**WEARSIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE**

**MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Tuesday 10thOctober 2023**

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

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

Dani Maguire, Chris Murray, Helen Pollard, Joe Partridge, Keith Simpson,

Kevin McKitterick, Steve Futers, Mick Grant.

1. **Apologies** Dave Copeland**,** Ian Stewart, Kevin Oliver, Kieran Downey, Marshall Lawson,

Paul Bell, Paul Sharpe.

1. **Minutes of the last Management meeting**.

The minutes of the last management committee meeting held on Tuesday 5th September 2023, previously circulated, were confirmed as a true record.

1. **Matters arising.**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

1. **Correspondence**;

* **Discipline/Misconduct - DFA.**

Letter from the County reporting that they have received an increase of referee reports regarding Anti-discrimination, coaches/parents/spectator’s behaviour as well as abandoned fixtures. Informing that when they receive similar reports in the future as well as investigating the incidents, they will also be writing directly to clubs to ask what actions they have taken or intend to take against the individual(s) involved. Responses from clubs will be discussed and if it is considered the actions taken are insufficient the club will be instructed on what action to take. If a club has TWO incidents within the same playing season, they will be required to attend a meeting with Durham County FA. Should a club have THREE similar incidents within the same playing season consideration on removal/ suspension of their accreditation will be discussed which may result in ALL their teams having fixtures cancelled. The county request that all members of the club(s) are aware of this as this will come into effect from Saturday 30th September 2023.

* **Discipline Reports - DFA.**

Letter from the County reporting that they had received an increase in charges relating to players playing under suspension and clubs playing those players whilst under suspension and this has resulted in clubs being deducted points, and in some cases, removed from Cup competitions. They inform that FA rules stipulate that suspensions commence 7 days from the date of dismissal regardless of whether the club is in possession of the referee’s report or not. Should a referee not submit their report in the stipulated time investigations will commence and if necessary the referee will be reported to the Referee Committee which may impose a fine / suspension on that match official. Once a referee takes disciplinary action they MUST report it to the County FA. If is not reported by the club or referee, the County will take action.

* **NLS League Admin Grant 2023-24 - FA.**

Email from Laurence Jones, head of the FA’s National League System, informing that the FA have awarded the league an Administration Grant of **£3,000**, for season 2023-24.

* **Durham United - compliments from Keith Simpson (WOLVISTON FC).**

Email from Keith asking to be put on record the impeccable behaviour of Durham United players, officials and supporters at Wolviston’s ground on Saturday 7th October 2023. “From the moment they arrived right through to the moment they left they conducted themselves in a truly wonderful manner, leaving the Dugout spotless along with the changing room and showers. They were a credit to the league, and it was a pleasure to host them.”

1. **Farringdon Detached v Wolviston FC - Wednesday 6th September 2023.**

Referee Steph Lyons, with agreement from both clubs, abandoned the game at half time due to Fog. The game will now be played on Wednesday 11th October 2023.

1. **Bishop Auckland Res. v Gateshead Leam Rangers - Saturday 9th September 2023.**

Referee Paul Burt reported that the game was abandoned on half time due to the playing conditions. The 3G pitch had 2 wires running across the pitch and during the first half there were 7 instances where the ball struck the wire. In agreement with the match officials and both club secretaries the game was abandoned in the best interests of all parties. The fixture to be rearranged at a later convenient date.

1. **Durham United FC v Annfield Plain - Thursday 14th September 2023.**

Referee John Henderson reported that the match was abandoned at half time due to unmanageable behaviour from Annfield Plain players. The report is being dealt with by Durham FA and the league await the outcome. It will be placed on the Agenda for the next management meeting.

1. **Durham FC Corinthians Development - failing to field a team at home to Shildon Railway on Saturday 16th September 2023.**

Helen Pollard, club secretary, informed the meeting that they were short of players available to play for the 2nd team due to some being seconded to the 1st team, and she had no other option but to call the game off. The decision of the management committee was that **FA and League Rule 20.E.1**. be applied resulting in the club being fined £50.00, as per the Fines Tariff in relation to the rule, and the game to rearranged at a later convenient date.

1. **New Durham AFC - request for a suspension of fixtures.**

Phil Rutherford, club secretary, requested a 3-week grace of fixtures until the 7th October 2023 as they had lost a number of players following their game on 16th September and are now struggling to field a team and will need to regroup. League Secretary Kevin Harrison agreed to call off the next two games and informed Phil that it will be referred to the management committee. Following lengthy discussion, it was decided that the club be fined £50.00 for the 23rd September call off, but not to be fined for the 30th September call off. The fixtures will be rearranged at later dates.

1. **Willington AFC v Wolviston FC - Wednesday 20th September 2023 - verbal abuse of Wolviston players and officials.**

Keith Simpson (WOLVISTON FC), reported to League Secretary on the unsavoury incidents that occurred at their game at Willington. From the second half commencing their players were verbally abused and insulted constantly from a group of children aged approximately 14/15 years old. When confronted by Wolviston officials asking to stop the bad language it was then extended to them, including Keith, as well. The senior assistant informed Keith that he would be reporting this group due to the vile conduct. At the end of the game Keith immediately went to the Willington committee room to report the incident where one of the members commented that he was ‘nit picking.’ A meeting was then held involving Keith, two committee members and the Willington manager who at first tried to make light of it before realising how serious the incident was. He was given a very humble apology from one of their committee. Keith wants to ensure that they investigate the incident so that other clubs in the future do not have to endure what he personally went through by these mindless idiots. He also reported that before, during and after the game Willington’s hospitality was exemplary, first class and a credit to the League. On leaving their clubhouse he was once again apologised to by numerous Willington committee men. He hopes they do carry out an investigation to stop this unwarranted behaviour from ruining local football.

1. **Hilda Park FC - failing to field a team at home to FC Hartlepool Reserves on Saturday 30th September 2023.**

Email received on 29th September 2023 from the club informing that they cannot field a team for the above fixture so will have to pull out. They will be informing the referee and opposition too. He assumed that they would concede the game.

The decision made was that **FA and League Rule 20.E.1**. be applied resulting in the club being fined £50.00, as per the Fines Tariff in relation to the rule. The fixture will be rearranged on a later convenient date.

1. **Billingham Town Reserves - failing to field a team away to Coxhoe Athletic on Saturday 30th September 2023.**

Letter in mitigation submitted by Ray Morton, club secretary, apologising for not being able to fulfil the fixture with not having a team due to injuries, covid and lack of transport for young players who don’t drive. Theu are having a meeting of players to discuss the current situation.

The decision made was that **FA and League Rule 20.E.1**. be applied resulting in the club being fined £50.00, as per the Fines Tariff in relation to the rule. The fixture will be rearranged on a later convenient date.

1. **Darlington Town - failing to field a team away to Durham United on Thursday 5th October 2023.**

Email and Letter in mitigation submitted by Norman Stephens, club secretary, apologising and informing that they were unable to field a team due injuries, covid, players leaving, and the game being on a Thursday as some players were unable to change their shift pattern from a Wednesday. Following deliberation, the decision of the management committee was that **FA and League Rule 20.E.1**. be applied resulting in the club being fined £150.00, as per the Fines Tariff in relation to the rule, and the fixture to be rearranged on a later convenient date.

1. **Darlington RA - request for postponement of game away to Durham United FC on Saturday 14th October 2023.**

Scott Craggs, Club Secretary, addressed the meeting informing that they have a number of players missing through injury, 4 players away on holiday and 3 players have left the club this week. Following lengthy discussion, the decision of the management committee was that **FA and League Rule 20.E.1**. be applied resulting in the club being fined £150.00, as per the Fines Tariff in relation to the rule, and the fixture to be rearranged on a later convenient date.

1. **Billingham Town Reserves - non-payment of referee’s fee and expenses for their home game on Saturday 7th October 2023.**

Steve Futers, League Match Officials Secretary, informed the meeting that referee David Batty had reported to him that he had not received his match fee or expenses for the game. Steve contacted Club Secretary Ray Morton requesting that payment be made as a matter of urgency. Referee Dave Batty reported back to Steve confirming that had since received payment on the Saturday night and was happy for the matter to be concluded.

Kevin informed the meeting that should this happen again the Club will be charged as per League Rule 23.E.

1. **Bishop Auckland Reserves - failing to field a team at home to Norton & Stockton Ancients Youth in the Alan Hood Cup on Saturday 7th October 2023.**

Ian Baranowski, Club Secretary, joined on a zoom call but was having difficulty in connecting verbally into the meeting so League Secretary Kevin Harrison spoke to him over the phone. This followed an earlier email to the league reporting that he had been informed that the club are unable to field a team for the Cup game on the forthcoming Saturday. The decision of the management committee was that **FA and League Rule 20.E.1**. be applied resulting in the club being fined £150.00, as per the Fines Tariff in relation to the rule, and the club excluded from the cup competition. This was relayed to Ian over the phone, and that he would receive written confirmation of the decision following the meeting.

1. **Covid.**

Kevin reported that he had received a number of enquiries from clubs regarding the possibility of calling games off due to players with Covid. Following discussion and that self-isolation is no-longer a requirement, It was agreed that clubs will be instructed that the league will not acceptCovid as a reason to not fulfil a fixture.

1. **Medical Emergency Action Plan Workshop.**

Kevin informed the meeting that 15 names had been received who wish to attend the MEAP Workshop which is going ahead on Thursday 19th October 2023 at Farringdon Youth and Community Centre, Sunderland. He will contact those clubs who are attending with a reminder. Those clubs not attending that have a MEAP in place are to forward a copy to him.

Peter will contact Phil Tye, League Charter Standard Officer for a club situation update,

1. **Fines - update.**

With League Treasurer Sean Rooks, currently away on holiday an update will be provided at the next meeting.

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

* **Match Postponements.**

Kevin referred to the number of fines being issued to clubs for failing to field a team and calling games off and felt that a fine appears not to be a sufficient deterrent. He suggested a possible deduction of points be considered, as per league rules, for persistent offenders, i.e., those clubs who have called off games twice. He will write to all clubs informing them that the league will consider taking firmer action re clubs not fulfilling fixtures.

* **3 Legends.**

Keith Simpson (WOLVISTON FC) informed the meeting that SKY Sports had been to their Club’s home ground, Metcalf Park, to promote a forthcoming ‘Talk-In’ event involving a number of former Middlesbrough FC footballing legends.

Before the conclusion of the meeting Mick informed the committee of the recognition by Durham County

FA, at a recent awards ceremony, to league Life Members Keith Simpson and Marshall Lawson, for ‘Over

50 Years Service to Football Administration.’

Being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.15pm.