

**MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Thursday 22nd July 2021**

**Held via Zoom Video Conference at 7.00pm.**

**Present:** Peter Maguire (Chairman), Kevin Harrison (Secretary), Frank Thompson,

Dave Copeland, George McKitterick, Gordon Mason, Joe Partridge, Keith Simpson, Kevin McKitterick, Kieran Downey, Sean Rooks, Steve Futers, Mick Grant.

**Apologies:** Brian Hammond**,** Dani Maguire-Myers, Helen Pollard, Ian Stewart, Marshall Lawson, Malcolm Langley,

1. **Minutes of the Management meeting** – The minutes of the management committee meeting held on Friday 25th June 2021, previously circulated, were confirmed as a true record with no matters arising.
2. **Correspondence;**

* **Boldon CA - Decision letter from The FA in respect of Appeal** - summarised - **‘*Whilst the Committee considered the League’s recommendations and observations reasonable and justifiable, it was clear that the Club should have been recommended by the League in accordance with the criteria agreed by the Committee. The Appeal was therefore allowed and the Committee determined that the Club should be allocated to the Northern League Division 2.’***

1. **Cockerton Club - resigning from the league (2nd Division**).

Email (28/6/2021) received from Liam Clark, club secretary, informing that the club will be unable to fulfil their league commitments for the upcoming season due to only having 7 committed players, and others coming to the end of their playing careers. The management committee accepted their resignation with no further action to be taken.

1. **Hylton CW U23s - withdrawing from the New 3rd Division.**

Email (1/7/2021) from Gary Foster, Club chairman, informing that the Club will not be able to field another team, (U/23s) from within the Club in the new 3rd Division. Following a meeting of their Club team managers it was found that a lot of players had since gone elsewhere, there was now insufficient numbers to form an under 23’s team. The committee accepted their withdrawal with no further action to be taken.

1. **Sunderland West End & University FC** **- resigning from the league (2nd Division).**

Email (13/7/2021) from Keith Gill, club secretary, informing that the team will not be continuing for the forthcoming season. He had been informed that the two coaches have left taking most of the players with them and the other admin person does not want to be involved anymore, leaving Keith to run the club on his own, which he was not prepared to do. The committee accepted the club’s resignation with the club being instructed to return the 2 match balls and pads, recently provided by the league, within the next 14 days.

1. **Washington AFC - resigning from the league (2nd Division).**

Email (19/7/2021) received fromLee Holmes, club secretary, informing that Washington AFC are having to fold the adult team. Since the return to football, they have struggled to recruit players and with quite a few not returning to football since the pandemic they do not have enough players to compete on a week-to-week basis. The committee accepted their resignation with no further action to be taken.

1. **Covid Procedure.**

Kevin informed the committee that as Covid is still prevalent and indications are that numbers of people testing positive are on the increase, he is proposing to resurrect the league’s Covid Procedure which was adopted last season. This time if a club calls a game off their fixtures will be suspended for 10 days instead of 14 days. He had recently received the FA’s Guidelines on their recommendations following restrictions being lifted which included the suggestion / recommendation that Lateral Flow Tests be taken by players and participants prior to the match to lessen the chances of games being called off due to infection. These can be purchased locally free of charge. The guide also approved the reopening of changing facilities, but concerns were raised by club representatives on the committee that some council controlled facilities were still closed with no indication yet when/if they will be reopened. The home club would need to advise their opponents and match officials in advance regarding their situation.

Concerns were expressed by some clubs regarding being able to provide ‘After Match Hospitality’, as per league rules for the 1st Division, under the present circumstances. The league, with the help of clubs, will monitor the situation in the early part of the season.

1. **Final Constitution.**

Kevin reported that, following resignations and withdrawals, the league will now be operating with 44 teams for season 2021-2022. 18 in the 1st Division, 13 in the 2nd Division, and 13 in the newly formed 3rd Division. with the intention that all three divisions will be fully up and running on August 7th, 2021.

1. **A.O.B.**

* **Match Officials.** - Kevin informed the meeting that the situation regarding referees had become desperate. At least 14 referees had decided not to continue next season which means that there is a possibility that some 1st Division fixtures may not have 3 officials on their game. He will continue to try and find replacements and increase the numbers.

He also reported on the latest updated guidance / instructions in relation to match day procedure for match officials. He would be contacting Kevin Hewitt (Northern League) to see what they are going to do regarding ‘Handshakes’ and we, as a league, would look to do the same.

* **Annual Subscriptions.** - Sean Rooks, League Treasurer, informed the meeting that quite a few clubs had still not paid their annual subscription to date. He will be placing a notification on the league’s WhatsApp page reminding those clubs that they have until 1st August 2021 to make payment, or a fine can and will be incurred for non-payment.
* **Darlington Town FC.** - Kevin informed the meeting that the club would not now be playing out of Stockton Town’s ground, as previously advised, as Stockton Town have now blocked the move. They will now be playing back out of Eastbourne Sports Centre.

Being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.36pm.