

Johnstone & District Youth Football League
Special General Meeting
St. Convals Social Club 04/08/09

Billy Baird, League Secretary, opened the meeting and explained that a number of clubs had requested a Special General Meeting to gain clarification on the proposed merger of the Johnstone and District league and the Renfrewshire Soccer Sevens. Billy explained that this would be the business of tonight. Billy highlighted that David Little, SYFA National Secretary had agreed to come along tonight to manage the meeting. Billy asked that questions raised during the meeting could be conducted in an orderly manner and for the person to introduce themselves and the club they represented. Billy asked if members could place their phones on silent mode during the meeting.

Minutes from the last meeting in July were read by Billy Baird – these were agreed as a proper reflection of the meeting by Gerry Docherty, Harmony Row & Pat O'Neil, St. Mirren Johnstone West.

Business

David Little, National Secretary was introduced to the membership and Billy Baird passed over the responsibility to David for the remaining business.

David advised that the reason for the meeting was quite clear. He stated that we had to take two votes: one to look at whether or not a merger takes place and the other to consider a ban on any such discussions for a five year period if the merger fails. David stated that he would allow a period of discussion to take place before progressing with the votes. David further stated that if the proposal was to go through then a sub group would need to be set up to consider the way forward in this matter. If the merger failed then the status quo would remain.

(Comments from the hall)

Steven Mann, St. Mirren YFC – Stated that it made perfect sense for one committee and one association. He pointed out that the less politics involved could only aide/benefit the children we serve.

Pat O'Neil, St. Mirren/Johnstone West – Stated that he felt that the J&D offered a league set up as opposed to a tournament set up offered by the Soccer Sevens. He stated that folks were welcome to leave, however believed that things are best working as they are.

Steven Brennan, Gleniffer Thistle – Advised that he understood the issues concerning a merger, however questioned what we would get – what are we merging with?

Joe Gibson, BOW BC – Stated that he was concerned about the finances and change of timings of the league.

Robert Ingram, St. Andrews BC - Advised that he strongly felt that a merger was the best way forward and 52 week programme would work.

Billy Baird, league Secretary – Stated that he feared that the SFA proposals were to eliminate districts in favour of postcodes. This followed a meeting in relation to Charter Mark clubs along with Jim Fleeting, SFA.

David little, National Secretary – Advised that where and when teams play football was up to the membership of each league to determine its boundaries and rules.

Gerry Coyle, Glenbrae Colts – Explained that he felt no need to change things as they were working well as they are.

Richard Newall, Piri Park Youth – Questioned the issues surrounding the restructuring of the Under 12's set up as this appeared to be a helpful set up in preparing children for competitive football.

Iain McAllister, barrhead Boys Club – Asked if it was too late to make an amendment to the proposals. David Little informed that this could not take place on the night.

Hugh Taylor, St. Andrews BC – He stated that our objective is to involve children in football and in order to progress this a vote should now be made to allow us all to move on.

Stuart Coulman, Clydebank Utd. BC – Had been advised that a future proposal that had been placed on recent minutes stated that future membership of any reshaped league would mean clubs who had not gone through the charter mark would be excluded. David little again stated that this would not be allowed and reinforced that it would be the league and its membership to determine such matters – not the SYFA or SFA.

Alistair Lyall, Glenbrae Colts – Stated that his mind was now made up and he was now ready to vote.

Allan McIntyre, Quarriers – Asked for the committee to state their interests in this matter.

Andy Johnstone, Langcraigs – Advised that the committee are the guardians for the league and would seek to protect the interests of those children that we represent.

Robert Ingram, St. Andrews BC – Asked if it was the intention of the committee to stand down if the merger was to go through.

Derek Torrance, Johnstone Burgh – Advised that the committees interests were about the children and for him his duties as match secretary for the under 11's.

Billy Baird, league Secretary – Advised that it was not the intentions of the committee to stand down.

Gerry Docherty, harmony Row – Explained that if things did not go through then the committee would remain the same. He highlighted if the merger goes through then there would be a need for an emergency committee to be set up to consider all aspects of any changes necessary.

David little, National Secretary – Advised that there would need to be a various meetings arranged to look at the merger. The findings of these meetings would then need to be presented to the AGM 2010/11 and formal acceptance to be made on any proposals. At this time the transfer of responsibilities and any assets would be made.

Voting

It was agreed that a vote would be taken on the two proposals. It was agreed that this would be carried out by show of hands. Two tellers were appointed to aide the count: **Craig McKee**, langcraigs FC and **Sharon McNicol**, St. Peters FC.

1st Vote

It was proposed that the counter proposal would be considered first:

This was from Gerry Docherty, Harmony Row & Pat O'Neill, St. Mirren/Johnstone West. They proposed that if the merger does not go through that there should be a ban on any further talks of a merger for a period of five years.

Due to the design and lay out of the hall it was difficult to gain an accurate count. After a few failed attempts at collating numbers we eventually got an accurate count where the proposal was rejected by the hall by a majority of nine. There was 6 folks who abstained from using their vote.

2nd Vote

David little, National Secretary, informed the hall that a second vote would now be made. This vote would be made on the original proposal for the merger to go through without any conditions. This would be for the J&D to merge with the Renfrewshire Soccer Sevens.

Again, similar voting difficulties were experienced as people in the hall got impatient. There were also a couple of folks who had left the room prior to the vote commencing.

On the final count the hall was split on a 50/50 basis. This left a casting vote to the current league Secretary, Billy Baird. Billy summed up his intentions in this situation before announcing that he would reject the notion of any merger at this time.

The meeting was ended with a thanks from David little and Billy Baird. Billy highlighted that the next general meeting would be the first Tuesday in September and that the fixtures would be posted on the web page for a September beginning to the league.

Minute taken by Paul Kyle, Child protection officer, J&D League.