



## Annual General Meeting

06/07/22

**Clubs not represented at roll call:** AFC Cronton, Ashton Athletic, Ashton Park, Aspull, Astley & Tyldesley, Bootle FC, Cherrybrook, City of Liverpool, Culcheth, Daten, East Leigh, FC Britannia, FC St Helens (apologies received), FC Kirkby, Grappenhall Sports, Halton Borough Wolves, Halton Farnworth Hornets, Hawkley, Haydock, Herald (apologies received), Highfield Grange, Hindley Green, Leigh Town, Orford Juniors, Parklands, Pex Hill, Pilkingtons, Raiford Rangers, Runcorn Linnets, Runcorn Sports, Runcorn Town, Sankey Strikers, Shevington, Standish Panthers, Westoughton, Widnes Dragons, Widnes FC, Wigan Cosmos, Wigan Junior Latics

### **Chairman's Address:**

The Chairman reported on the past season 21/22. The league had continued to operate through the pandemic and remained financially viable despite income loss. He reported there would be a rise in league fees for the 22/23 season, but cup prices would remain unchanged, and the leagues were still priced competitively compared to others.

He expressed grave disappointment at the abysmal turnout at the league presentations at The Hive w/e 2/3 July. A total of 20 Clubs (4%) had turned up for non-competitive medals, on the first of the two days, who participated in the WJFL which was completely unacceptable and totally disrespectful to the League. The WGFL turn out was excellent on the Sunday (day 2) and most division winners and runners up collected their silverware. He asked Clubs who were due at the second phase of the presentations on the 16/17 July to attend as the presentation days weren't about Clubs but were about the players and this should be something that Clubs should remember. There were still approx. 5000 medals from the 20/21 season that hadn't been picked up which was appalling given the effort that went into providing the medals, organisation at the venue and time given up by Committee medals to man the presentation days. The lack of effort on the part of the Clubs had been noted and the Committee would be deciding whether to hold future presentation days given lack of Club attendance. Any Clubs wishing to receive their medals or silverware should contact the Chairman directly ([chairman.wjfl@gmail.com](mailto:chairman.wjfl@gmail.com)).

The Chairman announced that there would be some departures from the League Committee. Of note, Gail Hunt would be stepping down as Registrations Secretary and her replacements would be Stuart Whittaker and Phil Vose who would share the role. In addition, Gary Goodwin would be stepping down as Secretary of the WJFL and WJSFL. He would continue as fixtures secretary for the small-sided fixtures in the WJFL. Ian Dibbert would be taking up the role of Secretary of the WJFL and David Edwards would be taking up the role of Secretary for the WJSFL. Both Gail and Gary were thanked for their commitment and hard work to the League and Gail was wished well for the future.

The Chairman reminded Clubs of the following:

- **all correspondence** to the league would need to be done via Club Secretaries to the corresponding League Secretary except for Finance related matters going to Head of Finance and League welfare matters which would go to the Head of League Welfare. Any correspondence received from Club coaches or managers would not be dealt with or acknowledged.

- Match postponements for the 22/23 season will need to be raised via the online form on the league website.
- All appeals to the league will need to be accompanied by £25 admin fee which is refundable if the appeal is won.

The Chairman acknowledged that one of the biggest issues in the 21/22 season had been the lack of referees. This was due to several reasons outside the control of the league. However, there was no doubt that the pandemic and increased abuse towards referees had been major contributing factors. There is a new Referees' Development Officer at LCFA, and the league would be meeting with him in the next week to discuss the issues from last season and also work with him to support the league in accessing more referee courses. In addition, the league would be appointing a referees' panel and a mentor to the league referee officers to support referee recruitment and retention. The Chairman also reminded clubs that the League Management Committee and the Board of Directors were more than happy to visit any Clubs to address any League concerns that Club's had.

### **League Accounts:**

The Statement of Accounts were presented as a verbal update due to the accounts still being with the auditor for validation. The closing balance of the 21/22 season was £41,635. Expenditure for the season was £58,503. The accounts recorded a loss of £10,500 on the previous season.

### **Referees update**

We are putting in place referees' courses for the coming season but representatives from Clubs need to put in an expression of interest prior to attendance regardless of whether you have informed the League you wish to join a course. The form can be found on the LCFA referee's pages.

### **Fixtures update**

All entries to the league will need to be checked by Clubs and any changes notified to the League Secretary no later than the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2022. This includes any additional teams that were not originally added to your submission, any teams that have been withdrawn and any team name changes. Divisional movements have already been done for promotion and demotion, so please do not request any changes to these as your request will not be granted. To maximise fixtures for the 22/23 season, divisions will be increased to sizes of 10-12. All fixture postponement requests must be done through the online form on the website in advance. When granted this can then be changed in full-time. If you use the "Other reason" for late postponements, then you must put the reason in the notes section on the fixture on full-time.

### **Finance update**

All invoices must be paid prior to the start of the season. Any Club invoice not paid will have fixtures suspended until the invoice has been paid in full.

### **New Clubs submissions**

A total of 22 new Clubs had submitted applications to join the league. From the triage interview, 13 Clubs had been recommended by the triage panel for acceptance into the league via a vote at the AGM – 2 for the WJSFL: Robin Park and Independiente Rainhill and 11 to the WJFL: AFC Knowsley, Ashtonians, Baguley Athletic, Bank Quay Rovers, Billinge FC, FPA Corinthians, FC Burtonwood, FC Woolton, St Helens Rovers, Sutton Junction and Whiston Juniors.

Clubs voted in favour of entry to the WJFL of: AFC Knowsley, Ashtonians, Bank Quay Rovers, Billinge FC, FC Burtonwood, St Helens Rovers, Sutton Junction and Whiston Juniors

Clubs voted in favour of entry to the WJSFL of: Robin Park and Independiente Rainhill

Baguley Athletic did not attend the AGM

Clubs voted against entry to the WJFL of: FPA Corinthians and FC Woolton

The new clubs were welcomed to the league.

### **Proposed rule changes**

One proposal had been received from Eagle JFC for consideration and vote:

“No club can have more than one team in the same division in competitive leagues. This will avoid the temptation to advantage either of the teams in the same Club should the opportunity arise for promotion.”

The vote went against the proposed rule change.

### **Surveys**

Two surveys had gone out regarding referees at the end of last season. The results were presented at the AGM.

The key results from the Club Survey were as follows:

- 34% (one-third) of Clubs across all leagues responded to the survey
- 100% of Clubs that responded stated they were dissatisfied with the current level of referee availability across all leagues
- 100% of Clubs that responded acknowledged that they had a responsibility to monitor ill-discipline/poor behaviour from players, coaches and spectators towards referees
- 71% of Clubs that responded said they funded players/coaches who are interested in refereeing.

The key results from the Referees Survey were as follows:

- 19% of registered league referees responded to the survey
- From those that responded 44% were in the 40+ age group; 12% were in the 26-40 age group; 20% were in the 19-25 age group and 24% were in the 14-18 age group
- From the responses received 38% had been refereeing for 1-2 seasons; 15% had been refereeing for 3-4 seasons and 47% had been refereeing for 5 seasons or more
- 44% refereed across all age groups, 32% refereed ages u13s-u18s, 12% refereed u10-u12s and 12% refereed u7s-u9s
- 74% of respondents enjoyed refereeing in the Warrington Leagues, 24% said sometimes and 2% said they didn't like it.

Full results of both surveys can be found at [www.thewjfl.co.uk](http://www.thewjfl.co.uk)

### **Pre-season meeting**

A meeting for all new Clubs and teams will be arranged to go through league compliance with the whole game system and full-time. The date will be confirmed in due course.