



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 879 teams in Season 2020/2021 this includes 91 female teams, and 159 registered referees (10 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 4 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 the first assessment. 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 the previous Strategy particularly in female participation and Charter Standard.

We are working hard to modernise our Governance Structure and meet the requirements of the FA Code of Governance. Dorset will not have a Council going forward and as can be seen by the diagrams in this document the structure of the Board will change from July 2021 and our revised Articles have already been adopted by the members. The Directors have undertaken an external skills audit and we are now looking to recruit members for our constituted Board to ensure the necessary collective skills are covered.

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 we have seen a massive drop in income owing to the pandemic. 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 and our ambition is to generate at least £100,000 income each Season during the life of this Strategy. Within the County Operating Model Dorset County FA will have their income reduced by just over £11,000 for each of three seasons

cumulating in approximately £33,000 loss during the life of this Strategy. 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 are currently working towards achieving the Preliminary Equality Standard and the County have recently 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 the first year of our Strategy

Code of Governance Achieved

- 2nd County FA to achieve Code of Governance
- Structure of Board of Directors changed
- Council replaced by Parliament of Football
- Committee structure working well
- Preliminary Level of Equality Award obtained



Safeguarding embedded across Dorset Football

- Meeting Safeguarding 365 following a very positive assessment from the NSPCC
- Welfare Wednesdays embedded within the Workforce
- Regular compliance achievement



Achievements against KPIs

- Male and female participation numbers
- Coaches CPD
- Player Registration Coverage
- Youth Teams with Qualified Coaches



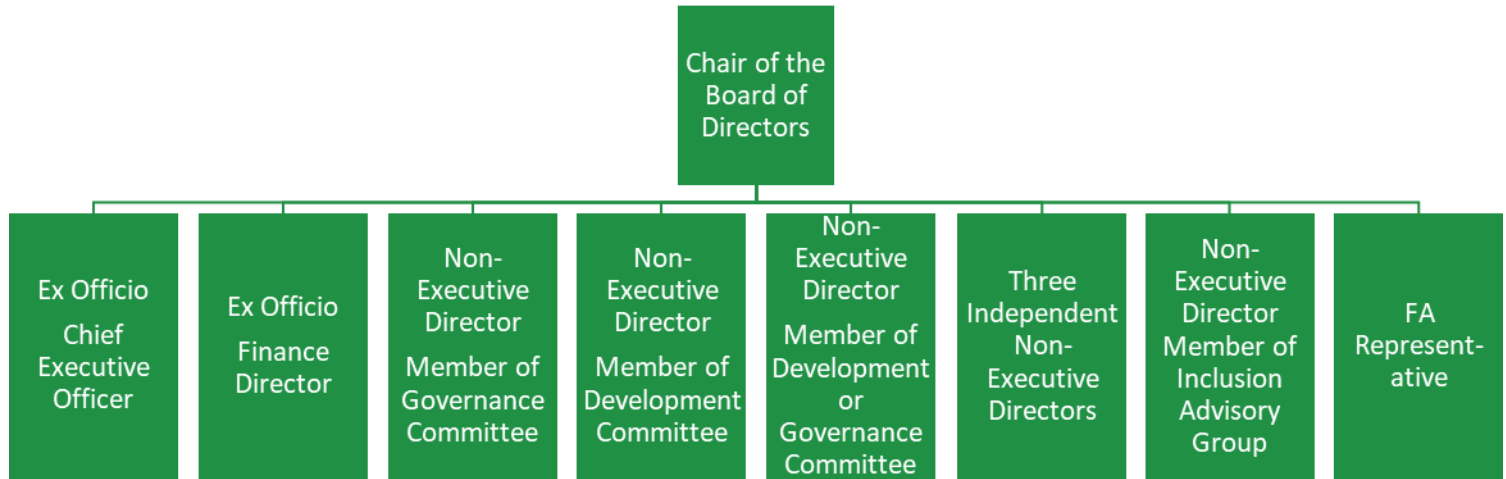
Financial Position

- Profit that will be achieved in first year following Covid-19 pandemic
- Investments
- Finance Committee formed
- New Sponsor for County Ground secured

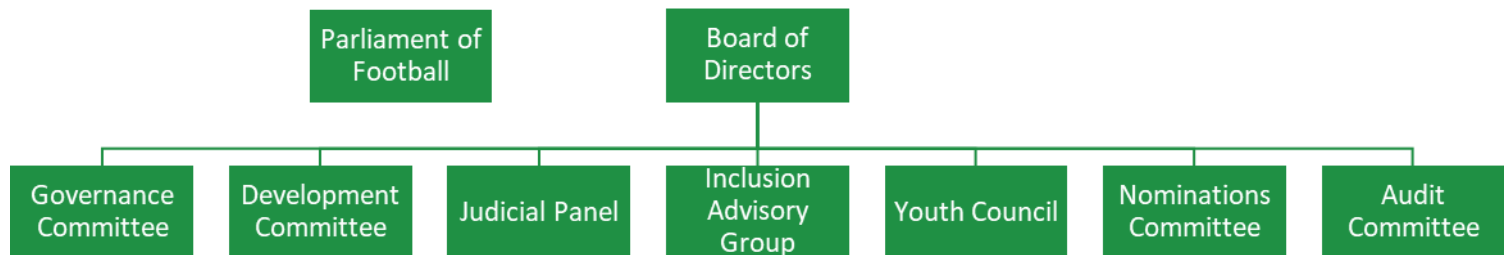


DORSET COUNTY FA STRUCTURE SINCE JULY 2021

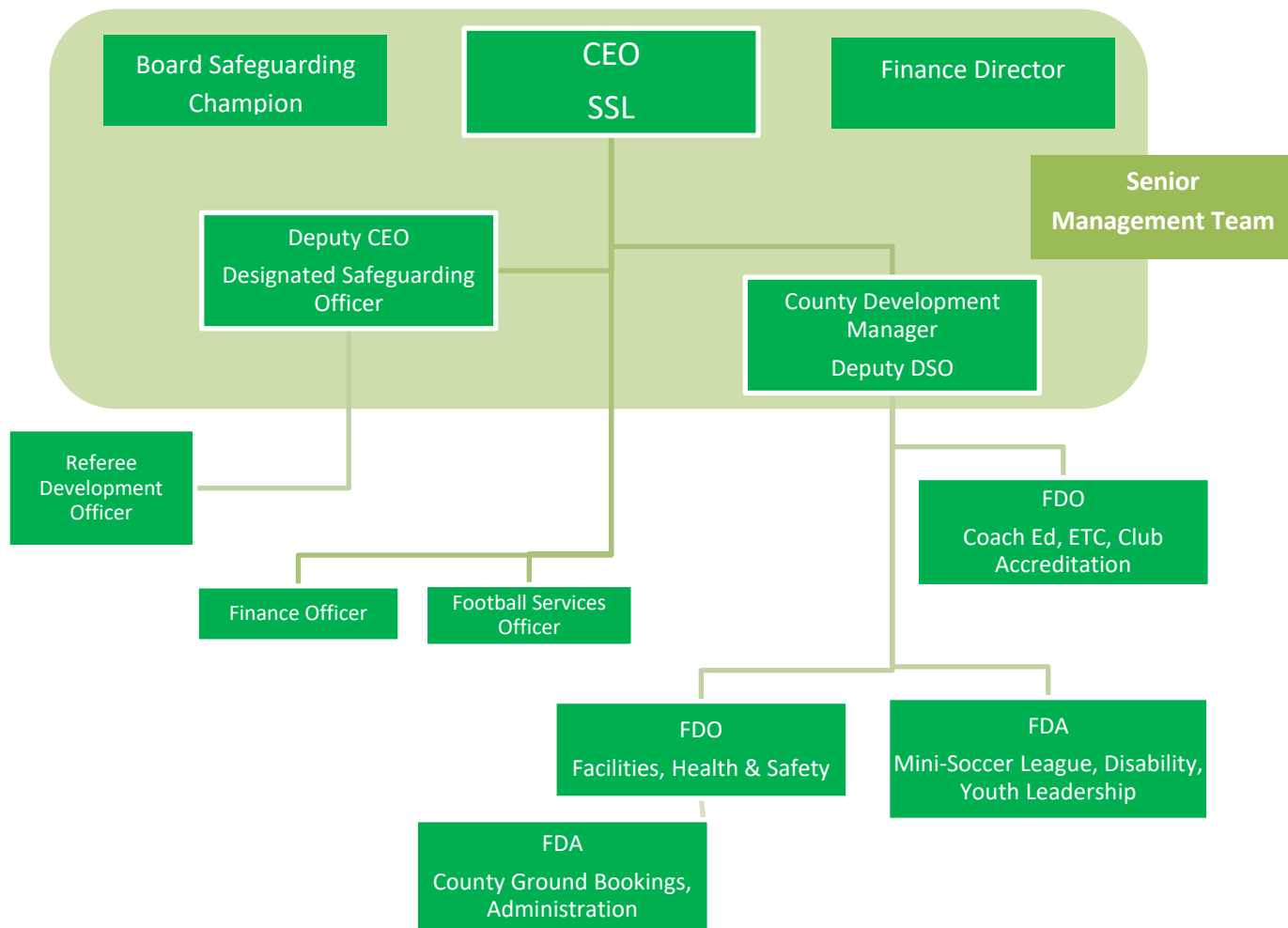
Board Structure:



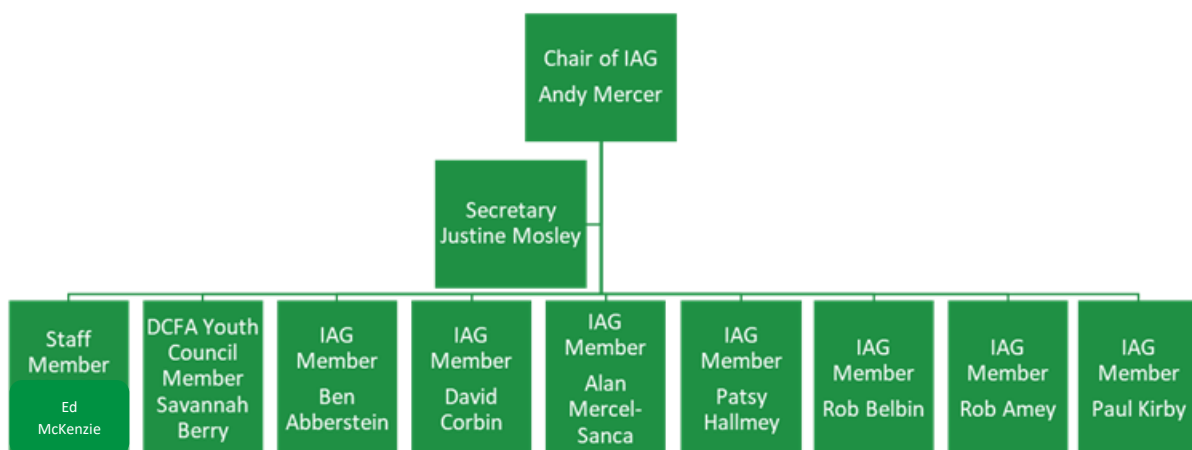
Governance Structure:



Organogram of Staffing Structure:



Organogram of Inclusion Advisory Group:



BUSINESS STRATEGY OBJECTIVES SEASON 2021-2024

OBJECTIVE 1

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
- Local small sided league providers connected to County FA
- Work with England Football Accredited clubs to identify gaps in the male pathway
- Support the evaluation of FA Early Years pilot across 6 Dorset clubs
- Stabilise and 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 8 – Under 18 age groups
- Build relationship between leagues for transition – movement from Rec League into Women's League and Women's League into regional structure
- Women's Recreational League – retain the league
- Social adult football – Firmitude summer sessions, 11 v 11 fixtures and 7 v 7 festivals
- Girls Schools Football Partnerships (3) – community links; leadership academy
- Weetabix Wildcats – retain 3 providers; grow 2 new providers
- Squad – deliver pilot; identify potential additional providers
- EUROS 2022 – use opportunity through #LetGirlsPlay and summer festivals for growth
- Work with England Football Accredited clubs to identify gaps in the female pathway
- FE and HE relationships, activity affiliated and facilitating matches - Sept 2022 onwards

Disability Pathway

- Training – highlighting and promoting the Introduction to Disability Football e-module.
- Possibility of offering County networking events until suitable FA Training is in place. Cross County training events. Club to Club training/networking
- Re-engaging with current clubs with Disability Teams
- Offering support to clubs with affiliation/player registration/League
- Growth – Youth Teams (Ability Counts Youth Division)
- League – Continue to offer Festival Fixtures once a month
- Dorset FDO part of the South-West Disability Working Party, main priority to encourage female disability opportunities and partnerships.
- Contacts for GP Practice Managers established to help signpost potential participants into disability football.

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
- To ascertain via personal contact the real availability of potential referee course candidates
- Ensure all candidates commit to working on DCFA sanctioned competitions priority as a starting point the DYFL.

Conversion

- During The FA Referee Course; To link all new recruits to DCFA mentor support via the YDG (Youth Development Group for all U18 referees), or the county Development group for all other referees.
- To ensure League stakeholders offer new referees sufficient matches
- To ensure all newly qualified referees are supported through their first 5 matches with 4 and 8 weekly catch up.
- During The FA Referee Course, explain DCFA referee information pack which includes discipline/safe guarding support, match day cards, and mentor contact. The mentor contact is also available to parents and carers of U18 referees

Retention

- At point of registration discuss individual referee pathway and development training.
- WhatsApp support groups set up in over 18 age groups
- Easier methods of reporting poor behaviour, with follow up support from CFA
- Each parent/child consulted to choose most appropriate mentor
- To ensure all good news stories relating to referees are shown to all football participants

Education/Development

- To deliver two training sessions to the DCFA Development group.
- To deliver four training sessions to the YDG.
- To deliver four training sessions to the DCFA CORE.
- All referees included in the DCFA CORE group and promotion candidates will be mentored/coached individually
- To deliver to the Youth CORE Scholarship

OBJECTIVE 2

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
- 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 education
- 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 deliver the Say Less, Play More initiative

OBJECTIVE 3

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

OBJECTIVE 4

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

Main actions to achieve this objective:

- To appoint FA Representative in accordance with Articles of Association
- Review the new Governance structure in order to evaluate its effectiveness
- Stakeholders invited to nominate replacement members if vacancies occur
- To review the membership of the Finance and Nominations Committee
- Youth Council expanded to at least seven members and Role of Youth Council reviewed
- Gain feedback from Youth Council Members to ascertain effectiveness
- Investigate the feasibility of working towards the Intermediate level of the Equality Award

OBJECTIVE 5

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

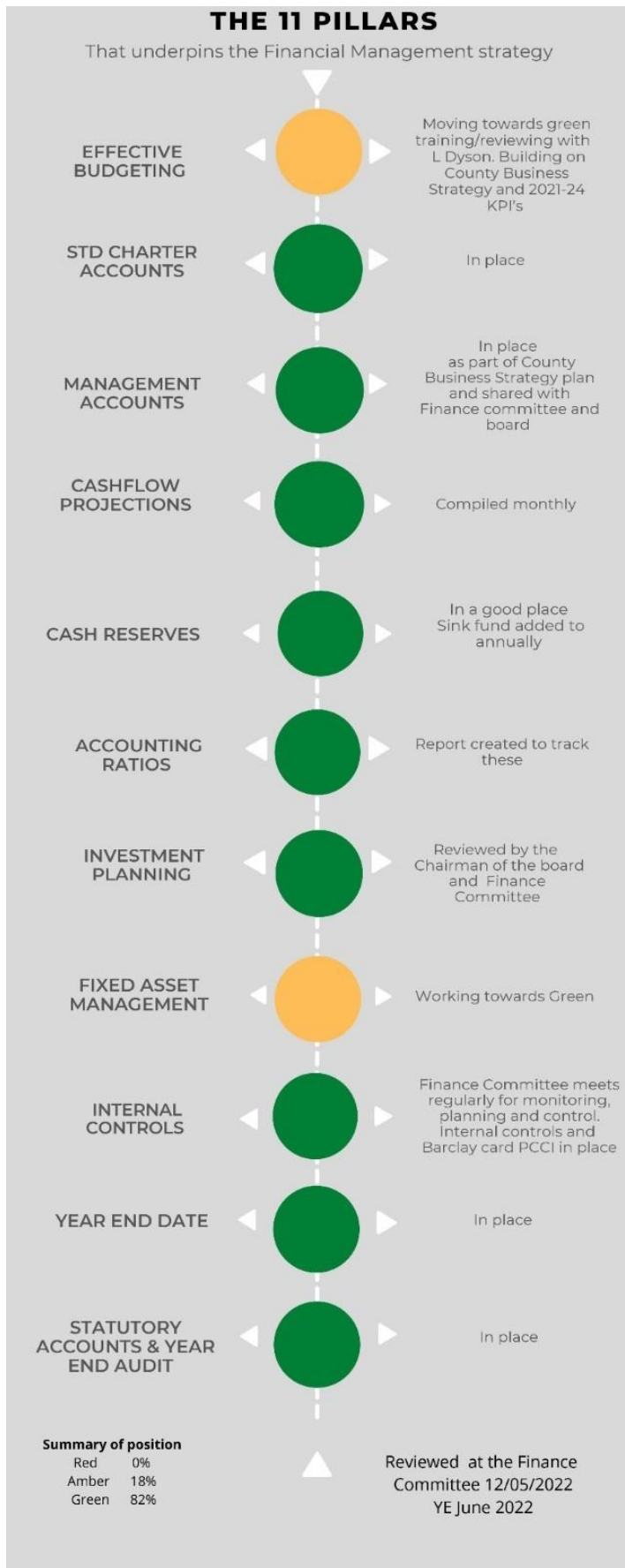
Main actions to achieve this objective:

- 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 2022/2023
- To maintain the sinking fund for the replacement of the 3G pitch when needed. Aim for £25,000 each Season but minimum of £15,000
- 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 begin the process of developing a MUGA at the rear of the classroom at the County Ground in order to generate additional income and provide a community facility
- To conduct a feasibility study to set affiliation fees for Season 2023/2024

DCFA Investments as of 1 June 2022

Aldermore	£86,670
Hampshire	£85,000
Teachers	£102,916 – identified as sinking fund for 3G pitch
Wine Investment	£21,000

Bank – Current Account £146,773.75



OBJECTIVE 6

To further review the Workforce by the end of Season 2022/2023 and review all processes to maintain a motivated workforce which has the skills to deliver the Strategy.

Main actions to achieve this objective:

- To undertake a Workforce Review to ensure it reflects the requirements of the Business.
Additional funding of £12,000 for Facility work but loss of funding in the sum of £11,000 for this Season and two subsequent Seasons in County Operating Model
- Workforce to ascertain 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 the Shared Services as 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

OBJECTIVE 7

Health and Safety/Risk

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

OBJECTIVE 8

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

OBJECTIVE 9

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 support all Leagues to ensure they 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 – Review the current Judicial Panel and ensure that are up to date with current training
- To support a vibrant club network within Dorset Football for all areas of the game
- 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 first year of the Strategy 2021-2024.

In the first Season returning from Covid 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 first year 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 prospective. The Parliament of Football sessions have been well attended and we have been able to invite a wider audience to take part in our discussions.

We have operated this Season with a reduced Workforce and without doubt our loyal, hard working members of staff are stretched. Unfortunately, our projected budget for Season 2022/2023 will not enable an uplift to previous staffing levels and this remains a challenge.

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