

WORCESTERSHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION LIMITED



Notice is hereby given that the 24th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the WORCESTERSHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION LIMITED will be held at County Sports Ground, Claines Lane, Worcester WR3 7SS **on THURSDAY 15th JUNE 2023 at 6.30pm** precisely for the transaction of the ordinary and special business of the Association, an Agenda of which accompanies this notice.

By order of the Board of Directors

N E Trigg
Chief Executive Officer

County Sports Ground
Claines Lane
Worcester
WR3 7SS

1st June 2023

AGENDA

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

The following ordinary resolutions shall be considered and, if thought fit, passed.

ITEMS

1. **Apologies**
2. **To receive and, if thought fit, adopt the Annual Report for season 2022-23.**
3. **Statement of Accounts and Independent Accountants Report**
To receive and, if thought fit, adopt the Abbreviated Unaudited Accounts for the Worcestershire Football Association Limited for the period 1st July 2021 to 30th June 2022.
4. **Election of Officers**
 - 4.1 **Honorary President**
The Board of Directors proposes the election of **Mr Roy Northall** as Honorary President for a term of office for one year.
 - 4.2 **Chairman**
In accordance with Article 48 at the Annual General Meeting the Chairman shall retire and is not eligible for re-election. **MR R BATE** has formally notified the Board of Directors that he wishes to be considered for election. No other nominations have been received.
 - 4.3 **Vice Chairman**
In accordance with Article 48 at the Annual General Meeting the Vice Chairman shall retire but shall be eligible for re-election. No nominations have been received.
 - 4.4 **Independent Accountants**
The Board of Directors proposes the appointment of **KENDALL WADLEY LLP, 27 SANSOME WALK, WORCESTER, WR1 1NU** as Independent Accountants.
5. **Annual Election of Area Representatives and Disability Clubs Representative**
To receive a report of the Area Representatives and Disability Clubs Representative elected for following year, in accordance with Article 43.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR SEASON 2022-23

On behalf of the Board of Directors I have pleasure in offering this report as an overview of the Association's activities during season 2022-23 - the 129th year of The Association.

IN MEMORIAM

During the season we recorded the passing of several members of the local football family. To these, and other servants of association football who have passed away during the past season, we offer our gratitude for their valued service and extend our sincere condolences to their families.

COUNTY SPORTS GROUND - CLAINES LANE

We are delighted to report that the 3G ATP continues to be well received and is fully booked for most evening and weekend slots – the daytime slots are gradually increasing, and we welcomed the university sides here for regular Wednesday afternoon bookings. We have been able to use the building for many events this season. We are very proud of the Connexions Café which is held on Mondays and Fridays led by Helen Plumley and Mark Owen which is proving very popular and regularly has a good and growing attendance. We are also fortunate to have some regular bookings for dance and fitness groups, dog training (inside and outside booking), and some local businesses are also using our facility for meetings and presentations including NHS Worcestershire. We are now seeing the asset being regularly used by the Community which is good news for increasing our presence and also allows us an additional revenue stream.

Both office suites remain rented out on full commercial terms allowing us to repay the annual Prudential Loan amounts to Worcester City Council without having to use other sources of income to do so.

Our excellent and flexible facility has allowed us to diversify, and we continue to work towards securing our future over the next few years to reduce our reliance on any one source of funding.

COUNTY CUPS

All County Cup Competitions were run to conclusion and all, but the Senior Invitation Cup continue to be held on the grass pitch at Claines Lane. We hosted 16 finals and welcomed huge numbers of supporters and visitors over a very busy 3-week period. The Senior Invitation Cup was held again at Bromsgrove Sporting's Victoria Ground. It was also the inaugural season for the Under 15's Girls Cup.

Senior Invitation Cup	Stourport Swifts FC v Redditch United FC (2-0)
Saturday Cup	Evesham United Development FC v Worcester City Reserves FC (1-1, 1-3 pens)
Saturday U18's Cup	Stourport Swifts Juniors U18 FC v TDMS U17 FC (4-4, 4-3 pens)
Saturday U16's Cup	Droitwich Spa Youth U16 Trojans FC v West Worcester Youth MJPL FC (2-1)
Saturday U15's Cup	Kidderminster Harriers Youth U15 Whites FC v Pershore Town Youth U15 FC (4-3)
Saturday U15's Girls' Cup	Inkberrow Eagles U15 Girls FC v Kidderminster Lions U15 Girls FC (4-8)
Saturday U14's Cup	City Juniors U14 FC v Kidderminster Harriers Youth U14 Reds (1-4)
Saturday U14's Girls' Cup	Worcester City Youth U14 Lionesses FC v Meadow Park Youth U14 Cobras (2-4)
Midweek Youth Cup	Stourport Swifts U18 FC v Pershore Town Youth U18 Floodlit FC (0-0, 4-5 pens)
Sunday Premier Cup	Stourport Swifts Sunday FC v Inkberrow Sunday FC (2-1)
Sunday Junior Cup	Redditch Borough FC Sunday JW v New Chequers (2020) Firsts FC (0-2)
Sunday Minor Cup	Wolverley Social Firsts FC v Holte FC (5-1)
Sunday Women's Cup	Redditch Borough Firsts JW Women FC v Kidderminster Harriers FC Women (0-2)
Sunday U18's Cup	West Hagley Juniors U18 East FC v Meadow Park Youth U18 CWYFL FC (1-2)
Sunday U16's Cup	West Worcester Youth U16 Chelt FC v City Juniors U16 FC (0-1)
Sunday U15's Cup	West Hagley Juniors U15 South FC v Pershore Town Youth U15 Bullets FC (2-0)
Sunday U14's Cup	Nunnery Wood Colts U14 Typhoons FC v Bromsgrove Sporting Colts U14 FC (1-5)

DEVELOPMENT

The Development team has seen some significant changes during the season. Jodie Williams who has led the development of Girls' & Womens football for several seasons left us to become a fulltime coach with Fulham – managing their U18s Girls team. Martin Collier, Football Development Manager was offered a one-year contract at the Football Foundation in March 2023 and takes a sabbatical from WFA for this period. Jacquie Owers, Football Delivery Manager currently leads the Development Team with 4 new team members: Issey Lee- Fisher (Disability & Inclusion & Youth Football), Louise Mylles, (Girls & Womens Football), Jack Handsaker (Facilities & Adult Male) & Jack Shepherd (Refereeing).

There continues to be significant changes in how our FA funding and targets are managed. There has also been great change within The FA. The FA Coach Education programme having had a complete overhaul in 2020 now has the majority of Education programmes administered and centrally managed by The FA with most learning being transferred to online or with only minimal face to face delivery. The Charter Standard Programme has been rebranded to “England Football Accreditation” All KPIs have now been changed and most areas are based on market share for the current funding period of 2021-24 – a huge change from that of the past 2 decades. This has caused a decrease in FA funding received but we have been successful in identifying other income streams and are looking forward to being able to develop these and massively reduce our reliance of FA funding.

Provision and availability of facilities continues to be a challenge for football as local Councils and other privately owned facilities continually struggle financially and are always looking for ways to reduce costs and/or increase prices. We have worked closely with all pitch providers this season to find more economic ways of providing places to play and keep pitches open and we will continue to do so. It has been an extremely challenging season, but we have identified grants and funding streams that may be available. We have supported and encouraged many clubs to apply for these sources of financial support. The new Facilities Officer strengthens the support we can provide, and this is most welcome.

CHILD WELFARE - SAFEGUARDING AND RESPECT

The Association was reaccredited with The FA Safeguarding Operating Standard. The independent assessment for 2022 was carried out by the new independent assessors from NSPCC who replaced Girling Hughes Associates after 3 years. The amount of work involved to achieve this annual reaccreditation is immense and requires complete support from the entire team as well as The Board and Council Members. Clubs also need to be recognised for their efforts in ensuring their volunteers engage with the new regulations and processes and maintain in date qualifications. The Standard has been extended to include Adults At Risk.

Clubs continue to be supported by WFA during the affiliation process to ensure all statutory and training requirements for Club Welfare Officers (CWO) are met. It continues to be challenging - poor social behaviour sadly continues to mar the game and we have experienced a significant increase in reported safeguarding concerns over the last few months; early intervention with CWOs has had some evidenced positive effects and we continue to provide support and guidance to clubs and leagues.

Serious child welfare cases reported to us are referred directly to The FA Case Management team and external agencies. Where required we have been actively involved in multi-agency working during the season and this cross party working ensures that information is disseminated effectively and professionally to all relevant parties. External agencies i.e. Social Services and the Police are now referring directly to the WFA and seeking information and requesting our attendance at strategy meetings.

Spectator behaviour/coach behaviour remains a perennial problem and as in previous seasons there appears to be no consistency regarding clubs or age groups making it a difficult area to target for improvement. WFA continues to take a zero-tolerance approach and with the support of Leagues and Clubs, will immediately suspend any teams involved until the investigations into allegations are completed and any discipline matters resolved. We would like to thank the Clubs and Leagues who supported our action. We have also visited Clubs and presented directly to players and coaches in a Club environment in order to provide early intervention and/or prevention of poor behaviour.

GOVERNANCE

Roy Northall has completed his fifteenth season as Chairman. Roy has reached the retirement age of 75 and, in accordance with the Articles now steps down as both Director and Chairman of the Association. WFA would like to place on record their immense thanks for his stewardship during this time.

Richard Bate has completed his ninth season as Vice-Chairman and Eric Birch his ninth season as an Independent Director. Eric is also the Board Safeguarding Champion.

WFA participated in a FA funded initiative for recruitment of Independent Directors and were delighted to be able to appoint Simon Trickett, Jo Kelly and Elaine Brewster. They have brought a wealth of knowledge and experience in Corporate Governance, Marketing and Human Resources this season which has significantly strengthened the Board and allowed it to continue to steward and actively administer and govern the Association's business affairs and regulate its football activities. The next challenge ahead is to achieve The FA Code of Governance.

Council Members continue to support the activities of the Association and give their time generously. Their commitment to service and improvement is greatly appreciated.

FA REPRESENTATIVE

Chairman Roy Northall served as the Association's Representative on The FA Council for the 2022/23 season. He reported back to all Council and staff regularly throughout the season keeping them informed and updated over FA issues and the impact on the Association. Nichola Trigg has been appointed by the Board to become the Association's Representative from 2023/24 season.

REFEREEING

Ollie Williams was promoted to Chief Operating Officer in August 2022 following a workforce review where a new post was created. Referee development and promotion is now led by Jack Shepherd who joined the Association in February 2023 and is part of the restructured Development Team.

Helen Plumley continues with the Central Pool of Referees Appointments for the County Youth Leagues. The referee tutor workforce comprises Jerry Curtis, Ravel Cheosiaua, Dan Pattison, Marvyn Amphlett and Ollie Williams.

Worcestershire's referees continue to represent themselves and the County FA with distinction at all levels of the game from grass roots to the professional game. We also had a number of successes with promotions and certainly have good representation now at all levels of the game locally and nationally.

DISCIPLINE

Cases going to personal hearings have increased this season. Discrimination cases continue to increase significantly, and we are also seeing an increase in the range of alleged discrimination incident types as well as a greater age range of the participants alleged to have made such remarks. It is of particular concern that there is an increase at the younger age groups where this would not be expected given the greater focus on anti-discriminatory behaviour in schools and colleges. Most allegations are for homophobic remarks, followed by racist remarks and disability.

It is evident that where Clubs take action against poor practice and are intolerant of unruly and unacceptable behaviour there are fewer on or off field misconduct charges. Club Welfare Officers continue to be extremely supportive and early intervention continues to address this undesirable trend. The Association continues with weekly round table meetings where all cases of poor practice, misconduct, and potential aggravated breaches (discrimination) are considered and allocated to the relevant staff member for action. This continues to be very effective and we will continue to develop and refine this process.

The FA continues to implement significant changes to the discipline process. The national discipline system continues to focus on streamlining the process and this programme of change will help ensure that the discipline procedure will be both fairly and consistently applied across the country at all levels of football. WFA continues to participate in the scheme where a Regional Panel of Commission Members is available as a pool and several of our previous panel members have been successful in being appointed. All FA hearings continue to be via video conference. This reduces the time taken to manage cases and is more cost effective and efficient for the participant in the long term.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The County FA website www.worcestershirefa.com continues to be widely accessed. It is a significant source of current information. We also use selective social media tools such as Facebook, WhatsApp and Twitter (@WorcsFa) to act as notice boards providing the latest information to our participants across Worcestershire and the wider football fraternity. Twitter usage has increased significantly, and we now have over 7100 followers; Facebook is less popular for general notices but has proved a valuable communication tool for specific closed user groups e.g., referees. Youth Council predominantly uses WhatsApp.

We have undertaken a review of our marketing strategy during the season. Some early changes include new branding and updates to our website to establish consistency and ease of access to information. Further enhancements are ongoing.

FINANCE

Locally and nationally there continues to be significant changes to funding. As reported previously The FA has significantly reduced our funding over the last 5 years and funding continues to be reduced in real terms. The Association now works with a grant finder organisation and has successfully bid for some large grants which will be used to deliver projects in the next 12 months.

Our premises income continues to be a valuable source of income. The organisation continues to strive to maximise efficiency and rigorously monitors its expenditure and the financial forecast targets breakeven or better. However, like all organisations, particularly those with external funding streams there is reliance on these income streams continuing and plans are in place to quickly address any situation should any funding stream be withdrawn. Increased communication by electronic means continues to provide significant savings in postage, stationery and print costs.

STAFF

We have significant staff changes this season – the new members of the teams have settled in well and bring new ideas, energy, and direction to their roles. The team continues to be constantly professional and positive when delivering their area of responsibility. We are fortunate to have such a diligent and skilled team.

SUMMARY

This season has certainly been busy for the Association. The workforce review which created new roles and/ or work remits together with five new members of the team brought challenges with lack of knowledge and insight but this was countered with the new direction, innovation, and enthusiasm. Football continues to thrive and continues to be challenging. Formats of the game are ever evolving, facilities continually need new sources of investment, technology plays an ever-increasing part in administering and managing the game, but football is being enjoyed and is as popular as ever - the single biggest team participation sport in the UK. It is a privilege to lead the team at WFA to support those involved with the game locally.

Expectations are not always possible to meet- there are many demands on our time and resources but what we strive to provide is support to those providing football to the many to ensure football remains the number one participation sport in whatever format of the game they choose and that the facilities they play on, and the coaching and training opportunities are the best that can be achieved or provided with the resources available.

As always, a new season brings new opportunities, new perspectives, new challenges. It is an evolution not a revolution and with our excellent facility and team we look to remain the hub for football throughout the County.

The WFA staff team and I look forward to catching up with all of you in person, at some point over the forthcoming season.



Nichola Trigg
Chief Executive Officer
June 2023