



# DORSET FOOTBALL

## DORSET COUNTY FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION BUSINESS STRATEGY 2021-2024



## **Executive Summary**

The Dorset County Football Association was founded in 1887 and became a Company Limited by Guarantee in 1999. It is a small County in football terms having 956 teams this includes 124 female teams, and 166 registered referees (12 of whom are female).

Dorset is an average size County in terms of area (just over 1,000 square miles), however, the infrastructure for moving around the County is poor with no motorways and very few dual carriageways, public transport is very infrequent with the only regular train service running from Weymouth in the West to Poole in the East. There are pockets of rural deprivation and this must be noted when we are organising football activities in order to provide access for all participants. Participants that do not have access to a car can be disadvantaged as the County is 60 miles East to West and 33 miles North to South.

When working with our partners in Local Authorities one difficulty is that football operates on pre 1974 Boundaries and therefore Bournemouth is recognised as within the Hampshire FA boundaries. This splits the Bournemouth & Poole Council area between the two counties and in reality means that Dorset do not have an affiliated football club playing in either the English Football League or the Premier League. Our highest placed Women's team is in Tier 5 of the pyramid.

The Association is proud of its achievements during the life of our current Strategy and as a County FA we recognise the importance of providing a safe environment for our participants. The Safeguarding Operating Standard will remain a priority for our Business and we are proud of the work undertaken by our Safeguarding Team who have embedded Safeguarding across the entire business. Dorset is proud that, we are one of a small number of Counties, who have received a "pass" on all of our assessments. We will not compromise on the integrity of our Safeguarding Work, but we do recognise that our workforce team are often stretched beyond capacity.

The Association have performed well against all of our KPI's during the life of Strategy particularly in female participation, male participation and Accreditation.

We have modernised our Governance Structure and became the 2<sup>nd</sup> County to achieve the FA Code of Governance. Dorset now do not have a Council and as can be seen by the diagrams in this document the structure of the Board has changed to include three independent members and our revised Articles have already been adopted by the members giving more decision making power to our two principle Committees, Development and Governance. We appointed a new Chair of our Board for Season 2022/2023 who had led the recruitment of a new CEO from September 2023.

Finance is, of course, an enabler for all of our football activities and the Company is no different to other businesses throughout the country in that our costs have risen considerably. We are very proud to have our own pitch at our Headquarters in Poole: we developed this facility as a business investment for the Company, as well as providing a facility for the Community, with an ambition of achieving an income level of £100,000 and I am pleased to report that this will be achieved this Season. Within the County Operating Model Dorset County FA had their income reduced by just

over £11,000 for this Season and there will be a further £11,000 deduction for each of the next two Season cumulating in approximately £33,000 loss during the life of this Strategy and in the first year of the next. We will need to revise our dedicated Workforce and activities to reflect this loss.

As with Safeguarding, Inclusion and Diversity, are at the heart of our activities. We have achieved the Preliminary Equality Standard and the County have reformed their Inclusion Advisory Group. The County has a BAME population of just over 1%: although this is low, we must ensure BAME and participants from other protected characteristics are afforded the opportunities to participate and develop.

### **Vision**

*“Ignite and Inspire the Communities of Dorset using the power of Football”*

### **Mission**

To be recognised by our Football Communities as an organisation which inspires and governs football in collaboration with our stakeholders, delivered with expertise and integrity to create a fun, safe and inclusive environment in Dorset.

### **Our Values**

Approachable

Supportive

Passionate

Innovative

Respectful

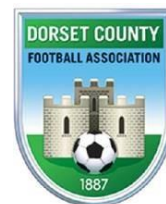
Engaging



## Key Achievements during Season 2022/2023

### Code of Governance Achieved

- Code of Government underpins Governance processes
- New Chair of Directors appointed
- Committee structure working well



### Safeguarding embedded across Dorset Football

- Meeting Safeguarding 365 following a very positive assessment from the NSPCC
- Welfare Wednesdays embedded within the Workforce
- Voice of the Child embedded into specific work areas
- Regular compliance reviewed and achieved



### Achievements against KPIs

- Growth of male and female team registrations across DCFA sanctioned leagues
- Exceeded male and female pathway KPI 2022/23 targets
- Exceeded YTWQC and Coaching CPD targets



### County Ground

- Laying of new carpet agreed including financial contribution
- £100,000 income achieved through ground letting
- Plans for new Stand underway

### Financial Position

- Profit that will be achieved in despite cost of living increases
- Investments
- Finance Committee meeting regularly
- Funding for full time Chief Executive achieved

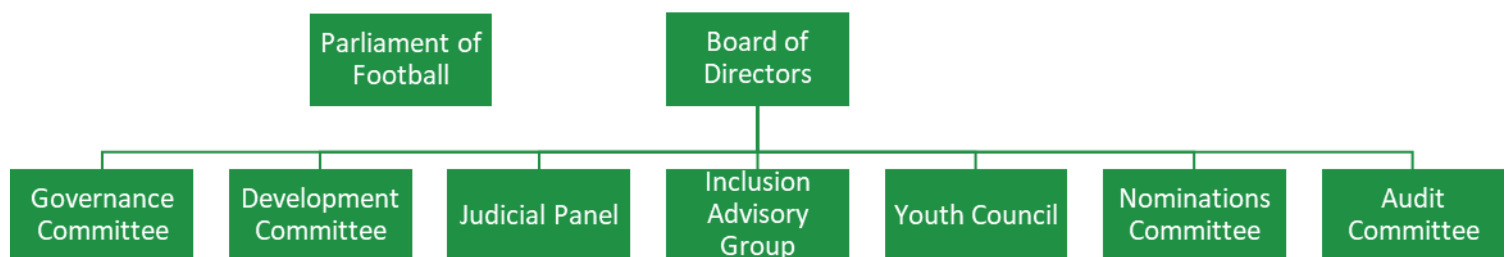


## DORSET COUNTY FA STRUCTURE – May 2023

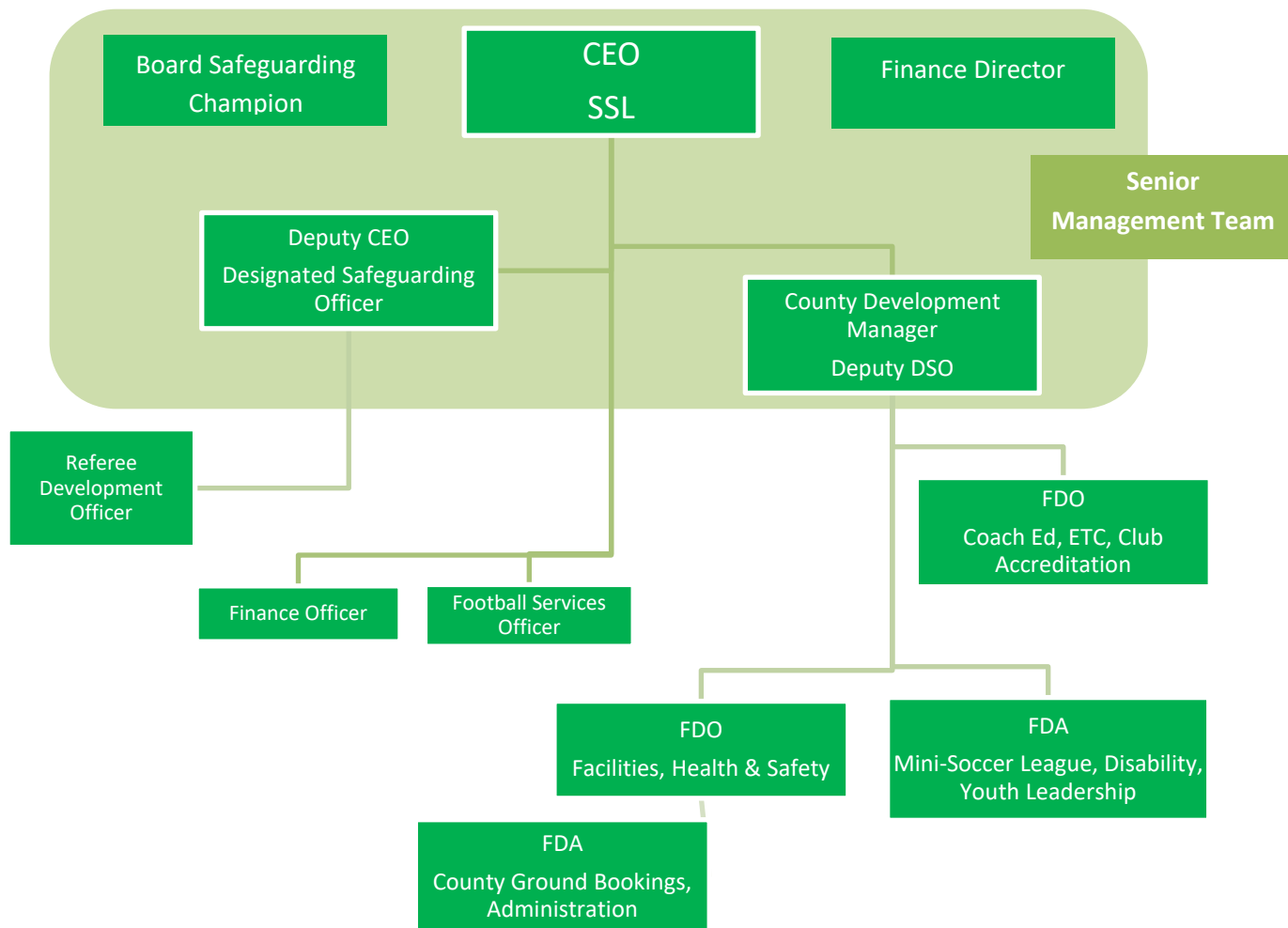
### Board Structure:



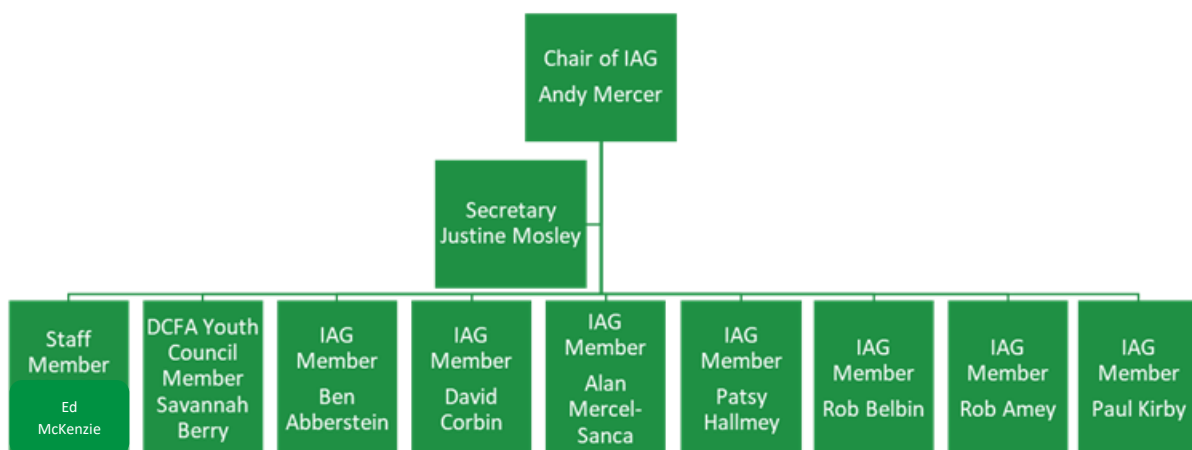
### Governance Structure:



## Organogram of Staffing Structure:



## Organogram of Inclusion Advisory Group:



## BUSINESS STRATEGY OBJECTIVES SEASON 2021-2024

### KPI's

To work in partnership with The Football Association to deliver our agreed KPIs:



### **Main actions to achieve this objective:**

#### **Male Pathway**

- Sanctioned adult and youth leagues in place – specific support in place per league
- Administration of Dorset Mini-Soccer League – development at the focus
- Relationships between Leagues is key – Mini-Soccer/Youth/U18/Adult/Vets/WF
- FE and HE relationships, activity affiliated
- Work with England Football Accredited clubs to identify gaps in the male pathway
- Support the promotion of FA Play Phase across 6 Dorset
- Grow the Dorset Walking Football League
- Exploring new opportunities for recreational/social football – health/walking football
- Map additional non-affiliated football (e.g. sports centre bookings, coaching companies)

#### **Female Pathway**

- Dorset Women's League – Grow league back to 9 teams
- Dorset Youth League – Under 7 – Under 17 age groups

- Build upon relationship between leagues for transition – movement from Rec opportunities into Women's League and Women's League into regional structure
- Women's Recreational football – evolve the offer
- Social adult football – Firmitude weekly sessions, 7 v 7 festivals
- Girls Schools Football Partnerships (3) – community links; leadership academy
- Weetabix Wildcats – retain 5 providers; grow new providers
- Squad – retain 2 providers; grow new providers
- Women's World Cup – use opportunity through #LetGirlsPlay and summer festivals
- Work with England Football Accredited clubs to identify gaps in the female pathway
- Deploy Equal Game Ambassador to grow female game in the County
- FE and HE relationships, activity affiliated

### **Disability Pathway**

- Training – highlighting and promoting the Introduction to Disability Football e-module.
- Delivery of Comets pilot and grow to additional providers delivering
- Deploy Disability Ambassador to grow disability football across the County
- Project to make the fixture structure across recreational/competition viable and sustainable
- Offering support to clubs with affiliation/player registration/League
- Continue to develop CP offer for youth football
- Dorset FDO part of the South-West Disability Working Party, main priority to encourage female disability opportunities and partnerships.
- Grow social prescription referrals into the game

### **Coaches**

- Youth Teams with a Qualified Coach
- Utilise Power BI data to target clubs/coaches
- Link in with Club Accreditation checks
- CPD Events – Online and Face to Face
- Plan an accessible CPD programme across the county with our CDO Team
- Target clubs to host CPD events that are delivered by CDO
- Work with leagues to have fixture breaks for CPD events
- Share all opportunities with all clubs, leagues and coaches
- Dorset FA Facebook group – Coaches Club and females in football group



## **Facilities**

- Increase PitchPower usage
- Target priority pitches (Linked to LFFP)
- Target Pitch Preparation Grantees
- Target multi-pitch sites
- Promote PitchPower to Educational establishments and Local Authorities to improve their maintenance programmes
- Support clubs to apply for Grass Pitch Maintenance Funding
- Promote Grass Pitch Improvement through online channels
- Create a database of Dorset Groundman that maintain club sites, so that they receive continual support to help upskill the workforce
- Promote Educational Pathways
- Online Workshops (CFA & GMA led)
- GMA Membership
- Courses
- Promote HIVE Grounds Keeping Community App

## **Referee Education and Development**

### **Recruitment**

- To target current adult players and female referees including BAME
- To produce realistic pathways for all potential referee course candidates
- To produce Course Brochure
- Ensure all candidates commit to working on DCFA sanctioned competitions priority as part of their conversion matches

### **Conversion**

- During the FA Referees course link all candidates to the mentor support programme
- To ensure League stakeholders offer newly qualified referees sufficient and appropriate matches
- To ensure all newly qualified referees are supported through their first five matches with mentor support and call back training
- During The FA Referee Course, explain DCFA referee information pack which includes discipline/safe guarding support, match day cards, and mentor contact.

**Retention**

- At point of registration discuss individual referee pathway and refereeing opportunities
- Easier methods of reporting poor behaviour, with follow up support from RDO
- To ensure Dorset referees are portrayed in a positive manner, and good news stories are shared with the wider football community

**Referee Progression**

- To deliver four DCFA Core training sessions
- To deliver four DCFA Youth CORE training sessions
- To deliver fifteen DCFA Youth CORE Scholarship observations as part of the S365 Voice of the Child requirements
- To ensure all confirmed referee promotion candidates receive sufficient developer reports
- To deliver two general DCFA training sessions for all registered referees

## **SAFEGUARDING**

To maintain the Safeguarding 365 Standard and embed Safeguarding policies, including the Sheldon recommendations across Dorset Football.

### **Main actions to achieve this objective:**

- DCFA Board to appoint the Board Champion for Safeguarding annually
- Welfare Wednesday meetings on a weekly basis and maintain up to date action log; this includes SSL/RDO, DSO, Deputy DSO & Discipline . When required will include any other member of staff
- To monitor the Safeguarding 365 Standard and always comply with the requirements and measures of the standard
- Ensure all managers and coaches working with U18 players hold an in-date FA DBS check and in-date safeguarding qualification
- Encourage all Adult Disability Clubs to appoint a designated CWO and signpost CWO and Team Officials to complete The FA Safeguarding Adults course
- Utilise online Player Registration to identify where 16-17-year-old are playing in open age football and to ensure these teams meet the mandatory safeguarding requirements
- DCFA Board to have oversight of initiatives and events that are acting on the voice of the child
- Ensure all DCFA Staff, Board and Committee Members have in-date FA DBS checks, safeguarding education and CPD relevant to their role
- Ensure Safeguarding Codes of Conduct are signed and adhered to by all DCFA Staff and deployed volunteers
- Promote DCFA's dedicated children and young people's webpage, Kids Pitch
- Promote The FA's Safeguarding for All, Safeguarding Children Course and Safeguarding Awareness for Parents and Carers to educate and raise awareness
- To promote the DCFA webpage Kids Pitch, and the DCFA Your Game Initiative
- To deliver, provided FA Innovation Funding the Say Less, Play More Programme.

## **SUNSEEKER INTERNATIONAL COUNTY GROUND**

- Installation of new carpet during June 2023
- Planning permission obtained for the demolition and building of new 150 seater stand at the Ground.
- Grant bid submitted to the Premier League Stadia Fund for funding of stand and dugouts
- New stand built
- Income of £100,000 secured for Season 2023/2024
- Explore the inclusion of a Playzone at the Ground when criteria are released for next funding cycle
- Appoint new site manager for out of office hours work
- Board to consider pricing structure for the Ground

## **DIVERSITY & INCLUSION**

To embed Diversity and Inclusion across Dorset Football.

### **Main actions to achieve this objective:**

- Football Leadership Diversity Code – 90% of affiliated clubs adhering to the code
- Continue Diversity Training for Staff and volunteer workforce
- Review Equality and Diversity Policy and Statement annually
- Behaviours of staff and members to ensure it promotes a culture of inclusion
- Clear reporting procedures for inappropriate behaviour
- Dorset Football is here to ensure everyone has a positive experience across all protected characteristics and social backgrounds
- Utilise FA Equality and Diversity dashboard to support operational plan delivery
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan reviewed quarterly by IAG and the Board
- Proactively communicate positive news stories around Equality and Diversity



## **GOVERNANCE**

To maintain the FA Code of Governance and ensure the Directors act in line with Company Law.

### **Main actions to achieve this objective:**

- Transition between outgoing and incoming Chief Executive
- Appoint an INED in accordance with Code Procedures
- Review the new Governance structure in order to evaluate its effectiveness
- To implement the changes in the Code of Governance to reflect version 2
- Attend the Code of Governance Conference at SGP to ensure understanding of new requirements
- To review the membership of the Finance and Nominations Sub Committees
- Youth Council expanded to at least seven members and Role of Youth Council reviewed
- Gain feedback from Youth Council Members to ascertain effectiveness
- Company Law processes followed throughout the Season

## **Finance**

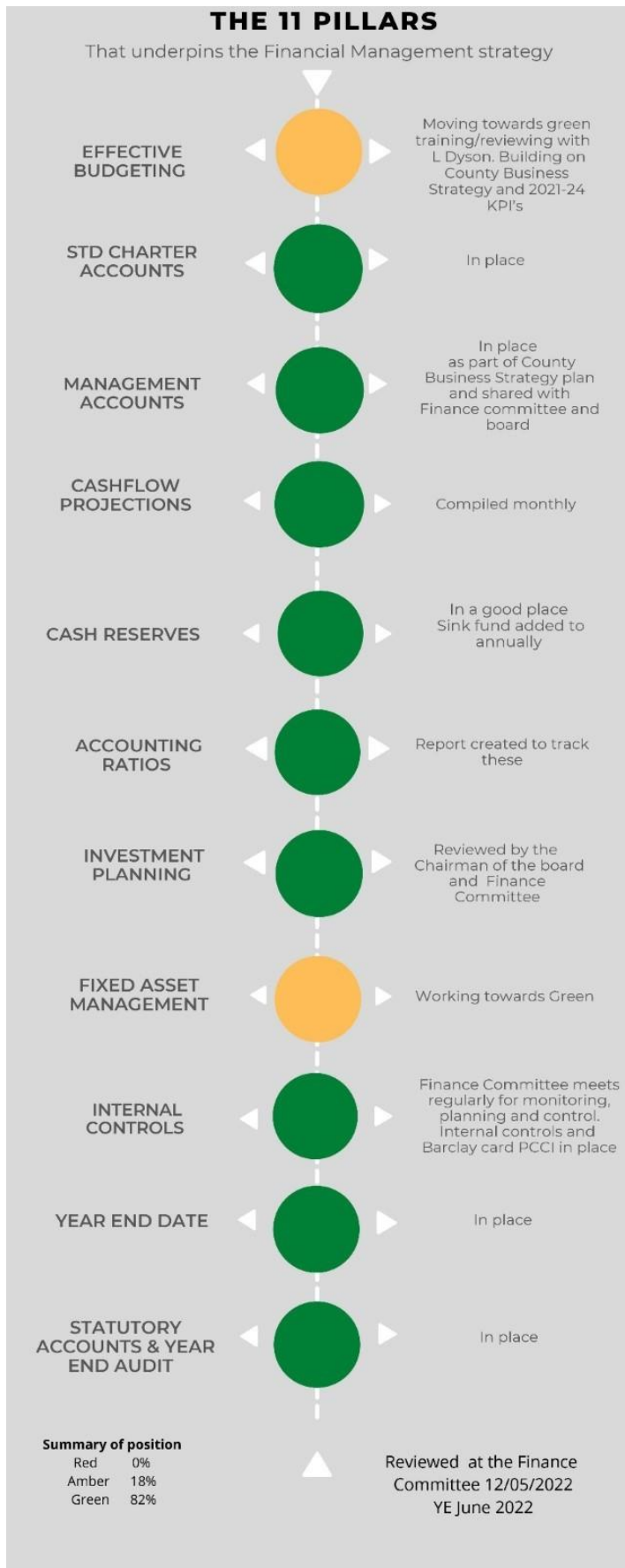
To ensure the Company operates to a budget which shows an operating profit for each Season and has at least 8 months of investments.

### **Main actions to achieve this objective:**

- Association to be Green on the 11 Pillars of the FA Financial Management Strategy by the end of the Strategy
- Review the Service Level Agreement with Sunseeker to ensure both parties are satisfied in order to maintain and protect and enhance relationship
- To budget for an income exceeding £100,000 from the letting of the County Ground for Season 2023/2024
- To continue to operate a sinking fund (it will have been used for new carpet)
- Financial situation monitored by Finance Committee and Board on a quarterly basis
- Develop format for finance monitoring reports to be presented to Board of Directors on a regular basis
- Pattern of meetings to be clearly defined for Finance Committee which dovetail with Board of Directors meetings
- To ensure the budget is set for Season 2023/2024

### **DCFA Investments as of 1 June 2023**

Aldermore	£87,622
Hampshire	£85,902
Teachers	£101,959 – identified as sinking fund for 3G pitch
Wine Investment	£19,635
Bank – Current Account	£232,459 - £50,000 will be taken from here for new pitch carpet



## **WORKFORCE**

Newly appointed Chief Executive to further review the Workforce by the end of Season 2023/2024 and review all processes to maintain a motivated workforce which has the skills to deliver the new Strategy.

### **Main actions to achieve this objective:**

- To review the Workforce to ensure it has the capacity to deliver the developed Strategy but is within the staffing budget for the Company
- Review all workstreams that need delivery and how they can be allocated to utilise the skills of the staff
- Succession Plan in place where known key members may leave during the life of the Strategy
- To consider additional Business Savings efficiencies as they become identified by The Football Association
- To encourage all staff to complete the State of Play survey and use the results to devise an action plan to build on the strengths and make improvements
- To consider the mental well-being of the Workforce and measures that could be adopted to enhance
- To organise a thank you event for staff on an annual basis. To send a thank you communication to staff for outstanding work
- Appraisals and CPD opportunities
- To consider additional one to one meetings with staff to guide the team members development and identify issues early. Meeting with linked Director
- Revisit the Board of Directors key priorities and do they fit their skillset?
- Format and programme of meetings for Board and Committees. Target a mixture of remote and face to face meetings

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENTT**

### **Main actions to achieve this objective:**

- Director appointed with responsibility for Health and Safety
- Executive to work with Director and maintain a register of repairs, health and safety issues and risk registers and to carry out inspections on a monthly basis
- Risk assessments to be carried out by all staff when holding activities offsite
- To attend regular training on relevant areas of Health and Safety
- To ensure the Risk Register is monitored, reviewed and updated on a regular basis:
  1. Workforce and Employee Wellbeing
  2. FA Relationship and FA Changes
  3. Compliance and Contractual
  4. Safeguarding and maintaining the Operating Standard
  5. Commerciality and Profitability – Finance
  6. Business Administration, Sanctions and Regulations
  7. Governance and Management structures
  8. Volunteer Workforce/Programmes/Organisational structures
  9. Media, Communications and Perception
  10. Customer Service/Customer Excellence
  11. National Game Strategy performance
  12. Facilities/Business recovery
  13. Data, Digital and Information Technology



## **COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING**

### Communication and Marketing

#### **Main actions to achieve this objective:**

- Portfolio of Sponsorship opportunities which is reviewed annually
- To build the relationship with our main sponsor Sunseeker to ensure both parties are satisfied with the working of the partnership
- Review the partnerships that the DCFA have in place and examine the ROI on each one
- Review the communication to our stakeholders regarding our partnership agreements
- Review of social media policy
- To continue building relationships with our wide range of partners within Dorset Football and ensure our messages are communicated effectively

## **GOVERNING THE GAME**

### Governing the Game

#### **Main action to achieve this objective:**

- Use of digital products available in the game to develop an efficient grassroots digital ecosystem to serve the administration and development needs of players, parents and the workforce
- To check that all Leagues are utilising the on line FA Registration system
- Supporting our volunteers in the game. Utilize the FA Volunteering Strategy. Work to promote a reward scheme for our volunteers
- Compliance – ensure we operate in compliance with the Rules and Regulations, including judicial processes of the game
- Compliance – Dorset FA to become part of the Regional Disciplinary Panel. Members completed application process and will join the panel from July 2023
- To support a vibrant club network within Dorset Football for all areas of the game and strive to support Clubs and Leagues with Accreditation
- To carry out our Business as Usual functions in a professional and efficient manner

## **Key Partners we will work with to achieve our Business Objectives**

The Football Association  
The Football Foundation  
Sport England  
Dorset Sanctioned Leagues and Recreational Football Providers  
Affiliated Clubs  
Pro Direct Soccer  
Sunseeker International  
Active Dorset  
Girls Schools Football Partnerships, West Dorset and North Dorset  
Dorset Mind  
Firmitude – recreational football session community interest company  
Dorset Schools FA  
Dorset Mental Health Forum  
Dorset Children's Foundation  
Dorset LGB & T Equality Network  
Activity Alliance  
Youth Sport Trust  
NHS Dorset Healthcare University – NHS Foundation Trust  
BCP Council  
Dorset County Council  
AFC Bournemouth  
Inspired inclusive Solutions  
Grounds Management Association  
Bournemouth University  
Weymouth College  
Bournemouth & Poole College  
Kingston Maurward College  
GP Local prescribers  
Age UK  
St Anne's Hospital

## Summary

We are delighted with the progress we have made during the life of the Strategy 2021-2024. The Association are delighted that participation numbers for both male and females have risen and the appetite for participants to take part has been very strong. All of our Leagues have completed their fixture programmes and our County Cup Competitions have also reached their conclusions.

As we reflect on our two seasons under our new Governance structure it has worked well and certainly our decision making process has been streamlined. The Governance and Development Committee's have increased responsibility whilst the independent Members on the Board of Directors have added great value, looking at our strategic decision making processes from a Business perspective. The Parliament of Football has only had one session during the past Season but we did host an FA Youth Review session which was well attended by a variety of Stakeholders.

This Season we have lost two key members of staff including our DSO who was also EA to the Chief Executive. This resulted in a staffing shuffle and we are delighted to have passed our Safeguarding 365 assessment despite this.

The Association is delighted with our successes but recognise that there are challenges ahead particularly around behaviour on and around the field of play.

As an Association we will strive to continue with excellent customer service and to move forward in a changing world.

Sue Hough, MBE

Chief Executive