**Membership Rules**

These Rules are made pursuant to the Association’s Memorandum and Articles of Association [and may only be changed in accordance with Article 8]. If there is any conflict between these Rules and the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Memorandum and Articles of Association shall prevail.

**1. MEMBERSHIP**

**a.** All affiliated Associations, Leagues or independent Competitions shall be Members of the Association. Affiliated Associations, Leagues or independent Competitions shall forward to the Secretary on or before 31 August in each year a return in accordance with the Form marked "D" in the Schedule annexed to The Football Association Rules.

**b.** All properly constituted Clubs in the County of Stafford playing under the Rules of The Football Association shall be eligible for Membership, subject to the approval of the Directors of this Association. The Secretary of each Club shall annually forward to the Secretary of this Association, on or before 30 June, a return in accordance with Form "A" in the Schedule annexed to these Rules, also a copy of the Balance Sheet, duly audited within Seven Days after its Annual General Meeting. All Clubs shall be required to keep a Minute Book containing full records of all their Meetings and showing the date of election of Members.

**c.** Membership of the Staffordshire Football Association Limited is dependent upon taking out Public Liability Insurance and Personal Accident Insurance. In the case of Adult Clubs the Personal Accident Insurance shall provide their Members with a Minimum Benefit of £125.00 per week.

**d.** Membership of the Staffordshire Football Association Limited is dependent upon each Playing Member of a Club completing an approved Registration Form.

**2. LONG SERVICE**

**a.** A Long Service Award shall be presented to Members of Council on the completion of 15 Years active service (the definition of the term "active service" being that 50% of Meetings must be attended in the period required for qualification - except in the case of illness).

**b.** A Long Service Award shall be presented to Players and Officials on the completion of 15 Years unbroken active service in either or both capacities with an individual Club or Competition. The Club or Competition must make the request together with the necessary details.

**c.** A Long Service Award shall be presented to Referees on the completion of 15 Years unbroken active service as a Referee affiliated to this Association.

**3. REPRESENTATIVES AT GENERAL MEETING**

Each Member shall appoint its own representative to the General Meetings but in the event of a change in the representative at any Meeting, the Secretary of the Association must be advised by letter of such change by the Secretary of the body to whom the representatives belong.

**4. POWERS**

The Directors shall have the power to deal with any matter not provided for in the Laws and Rules of this Association.

**5. ALTERATIONS TO RULE**

No alteration shall be made in these Rules except in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

**6. OFFENCES AGAINST THE RULES**

The Council may call upon Clubs or Individuals charged with offending against the Laws or Rules to prove to the satisfaction of the Council that the offence has not been committed and failing such satisfactory proofs, the Club or Individuals shall be judged guilty of the offence. The Council shall have power to call upon any Club or Individual to produce the Books, Letters or Documents, and evidence of any kind that the Council may desire.

**7. PUNISHMENTS**

Any Affiliated or Associate Association, Combination, Club, Player, Official, or Member being proved guilty of any breach of the Laws or Rules of Misconduct shall be dealt with in such a manner as the Council may decide; and any other Association, Combination, Club, Player, Official, or Member taking part in Football against such offender shall be liable to be similarly dealt with.

**8. DECISIONS AND APPEALS**

Resolutions and decisions of the Council and the Directors shall be binding on all affiliated Associations or Competitions and all Members thereof, until they are rescinded or varied in accordance with Standing Orders. The Council’s decision shall be final in respect of the Cup Competitions and the Charity Fund. Any District Association, League, Competition, Club or Individual wishing to appeal against a decision of a Committee or Council of this Association shall forward to the Chief Executive of The Football Association (Wembley Stadium, PO Box 1966, London, SW1P 9EQ) within 14 DAYS from the date of the Meeting at which the Committee or Council FIRST gave its decision, and by Registered Letter, a notice setting forward the grounds of the Appeal, together with the sum of £35.00 (Thirty Five Pounds). At the same time an exact copy of the notice must be sent to the Secretary of this Association, also by Registered Letter. In the case of an Association or Club, the Appeal must be signed by the Chairman or his deputy and the Secretary. Appeals cannot be made arising out of the Competitions of this Association when the Rules provide that the decision of the Association shall be final. The Appeals Board appointed by The Football Association to hear the Appeal shall have power to order the Fee to be forfeited if it thinks fit ad may, in addition order the appellant concerned to pay the cost of the hearing of the Appeal.

**9. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS**

All Complaints and Appeals shall be in writing and sent to the Discipline Manager within Fourteen Days of the Competition notifying the Club in writing. No Complaint or Appeal will be entertained by the Association if full details of the grounds or the reasons for the Appeal are not lodged. The Complaint or Appeal must be accompanied by a Deposit of £25.00 which shall be forfeited if the Complaint or Appeal is not sustained. The Council shall also have power to compel any party to the Complaint or Appeal to pay such expenses as they deem fit. All Complaints relating to nonfulfillment of match fixtures must be made within 28 Days from the date upon which such fixtures should have been played.

**10. PUBLICATION OF DECISIONS**

The Association through its Secretary, shall be entitled to publish in the public press, or any other manner, report its proceedings, acts and resolutions, whether the same shall nor shall not reflect on the character or conduct of any Association or Competition, Club, Official, Player or Spectator, and every such Association or Competition, Club, Player or Spectator shall be deemed to have assented to such publications.

**11. CONDUCT OF OFFICIALS AND BETTING**

**a.** Every Association or Club is responsible to the Council for the actions of its Players, Officials and Spectators, and is required to take all precautions necessary to prevent Spectators threatening or assaulting Officials and Players during, or at the conclusion of Matches.

**b.** No Official of an Association or Club, Referee or Assistant Referee or Player shall bet on any Football Match, and Associations and Clubs are also required to prevent betting and the use of objectionable language.

**c.** An Official of an Association or Club, Referee, Assistant Referee or Player, proved to have taken part in Coupon Football Betting (Authorised and Registered Football Pools excepted) shall be permanently suspended from

taking part in Football or Football Management.

**12. CLUB FINANCE**

All books and vouchers, for at least TWO Seasons preceding the current Season, must be retained by the Club and be ready for production whenever required by this Association. The Association shall call for the books of AT LEAST TWO Clubs who are not FULL MEMBERS of The Football Association each Season. All Clubs applying for RE- AFFILIATION shall submit with their Form "A" a Statement of Accounts for their last Financial Year.

**13. COUNTY COMPETITIONS**

All Clubs whose parent body is this Association will be required to enter whichever of the County Competitions is considered suitable by the Council.

**14. GATE RECEIPTS AND ASSOCIATION ACCOUNTS**

All Gate Receipts in which the Association is interested shall be checked at the conclusion of the Match by Two Members of the Board of Directors, who shall certify the correctness of same and at the first Meeting of the Council thereafter, a report of the net receipts shall be made, the funds of which shall be deposited in such Bank as the Council may decide and all cheques shall be signed by Two Members of the Board of Directors. The Accounts shall be audited annually and a certified Balance Sheet shall be sent to each Member at least One Week prior to the Annual General Meeting.

**15. REPRESENTATIVE MATCHES**

**a.** The Council may call upon the services of any Player registered with the Clubs in Membership of this or any affiliated or Incorporated Association if required for a Representative Match.

**b.** Any Player selected to attend a Match arranged by the Association and (without good and sufficient cause) refusing to comply with the arrangements of the Council for the playing of the Match, or failing to attend such Match, may be adjudged by the Council to have been guilty of Misconduct, and any Club or Official who may be deemed to have encouraged or instigated such Player to commit a breach of Instruction or Rule, shall be deemed guilty of a similar offence.

**c.** The Council may also require a Member Club to place its ground at the disposal of the Association.

**16. REFEREES**

The Council shall have power to appoint Referees in all or any of the Matches played by Clubs under its jurisdiction and for this purpose may appoint a Committee or delegate the appointing of Referees to the Leagues and Competitions under its control and include such representatives as may be considered necessary.

**17. REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS**

Please see Football Association Rule C 2.

**18. PLAYERS WITH WRITTEN CONTRACTS**

Please see Football Association Rule C 2.

**19. PLAYING SEASON**

**a.** Between the period from the official commencement of the Season to 30 September and the period 15 March and 31 May in any playing Season, Leagues and Competitions (other than the Staffordshire Senior Cup, Vase, Walsall Senior Cup and Youth) Mid-Week fixtures shall be subject to the following conditions:

**i.** Leagues and Competitions sanctioned by this Association normally playing

on Saturdays shall play their Mid-Week fixtures on Mondays and Wednesdays.

**ii.** Leagues and Competitions sanctioned by this Association normally playing on Sundays shall play their Mid-Week fixtures on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The only exception to this shall be for Leagues and Competitions normally playing on a Mid-Week Day shall have priority on that Day.

**b.** The Close Season shall be defined as the period between First (1st) June and Thirtieth (30th) June inclusive each year, save where Council makes an order to the contrary. No Matches other than those permitted and played in accordance with Sub-Paragraphs (I), (ii) and (iii) of Paragraph c) of this Rule may be played during the Close Season. No Matches other than the following may be played during the Close Season: -

**i.** Small side Matches as specified in Rule B7 and those organised in connection with Works’ Clubs Sports Days on private grounds and at fetes and similar sports functions.

**ii.** Matches between Army, Navy and Royal Air Force Teams and Teams of the Auxiliary Forces in Competitions whilst in camp. Such Competitions shall be strictly confined to the Units concerned and gate money shall not be taken.

**iii.** Matches involving Members of Boys Brigades, Scouts and kindred organisations in Competitions whilst in Camp.

**iv.** Matches in any Competitions for National Representative Teams or Clubs played under the auspices of FIFA or UEFA.

**20. UNAUTHORISED FOOTBALL**

**a.** Any Player or Club competing in any Football Competition, the proceeds of which are not devoted to a recognised Club or Football Association, or Charitable Institution, shall be liable to suspension for such time as this Association may think fit, unless permission has been first obtained.

**b.** No Player registered with any affiliated Competition last Season who has since 30 June (subject to the provisions of F. A. Rule B.4) taken part in any Football Competition not sanctioned by this or a recognised Association, shall be allowed to take part in any affiliated Competition this Season unless and until they have been dealt with by this Association.

**c.** Clubs and Players under the jurisdiction of this Association shall not play with or against any Club which is not a Member of this Association or some other recognised Association.

**21. STAFFORDSHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION LIMITED CHARITY FUND**

The object of the Fund is to make grants to Players, Officials and Employees of the Staffordshire Football Association Limited who are incapacitated from earning their living, or to the widows and orphans of such persons, and to such other persons who, by virtue of service to the Association, are, in the opinion of the Council, deserving of such consideration.