

## **Amateur Football Combination**

### **Spirit of Football Committee**

#### **Minutes of meeting held on 25th November 2019 at 6.30pm at the Civil Service Club**

##### **1. Present**

M Sainsbury (MS) (Chairman), James Whitmarsh (JW), M Armstrong (MA), A. Shah (AS)

**Apologies** D Goldman (DG), Robin Gibbs (RG)

##### **2. Minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>h</sup> May 2019.**

2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true and accurate record.

##### **3. Matters arising from the previous meeting held on 7th March 2019.**

3.1 All matters arising were covered in other items

##### **4. Spaniards FC**

4.1 Spaniards had been invited to a pre-season meeting by the committee but because of the unavailability of club or committee members it had not been possible to organise a suitable date until now. The club were represented by Borja Perez (BP) and David Vasquez (DV). MS advised that Spaniards had not featured in any adverse marks reports this year and that the club were not currently a concern of the SOF Committee.

BP said that Spaniards had put a lot of effort to improving their SOF marks and were disappointed that they were as low as an average of 7.07 this season. DV outlined the steps the club had taken to adjust the behaviour of players who were used to a different football culture, actions such as trying to cut out diving or showing cards to the referee. He felt that their players will still subject to racist comments that referees did not take any action on. DV and BP also felt that some clubs were giving them lower marks than were justified. JW noted that Spaniards had had consistently good marks from referees this year. MA advised that if players were the subject of racist comments this should be reported to the league and appropriate counties.

Committee members thanked the club for the actions they had taken to improve their Spirit of Football and for attending the meeting.

##### **5. Review of Clubs discussed at previous meeting**

5.1 Globe Rangers Average mark had improved to 8.38 this season and the club had not caused any issues so far.

- 5.2 Hale End Athletic MS wrote to the club in the summer. Acknowledgement received. Average mark for the club was 7.79 which placed them just outside the bottom 10 but 1<sup>st</sup> XI mark was 6.88 and they had had players dismissed.
- 5.3 Old Aloysians The club were due to be invited to a pre-season meeting but this was not possible to organise. MS wrote to the club in the summer but did not receive an acknowledgement. Current average marking has now fallen to 7.50. No specific issues identified this year.
- 5.4 Ravenscroft Old Boys MS wrote to the club in the summer. Acknowledgement received. Average mark now 7.63. No issues identified
- 5.5 Old Manorians MS wrote to the club in the summer. Acknowledgement mark received. Average mark is now 7.90 but 1st XIs is just 7.06. RG continuing to monitor
- 5.6 Old Vaughanians Average mark of 3<sup>rd</sup> XI is just 6.25. RG has spoken to the club on more than 1 occasion this season and will continue to monitor closely.
- 5.7 Mickleham Old Boys Current average mark is 7.55. It was noted that although the 1<sup>st</sup> XI which was the cause of their low markings had apparently disbanded many of those players were still playing for the club.
- 5.8 Old Tenisonians MS wrote to the club in the summer and had received acknowledgement received. Current average mark for all sides had improved to 7.73 with the 3<sup>rd</sup> XI having the lowest mark. MA said he was still awaiting reports from the club on 3 incidents, each involving one of their top 3 sides. One of these involved an allegation of racist behavior still under investigation by the AFA
- 5.9 John Fisher Old Boys MS wrote to the club in the summer and had received acknowledgement but the club were still near the bottom of the SoF table overall. 2<sup>nd</sup> XI had a very low average of 6.56. MA said that he had spoken to Jimmy Creasey on more than occasion this year. He believed that the club recognised the issues they had and had taken measures to try and improve the situation but were continuing to be let down by 4-5 players.

## **6. SoF Co-ordinator Reports**

### **6.1 North**

DG had reported that he was currently dealing with an issue involving Wood Green IVs and Old Parmiterians VIII that had also been forwarded to the AFA. It was noted that Wood Green teams had been involved in more than one incident this season. Incidents involving Old Woodhouseians and Bealonians 1<sup>st</sup> XI were also noted.

The committee then spent some time discussing Lea Valley who were 2<sup>nd</sup> bottom of the Spirit of Football table with an average mark of 6.47. AFA were now dealing with an Extraordinary Incident report after a player had raised his hand against a referee at the end of a recent match. JW noted that they had one player dismissed and 8 cautions so far this year. The club said they would be taking action to improve their Spirit of Football including expelling the player Paul Okey who had threatened the referee and it was noted also gave a false name when he was cautioned earlier in the season. DG and Ian Andrews were still waiting for confirmation of action taken at this stage.

It was agreed that MS would write to the club, either to outline the committee's expectation of an improvement in Spirit of Football if appropriate steps were taken now OR to call them up for a meeting if current action was considered inadequate or further major incidents occurred. Meeting would either be with SoF committee or executive depending on circumstances.

**ACTION MS**

**6.2 West**

RG had reported his main concern was Old Vaughanians 3<sup>rd</sup> XI as outlined at para 5.6

**6.3 South**

Besides the clubs already discussed MA was also speaking to Old Grantonians. They were bottom of the SoF table with an average mark of 6.17. At the weekend they had been involved in a match against Old Wokingians VILs where several of their players verbally abused the 17-year female referee. Their chairman who was watching the match admitted that the behaviour of 4 or 5 players was unacceptable. MA was still waiting for confirmation of what action the club were taking.

It was agreed that MA and MS would review the actions that Grantonians propose to take when these are known and then recommend whether or not they should be called up for a meeting with SoF committee or Executive.

**ACTION MA, MS**

**7. Review of Spirit of Football tables**

The committee reviewed the tables but did not identify any further action required at this stage.

**8. Incidents involved AFC clubs & other matters requiring action**

No further incidents to discuss.

**9. Report back to AFC Executive**

MA wanted to confirm that the SoF co-ordinators way of working was usually to start their investigation of incidents when they became aware of marks of 5 or less. This had generally worked well for several years now. He felt that recently he had been rushed into some investigations when insufficient facts had been known and actions had been promised by other officers that he was not aware of.

**ACTION MS to relay concerns.**

**10. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled to be March 5<sup>th</sup> 2020. This may be reviewed if there is an earlier requirement to holding meetings with particular clubs.

**ACTION MS to confirm date of next meeting**