Midland League, Report of the Chair – November 2026

At one level, the League has had a successful season and my congratulations to all of the Divisional Champions. The Technical Match, in particular, has gone from Strength to Strength. Some other changes have been generally successful, whilst others need refinement. But by other measures the Management Committee have serious concerns with regards to a number of trends which we have seen.

In addition to the challenges of the UKA Age Group Changes, we have had to cancel one fixture due to the lack of a host club and other fixtures struggled for Lead Officials. Please remember that Clubs are expected to offer to host a match on alternate years, even if it means a joint promotion with another Club. We have also seen a trend to complain about the decisions of Technical Officials, even when those officials are working hard to deliver the meeting. Sometimes this reflects a lack of knowledge of UKA rules for competition! This is in addition to the decline in participation, in particular, in the Regional Divisions which is reported in the Secretary's report. We are also liaising with the other National & Regional Leagues to understand the challenges they face and understand how they propose to address them?

As a result, the Management Committee are proposing a set of changes to the format of the League in an attempt to secure its future. We are aware that clubs have differing priorities and that the Regional Divisions face different challenges, so have sought to make proposals which are applicable across the whole league.

These changes are fully explained in the Proposal, along with a supporting document which details the analysis which led to them. They will be discussed and taken as whole, subject to any amendments. Please understand that we believe that these proposals improve the experience for both athletes and officials and are essential to the survival of the League.

Another continuing theme is the shortage of Qualified Officials. If the Management Committee had chosen to use its powers, some well-known clubs would have been excluded from the League. However, as you should all be aware the League received a Grant for Officials Training in 2020, and barely any League Clubs have applied for it, why?? Previously, we were seeking to share it amongst all league Clubs, but that clearly hasn't worked so we will now distribute it on a First Come, First Served basis.

Finally, I would like to express my thanks to our secretary Richard White for his tireless efforts to deliver the League. Also, thanks to the Management Committee, Officials, Team Mangers, Divisional Secretaries & Athletes without whom the League would not take place. Also, to Val Day in the MCAA Office who does a great deal to help the League and is often the first recipient of Queries & Complaints.

Bryan Acford – 19th November 19, 2026