

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPEAL BOARD OF THE FOOTBALL
ASSOCIATION

BETWEEN

BISHOP'S STORTFORD FC

Appellant

and

THE FA ALLIANCE COMMITTEE

Respondent

DECISION AND WRITTEN REASONS OF THE APPEAL BOARD

1. The Appeal Board conducted a hearing on Wednesday, 7 June 2023, to determine an appeal by the Appellant against a decision of the Respondent, dated 15 May 2023.
2. This hearing was conducted by Microsoft Teams (video-conferencing).
3. The Appeal Board consisted of Mr Roger Burden (Chairperson), Mr Robert Purkiss MBE, and Mr Glenn Moulton. Mr Conrad Gibbons, the Judicial Services Officer, acted as Secretary to the Appeal Board.
4. The Appellant was represented by the attendance of Mr Ian Twinley, Club Safety Officer, and Mr Ian Kettridge, Club Chair. The Respondent was represented by Mr Nick Robinson and, attending as observers, Mr James Earl and Mr Matt Edkins.

The Hearing

5. The Respondent, on 15 May 2023, notified the Appellant of their decision that the Appellant was to be allocated to the National Football League North following their promotion.
6. The Appeal Board, having taken into account the submissions of the parties and having given the Appeal Bundle careful consideration, noted the following.

7. The Appeal Board thank both parties for the manner in which they made their submissions.
8. The Appeal Board noted that the Appellant was appealing on the following ground(s):
 - a. The Respondent misinterpreted or failed to comply with the Rules and/or regulations of The Association relevant to its decision.
 - b. Came to a decision to which no reasonable such body could have come.
9. The Appeal Board unanimously dismissed the appeal on the grounds raised.
10. The Appeal Board reached this decision considering the following:
 - a. The following is a summary of the primary considerations of the Appeal Board, however the absence in these reasons of any particular point, or submission, should not imply that the Appeal Board did not take such point, or submission, into consideration when it considered the matter and reached its findings.
 - b. The ever-changing locations of clubs' players are not factors that the Respondent should investigate when making its decision.
 - c. The Appeal Board noted that both Hemel Hempstead and St Albans City were viable alternatives to Bishop's Stortford for being placed in the National League North but that both those clubs would also be involved in long journeys for some of their away fixtures.
 - d. The Respondent had properly considered both the alternatives.
 - e. The decision to select the Appellant was an appropriate option and was made within the applicable rules and regulations. The fact that there were two viable alternatives was bound to make the decision a marginal one but that did not make the decision unreasonable.
11. The Appeal Board considered the matter of costs and decided that there would be no order as to costs.
12. The Appeal Board order that the appeal fee be forfeited.
13. The Appeal Board's decision is final and binding.

Roger Burden (Chair)

Glenn Moulton

Robert Purkiss MBE

8 June 2023