

Mr M Tattersall
Chief Executive
National League
By email

24th September 2020

JOINT STATEMENT FROM NATIONAL LEAGUE NORTH CLUBS REGARDING THE START OF THE 2020/21 SEASON

Dear Michael,

A meeting was held by Zoom at 17.30 on Wednesday 23rd September 2020 with representation from the majority of member clubs from the National League North to discuss the financial implications of the government's announcement that supporters will not be allowed entry in to stadiums from the 1st October 2020.

During the meeting a set of anonymous polls were conducted with the most important question being asked of clubs;

Given the simple option, no caveats attached, of starting the season or not without crowds, what would your answer be?

The majority verdict of 81% from clubs in the National League North would be to NOT start the season, unless there was a financial support package in place for member clubs.

The meeting considered the impact of the FA Cup 2nd Qualifying Round on the contractual status of players, many of whom have contracts that begin on the 'commencement of the football season'. We are sure you are aware that clubs wrote these contracts based on information provided by the FA via the National League. The issue is, that should there be a delay to the National League North season then these contracts would be activated by the FA Cup fixture. This would leave clubs exposed to having to pay these players for the rest of the season with obvious financial implications.

Elite status was debated at length, because as you are aware National League North and South clubs were granted elite status in July 2020. Therefore, the question was asked why do clubs from Step 1 receive one vote per club and Step 2 only receives four votes per league? We believe the decision regarding when to start the National League should be democratic across all members due to the financial implications of any decision on member clubs. This is never more apparent following the government's decision on Tuesday and we request that we should be treated equally and have one vote per club across the whole National League system.

These are views shared by the majority of clubs in the National League North and we ask that they are represented at the National League Board meeting taking place today.

Yours sincerely

AFC Fylde	<i>David Haythornthwaite</i>
AFC Telford	<i>Luke Shelley</i>
Alfreton	<i>Wayne Bradley</i>
Blyth Spartans	<i>Anthony Platten</i>
Boston United	<i>David Newton</i>
Brackley Town	<i>Pat Ashby</i>
Bradford (Park Avenue)	<i>Martin Knight</i>
Chester	<i>Andrew Morris</i>
Chorley	<i>Graham Watkinson</i>
Curzon Ashton	<i>Rob Hurst</i>
Darlington	<i>David Johnston</i>
Farsley Celtic	<i>Joshua Greaves</i>
Gateshead	<i>Neil Pinkerton</i>
Gloucester City	<i>Alex Patheram</i>
Guiseley	<i>James Pickles</i>
Hereford	<i>Martin Watson</i>
Kettering Town	<i>Dave Mahoney</i>
Leamington	<i>Jim Scott</i>
Southport	<i>Ian Kyle</i>
Spennymoor Town	<i>Tony Wilson</i>
<i>*Kidderminster Harriers</i>	<i>No response was received at time of announcement.</i>