



Reading Football Supporters' Society Limited,
Registered Office: c/o Vale & West, Victoria House
26 Queen Victoria Street, Reading. RG1 1TG.

www.star-reading.org

ELECTION POLICY

Date of Review	Reason for review	Amendments
06/09/2012	New Policy Approved at AGM	Not Applicable
09/05/2013	Periodic Review	No amendments
13/04/2017	Periodic Review	Revised Format and Paras. 5.1 and 7.3

1. Introduction

1.1. This document is drafted in accordance with the existing Rules of Reading Football Supporters' Society Limited (called "the Society" in the rest of this policy and trading as "STAR") and adopted pursuant to a resolution of the Society at an Annual General Meeting held on 6th September 2012. The purpose of the Election Policy is to ensure that the elections for Society Board members are conducted in a democratic and unbiased manner and the process and results are accepted as free and fair by all participants.

2. Definitions

2.1. Election Period" means the period from the date each year on which the Society Secretary Issues nomination forms to Members until 3 days after the announcement of the result of the election to which the nomination forms relate.

- 2.2. "Member(s)" means a member(s) of the Society.
- 2.3. "Society Board" means the Board of the Society including any co-opted Society Board Members.
- 2.4. "Society Board Member(s)" means an elected or Co-opted Member(s) of the Society.
- 2.5. "Co-opted Member(s)" means a person(s) who has/have been elected to the Society Board by Society Board Members but not elected by the Members.
- 2.6. "Election Policy" means the terms and conditions laid out in this document.
- 2.7. "ESC" means the Election Sub-Committee.
- 2.8. "Board Membership and Conduct Policy" means a detailed set of rules and regulations of the Society Board set out in a separate policy statement.
- 2.9. "Rules" means the rules and regulations of the Society laid out in the separate Rules document.

3. Election control

3.1. In advance of the commencement of the election period, the Society Board will appoint the ESC (with the exception of an independent scrutineer required under paragraph 3.3.3). The ESC will comprise of the Society Secretary and such other members of the Society or other persons as the Board may decide. No members of the Society Board whose positions are due to be offered for election shall be permitted to be members of the ESC (with the exception of any member who is not permitted to serve on the Society Board following the election under the terms of rule 58(a)). The Society Board will appoint a member of the ESC as its Chairman. In the event of a contested election the Society Board will appoint an independent scrutineer before postal ballot papers are issued by the ESC.

3.2. No members of the Society Board whose positions are due to be offered for election (with the exception of any member who is not permitted to serve on the Society Board following the election under the terms of rule 58(a)) shall play any part in determining the composition of the ESC or any aspect regarding the conduct of the elections.

3.3. The full terms of reference of the ESC are:

3.3.1. To supervise elections to the STAR Board in compliance with STAR's Rules and Constitution, this policy and the Board Membership and Conduct Policy.

3.3.2. To produce and publish an Election Timetable.

3.3.3. In the event of a contested election recommend an independent scrutineer to the Society Board for appointment to the ESC.

3.3.4. To devise and produce a ballot paper for use in the event of a contested election.

3.3.5. To devise and produce a nomination form.

3.3.6. To investigate nomination and election processes used by comparable organisations and make recommendations to the Society's Board for amendments to this policy.

3.3.7. To review the Election Policy and make recommendations for amendments to the Society Board.

3.3.8. In conjunction with Chairman of STAR draw up an Agenda for STAR's Annual General Meeting.

3.4. Members of the ESC shall not be eligible to nominate candidates nor be a candidate themselves and shall ensure that they are not associated closely with any candidates and have proper regard to maintaining the integrity of the election process.

3.5. During the Election Period the ESC will ensure that the election is run in accordance with this policy.

3.6. The ESC shall make the final decision as to the eligibility of candidates, nominations and valid votes. They shall conduct the count and the result, as determined by them, is final. Any decisions of the ESC will be by majority vote and recorded. The Chairman of the ESC shall have a casting vote in the event of a tie.

4. General Provisions

4.1. The Annual General Meeting will take place within the period laid down in the Society's Rules, and the exact date shall be decided by the Society Board by the end of the preceding financial year.

4.2. The Society Board shall agree the number of vacancies to be elected; if the numbers to be elected differs from the numbers elected in previous years, or changes the number of places to be elected in total on the Society Board, then the reasons why the change has been made shall be communicated to members in the form soliciting nominations.

4.3. The Society Secretary will circulate a nomination form with advance notice of the Annual General Meeting at least nine weeks before the Annual General Meeting. The number of positions that are being elected shall be communicated to members in the form soliciting nominations.

4.4. The Society Board shall ensure that the members of the ESC, with the exception of an independent scrutineer, have been appointed before the Society Secretary circulates nominations forms.

4.5. During the Election Period, the ESC shall manage the process.

5. Nominations

5.1. Any person wishing to be a candidate for election to the Society Board must be a fully paid-up member of the Society and be nominated by two other fully paid-up members of the Society.

5.2. The ESC will verify that persons nominating or supporting candidates are fully paid-up members of the Society. Fully paid-up members of the Society can nominate or support as many candidates as they wish, as long as the total number of candidates nominated and/or supported by them does not exceed the total number of positions available for election.

5.3. The ESC reserves the right to declare all candidates' nominations invalid where they have been nominated or supported by a fully paid-up member who has nominated and/or supported more candidates than the number of positions available for election. In such circumstances the Society Secretary

will advise all affected candidates to enable their nominations to be remedied. If necessary, the ESC will, upon request by a candidate, consider extending the period for the closure of nominations in the election timetable by one week to allow time for affected candidates to remedy nominations. During this extension period no nominations for new candidates will be accepted as valid.

5.4. A signed letter of nomination or support from a member, or an email, from the address a member has given to the Society Secretary for receiving Society communications, nominating or supporting a candidate, are acceptable substitutes for a signature on the candidate's nomination form.

5.5. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that their nomination is valid and submitted in accordance with the election timetable. In order to ensure that candidates can confirm the validity of their nomination, the Society Secretary should arrange for candidates to be able to check in advance whether those nominating or supporting them are fully paid-up members and if they have nominated or supported other candidates.

5.6. Decisions over the validity of nominations shall be a matter for the ESC having due regard for the Society Secretary's assessment of the membership status of an individual nominating or supporting a candidate. Any decision by the ESC not to accept a nomination as valid should be notified to the candidate as soon as possible in order that the situation may be rectified or an appeal heard.

5.7. Candidates must also submit a statement in support of their nomination and may also submit a photograph of their self for publication with their statement (see section 7 below for more details). The names of those nominating and supporting candidates shall be listed in each candidate's statement.

5.8. By submitting a nomination candidates will be deemed to have accepted this Election Policy, the Society's Rules, and any other policies and rules adopted by the Society Board and the membership and agree to be bound by them.

6. Eligibility for election to the Society Board

6.1. By submitting a nomination candidates are self-certifying that they comply with the Society Rules, this policy and the Board Membership and Conduct Policy relating to eligibility to serve on the Board. In particular, no person can be an elected member of the Society Board:

- 6.1.1. who ceases to be a Member of the Society;
- 6.1.2. who has been a member of the Board for 12 consecutive years;
- 6.1.3. who is subject to a bankruptcy order or has in place a composition with his/her creditors;
- 6.1.4. who is subject to a disqualification order made under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986;
- 6.1.5. fails to abide by any rules for the conduct of elections made by the Society Board.
- 6.1.6. who has a conviction for an indictable offence (other than a spent conviction as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974).
- 6.1.7. in relation to whom a registered medical practitioner who is treating them gives a written opinion to the Society stating that they have become physically or mentally incapable of acting as a Director and may remain so for more than three months;
- 6.1.8. in relation to whom by reason of their mental health, a court makes an order which wholly or partly prevents them from personally exercising any powers or rights which that person would otherwise have;

6.2. No Member shall be permitted to seek election to the Board if they are, or are reasonably likely during their term of office to be, an employee or worker of Reading Football Club (whether part-time or full-time, whether for consideration or voluntary).

6.3. Unless disclosure of the same is made in the election statement, no Member shall be permitted to seek election to the Board if they are in, or are reasonably likely during their term of office to fall into, any one (or more) of the

following (whether part-time or full-time, whether for consideration or voluntary):

- 6.3.1. a proprietor or editor of a fanzine or football magazine;
- 6.3.2. a sports journalist or broadcaster;
- 6.3.3. a proprietor or editor of a website relating in whole or in part to sport, football or Reading Football Club in particular.

7. Statements and Campaigning

7.1. Campaigning under the auspices of the Society will be restricted to the statements submitted by the candidates.

7.2. All candidates' statements are to be sent by email to the Society Secretary. These will be gathered together and, in the event of a contested election, issued with the ballot papers, and include the photograph (if submitted) of the candidate and a list of the members who have nominated or supported them. Additionally the candidates' statements, photographs (if submitted) and lists of members who have nominated or supported them will be placed on the Society's website.

7.3. Candidate's statements should be at least 200 words and no longer than 1000 words. If a candidate's statement has more than 1000 words, it will be truncated and text will be inserted below stating "The candidate's statement has exceeded the permitted amount of words and has therefore been truncated". The number of words counted shall be decided using Microsoft Word. A template giving guidance to help writing a statement is available from the Society Secretary on request.

7.4. Candidates shall not in their statements make threats, insults or derogatory, abusive, racist, sexist or homophobic statements or in any other way in the opinion of the ESC breach the Society's Equality policy. The ESC will reserve the right to edit any statement to ensure that it does not breach these rules and text will be inserted below stating "The candidate's statement has been edited by the Election Sub Committee".

7.5. In agreeing to be nominated and so accepting this Policy, candidates shall agree to indemnify the Society for the cost of meeting any liability of the Society that may arise as a result of the contents of their statement.

7.6. During the election neither the ESC nor the Society Board may provide advice to voting members as to the suitability of any candidate nor issue any voting advice to members collectively. Individual Society Board members who indicate a preference in public must make it clear that they do not speak on behalf of the Society Board and express a purely personal opinion.

8. Complaints and Appeals

8.1. Candidates or complainants shall raise matters with the ESC whose decision is final.

8.2. Complaints after voting has closed shall be made to the ESC not later than three working days after the close of poll. Any complaint received after this date shall be ruled out of order.

8.3. If any candidate should contravene the Election Policy, the ESC shall judge whether a disqualification should apply and its decision is final.

8.4. Any appeal against the decision of the ESC shall be made through and governed by the disputes procedure as set out in the Society Rules.

9. Election and Result

9.1. If there are more candidates than places available on the Society Board the following procedure shall be followed;

9.1.1. The ESC will issue postal ballot papers and copies of candidates' statements with the notice sent convening the Annual General Meeting.

9.1.2. The electorate shall comprise of the fully paid-up members of the Society at the date that postal ballot papers are issued.

9.1.3. Votes must be received by post up to the day of the Annual General Meeting in order to be included in the count. The count shall be made during the Annual General Meeting, and the result announced before the close of the Annual General Meeting.

9.2. The highest placed candidates in terms of total votes as equal to number of places available for election declared by the Board shall be deemed elected.

9.3. If there are as many or fewer candidates than there are places, an affirmative ballot shall be held at the Annual General Meeting. Each validly nominated candidate will be put before the meeting for the approval of members. Any candidate not receiving the support of more than half of those present in person and voting shall be deemed to have not been elected. The exception shall be that should the failure to elect any of the validly nominated candidates leave the Board below the minimum required under the Rules for them to act, all validly nominated candidates shall be deemed elected by the ESC and this declared at the Annual General Meeting.

9.4. The result shall be communicated to members on the Society's website and in the Society's newsletter.

9.5. The Society Secretary will issue the Board Membership and Conduct Policy to the successful candidates upon the result of the election and should any successful candidate not return the Board Membership and Conduct Policy duly signed in whichever way the Society Secretary asks for it to be returned within one calendar month, without an acceptable reason for the lateness in returning the document, the election of that candidate will be declared null and void and a vacant position will be created. For the avoidance of doubt, the onus for returning the signed Board Membership and Conduct Policy shall be on the successful candidate not the Society Secretary.

9.6. Successful candidates shall become full members of the Society Board upon receipt of their signed acceptance of the Board Membership and Conduct Policy.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed by STAR's Board biennially, but members may call for it to be reviewed at any time by contacting the Secretary.