**GENERAL**

* The basic principle of the Development League is to provide an opportunity for young players to make an easy transfer from junior hockey to adult hockey alongside and with the support of experienced players and coaches. It was initiated to provide a playing opportunity in a safe environment for young players with potential and in particular those, who due to their age, are not allowed to play in adult teams. Another benefit is to reduce the numbers of players who leave the sport because of lack of playing opportunities as they get older.
* The clubs entering teams in the Development Leagues adopts the EH policies for the inclusion of young people in sport. Most young people who participate in hockey in Yorkshire do so in a safe and enjoyable manner. However, there have been cases nationally where players have had a bad experience and adopting this document will help to reduce the risk of this happening in the future.
* Clubs should promote the social side of the Yorkshire Adult League hockey by entertaining the opposition after the match.
* All members of the league to support a code of Behaviour for spectators and players to develop good discipline and sportsmanship as well as an appreciation for good hockey.

**TEAM STRUCTURE**

* The teams should comprise 7/8 juniors and 4/5 experienced players/adults. It is recommended that there should be a minimum of 3 adults and 6 juniors on the pitch at any time. Juniors would be under 15 and be those not regularly playing in normal adult teams. Players under 13 years of age will be able to play in these teams.
* Adult players in the team should not be restricted from playing for other club teams on the same day but juniors would be restricted.
* It is recommended that Clubs use adults who have been CRB checked.
* Only clubs that have a Child Welfare/Protection Policy in operation will be allowed to join the league. (Adoption of the England Hockey Proud to Protect Policy is acceptable.)
* At least 1 qualified coach and First Aider should be present.
* Allow ladies or suitable girls to play in men’s development teams as long as the opposition have no objection and maximum of 1 lady and 2 girls. Men and boys over the age of 13 should not play in Ladies development teams.
* Umpiring to be done by individual clubs but perhaps encourage the use of junior umpires.
* Entry restricted to clubs who wish to have a development teams playing against like-minded development teams within Yorkshire who have the same philosophy of playing by maximising a player’s development and keeping their interest in the game. The principle of  “opportunity, experience and development” the YYHL philosophy, to be very much the ethos of these leagues.
* All other England Hockey rules to apply.

**LEAGUE STRUCTURE**

* There should be no automatic promotion from this league to the bottom Yorkshire Leagues. Nor should there be demotion from the bottom league.It is not essential that clubs have other team playing in the league structure.
* At the end of the season some clubs may wish their team to join the main adult league and this should be encouraged if it helps the player development at that club.
* Clubs to try to always keep a team in the Development League to provide match experience for young players and that players migrate to senior sides and be replaced by new younger ones.
* If more than 10 teams want to be involved then we will consider having regionally based sub Leagues N/S/E/W, or combination to give a workable league size N/E and S/W for example, to keep travel and costs to a minimum.
* If more than 1 league proposed then we will consider that the last session will be where teams of similar position in respective Regional Leagues play cross over games to give a Yorkshire County feel about the competition, and the notion of a County Champion at this level of play.