



# The Citizens Trust Board Member Election Policy

## Introduction

This document is drafted in accordance with the existing Rules of The Citizens Trust (the Society) and will be formally adopted pursuant to a resolution of the Society at the first General Meeting and the Best Practice guidance issued by the Football Supporters' Association (The FSA).

The purpose of this Election Policy is to ensure that the Society Board Elections are conducted in a fair and democratic manner.

Elected representatives will serve for a term of up to three years.

Term limits - Two term limits in one position, each term being a maximum of three years. Members can then stand for another position if they so choose.

## Definitions

This document uses several terms which are defined in the Society Rules.

## Election Management

1. In advance of the commencement of the election, the Society Board will appoint at least 2 members of the Society (who with the exception of the Secretary may not include serving Society Board members) to form an Election Management Group (EMG).
2. The EMG shall be chaired by an independent person who is not a member of the Society.
3. If it is not possible to agree on the identity of the independent chair, the FSA will assist with identifying a suitable chair.
4. No members of the Society Board whose positions are due to be offered for election shall play any part in determining the composition of the EMG or any aspect regarding the conduct of the elections.
5. The Society Board shall ensure that the membership of the EMG has been agreed before the Secretary circulates nomination forms.
6. Members of the EMG shall not be eligible to nominate candidates nor be a candidate themselves and shall ensure that they are not associated closely with any

7. candidates and have proper regard to maintaining the integrity of the election process.
8. During the Election Period the EMG will ensure that the election is run in accordance with this policy and manage the process, with the assistance of the Secretary as required.
9. The EMG shall make the final decision as to the eligibility of candidates, nominations and valid votes.
10. The EMG shall conduct the count, unless this aspect is handled by an external body, and the result, as determined by them, is final.
11. Any decisions taken by the EMG will be by majority vote and recorded. The Chair of the EMG shall have a casting vote in the event of a tie.

## **Timetable**

12. The election will take place at the society's AGM.
13. The 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.
14. The Secretary will arrange for the nomination forms to be circulated with advance notice of the AGM, at least eight weeks before the AGM.

## **Nominations and Eligibility**

15. Any person wishing to be a candidate for election to the Society Board must be a fully paid-up member of the Society before the membership cut off point as specified by the Secretary and be nominated by at least two fully paid-up members of the Society.
16. In addition, any person wishing to be a candidate for election to the Society Board must:
  - a. Have attended the four training sessions as organised by the Football Supporters' Association on the management of a Supporters' Trust.
  - b. Have served on a committee of the Society for a minimum period of three months within a calendar year.
  - c. Not maintain a conflict of interest with Manchester City Football Club, City Football Group, or any official or related partners of either organisation, commercial or otherwise.
17. The EMG with assistance from the Secretary will verify that nominations are valid.
18. Nominations can be made at any time from the issue of the nomination forms up until the notified close of nominations.

19. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that their nomination is valid and submitted in accordance with the election timetable. The Secretary will acknowledge receipt of all nominations.
20. Any decision by the EMG 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.
21. Candidates must submit a statement in support of their nomination and may also submit a photograph for publication with their statement.
22. Any statements which are deemed by the EMG to not conform to the Values of the Society, as set out in the Rules, will have their nomination invalidated.
23. By submitting a nomination, candidates will be deemed to have read and accepted this Election Policy and Rules adopted by the Society and to have agreed to be bound by them.
24. Specifically, candidates are self-certifying that they have read the Code of Conduct for Board Members and agree to be bound by it and certify they have not been disqualified from being a company director in line with UK law.
25. The Secretary will only confirm the number and names of nominations once the close of the nominating period has passed.

## **Statements and Campaigning**

26. Campaigning will be restricted to the statements submitted by the candidates and any hustings organised by the society
27. During the election neither the EMG, Secretary nor the Board may provide advice to voting members as to the suitability of any candidate nor issue any voting advice to members collectively.
28. Any comments made by candidates in public or on social media which are deemed by the EMG to not conform to the Values of the Society, as set out in the Rules, will have their nomination invalidated.

## **Voting & Result**

29. Voting will normally be conducted at the Society AGM.
30. If there are more candidates than places available on the Society Board, the Secretary will issue ballot papers and copies of candidates' statements to members of the Society.
31. Ballot papers can be issued electronically, by post or conducted through a digital third-party management platform.
32. Voting will be undertaken by members of the society who are fully paid up before the cut off point for membership as designated by the Secretary.

33. Society members will be issued with one ballot. Multiple ballots received from the same individual will not be accepted. If multiple ballots are received from the same individual, then neither will be accepted.
34. Votes may be submitted by electronic means up to the time stated on the ballot paper for those unable to attend and vote in the meeting. The count will be made at the AGM, and the result announced at the AGM where possible.
35. Society members will be asked to vote for up to one candidate per available seat.
36. The highest placed candidate in terms of total votes for each position on the Board shall be deemed elected.
37. If, after all votes have been counted, two or more candidates are tied for any vacancy, lots will be drawn to determine who is elected.
38. If there are as many or fewer candidates than there are places, an affirmative ballot will be held at the AGM. Each successfully nominated candidate will be put before the meeting for approval. Any candidate not receiving the support of more than half of those present in person and by proxy will be deemed to have not been elected.
39. The exception will 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 will be deemed elected by the EMG.
40. The result will be communicated to members on the Society's website, social media, and by email.
41. Candidates or complainants shall raise matters with the EMG whose decision is final.
42. Complaints after voting has closed shall be made to the EMG not later than three working days after the close of voting.
43. Any complaint received after this date shall be ruled out of order.
44. If any candidate should contravene the Election Policy, the EMG shall judge whether a disqualification should apply, and their decision is final.
45. Any appeal against the decision of the EMG shall be made through and governed by the disputes procedure as set out in the Society Rules.