



*We own our football club*

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## **Exeter City AFC Supporters' Society Limited**

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Notice of Annual General Meeting (AGM)

to be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2016

at

St Sidwell's Community Centre

Sidwell Street

EXETER, EX4 6NN

and Trustee Election Pack 2016

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## 1. Letter from the Chairman

Dear Trust Member,

Thank you for your continued membership of the Trust, which has ensured we remain at the forefront of supporter owned Football Clubs and continue to provide a sustainable model of ownership.

This year's AGM is on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> October at 11.00am and will be held at the St Sidwell's Community Centre in Sidwell Street.

Four Trust Board members come to the end of their current term this year. Whilst all four will be entitled to stand for re-election, the Board has decided to increase the number of elected Trustees and there will be seven vacancies on this year's ballot.

To assist in helping you decide if you wish to stand for election, I enclose an information pack that explains the role of a Trust Board member and the Election Campaigning Policy. It is the Trust's aim to have a diverse Board, with a broad range of skill sets. There is no doubt that being a Trustee takes up time and can be challenging, but it is equally rewarding and central to a democratic organisation. As well as electing four members onto the Club Board, Trustees are involved in all the groups within the Club's governance framework. This can only be maintained if members continue to seek election and the more of you that do so, the more vibrant is our democracy.

If you feel you possess the necessary skills and are able to devote some time to the role, I would encourage you to put your name forward. All the details and a nomination form follow in this pack. If you have any questions or would like further information, please email the Trust on [trust@ecfc.co.uk](mailto:trust@ecfc.co.uk) or call the Club reception on 01392 411243 who will pass on a message.

Many thanks again.

Laurence Overend

Chairman, Exeter City Supporters Trust

## 2. Election to the Trust Board (TB)

If you would like stand for election as a Trustee of the Exeter City AFC Supporters Trust you will find the nomination form later in this pack – however, we would urge you to read the pack in full as it will explain what might be expected of you should you be elected, the rules of campaigning for election, and of course, what you need to do to be nominated.

If you have any queries or concerns around this pack please do not hesitate to contact the Trust Secretary:

Nick Hawker  
Exeter City Supporters Trust  
St James Park  
Stadium Way  
EXETER  
EX4 6PT

e-mail: [nick.hawker1392@gmail.com](mailto:nick.hawker1392@gmail.com)

Queries or concerns relating the election process may be directed to the Secretary (as above) or to the returning officer:

ECFC Returning Officer  
10 Chariot Drive  
Kingsteignton  
TQ12 3GF

e-mail: [rx8man@btinternet.com](mailto:rx8man@btinternet.com)

We thank you for your interest and look forward to hearing from you.

Kindest regards

Nick Hawker, Trust Secretary

## 3. Potential Trustee Briefing Paper

The Trust Board (TB) is the formal management body of the Exeter City AFC Supporters Society Ltd (Trust). Under the constitution, it may consist of up to 15 elected members and 3 co-opted members together with several appointed officers (Treasurer, Secretary, Public Relations and Communications Officer, etc.) and its primary responsibilities are:

- *To ensure that the Trust is continually working towards achieving its aims and objectives and fulfilling the Strategic Plan*
- *To monitor the management of the Football Club through pre-defined procedures*
- *To monitor the actions of the Trust Executive through pre-defined procedures*
- *To contribute towards the development of Trust policy*
- *To contribute towards the development of the Trust and the Football Club within the community*
- *To ensure that sufficient funds are raised to allow the Trust and the Football Club to continue to operate*

The TB is organised to formally meet on a 2 monthly cycle with 3 standing sub-groups tasked with achieving the practical outcomes required by the Strategic Plan.

The sub-groups are:

- ***Finance & Governance***
- ***Ownership & Membership***
- ***Community***

All Individual Trustees are expected to be active in at least one of these sub-groups, and this will involve attending regular meetings, carrying out research; writing and presenting proposal documents; implementing and managing action plans and taking ownership to achieve positive outcomes.

It is expected that TB members will encourage supporter volunteers to help with the work of the TB and the sub-groups.

### **The Trust and the Football Club**

Working relationships between members of the TB and Club Boards are promoted and encouraged for mutual benefit and there are procedures in place to ensure that all contacts and information flows are positive, effective and efficient.

The Trust directly nominates:

- *Four directors to the Club Board*
- *Three TB members to sit on the Club Finance Board*

- *Jointly with the Football Club, runs the Community interest group which in turn is closely allied with the Football in the Community (FiTC) charity.*

All this gives the Trust considerable influence over the working of the Football Club in line with its responsibility as Majority Shareholder, but it must be borne in mind that Exeter City AFC Ltd is a 'Trust Owned' football club, not 'Trust Run', and via the Club Board we employ a professional staff to manage the business on behalf of all the shareholders.

### **Personal Commitment**

The TB & sub-groups typically hold meetings on a weekday evening. The TB currently meets every two months and the sub-groups meet monthly or as required. A Trustee is expected to attend all appropriate meetings; indeed, under the current rules, a trustee will be asked to step down if they do not attend three consecutive meetings without good cause.

In addition, the TB support the Club on match-days in the Board Room, typically entertaining visiting team directors and of course, the Trust 'Director for the Day' winner. This is done on a rota basis, as is attending to the Trust Stall in Red Square.

*You need to be aware that for a Trustee to be effective this work is likely to require a considerable and continuous time commitment.*

## **4. Guidelines for TB Membership**

### **Members of the Trust Board must not:**

- be less than 16 years of age at the date of their election. (The election date is deemed to be the date of the AGM)
- benefit financially, directly or indirectly, from any working relationship that is established in the course of duties undertaken or contacts made on behalf of Exeter City Supporters Trust;
- be subject to a bankruptcy order or has in place a composition with their creditors;
- be subject to a disqualification order made under the Company Directors Disqualification Act;
- have a conviction for an indictable offence (other than a spent conviction as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974);
- become incapable by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of performing the duties reasonably expected of a Trust Board Member;
- fail to abide by any rules for the conduct of elections made by the Trust Board

### **Guidelines for behaviour**

#### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TRUSTEES and other Officers of the Trust**

This Code of Conduct sets ethical standards for the Trustees of Exeter City F.C. Supporters Trust.

Trustees will pursue the highest standards of ethical conduct in the interests of Members of the Trust, Exeter City Football Club, employees, creditors and all other stakeholders.

The word Trustee in this Code shall also be taken to include Officers of the Trust

The following principles govern their conduct.

### **Honesty, Integrity and Commitment**

- Trustees shall act honestly and with integrity in all of their dealings on behalf of Exeter City F.C. Supporters Trust.
- Trustees will make their best endeavours to attend meetings of the Trust Board of Exeter City F.C. Supporters Trust, and not be absent without good reason.
- Trustees will devote sufficient time and attention to the Society in order to fulfil their duties as a Trustee.
- Trustees will not discriminate on the grounds of people's race, religion, gender, marital status or disability.
- Trustees will not make promises or commitments that the TB does not intend, or would be unable, to honour.
- Trustees have collective responsibility. They are bound by the decisions of the TB and when representing the Trust will support those decisions outside the TB environment.
- Trustees' conduct, at all times, will be such that their honesty is beyond question.
- Trustees' conduct, at all times, will be such that it upholds the reputation and good name of the Trust.
- Trustees shall adhere to the truth, and not mislead directly or indirectly nor make false statements, nor mislead by omission.
- Trustees shall treat everyone with whom they have dealings as a Trustee with personal respect and politeness.

### **Personal Transactions**

- Trustees' personal or other business dealings will be kept separate from their dealings as a Trustee of Exeter City F.C. Supporters Trust.
- Trustees shall not use the name of Exeter City F.C. Supporters Trust or Exeter City A.F.C. Limited to further any personal or other business transaction not related to Exeter City F.C. Supporters Trust or Exeter City A.F.C. Limited or its business interests.
- Trustees shall use goods, services and facilities provided to them by Exeter City F.C. Supporters Trust, Exeter City A.F.C. Limited or associated business, strictly in accordance with the terms on which they are provided.

### **Confidentiality of Information**

- Trustees will ensure that confidential information (or any information that could be considered to be of a sensitive nature) relating to the TB or the Football Club's operations, its customers, employees, creditors or associated businesses is not given

either inadvertently or deliberately to third parties unless that information is required by law or a regulatory body.

- Trustees will not use information obtained by them as a Trustee of the Exeter City F.C. Supporters Trust for personal financial gain, nor will that information be used to obtain financial benefit for any other person or business.
- Trustees shall respect the privacy of others.

### **Disclosure of Interests**

- Trustees shall fully disclose promptly any private or other business interests or any other matters, which may lead to potential or actual conflicts of interest.

### **Abiding by the Law**

- Trustees shall abide by the law at all times.

### **Payments, Gifts, Entertainment and Travel**

- Trustees shall not use their status as a Trustee of Exeter City F.C. Supporters Trust to seek personal gain from those doing business or seeking to do business with the Club. Trustees shall not accept any personal gain of any material significance if offered.

### **FAILURE TO ABIDE BY THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

- Trustees whose behaviour or actions are contrary to the spirit of this Code may be subject to such disciplinary sanctions as imposed by the TB after due process and, if appropriate, appeal or arbitration.
- Any allegation of Trustee's failure to honour the Code must be made in writing to the Chairman of the TB, or if relating to the Chairman of the TB, to the Secretary. The accused Trustee will be given written notice of the allegation and asked to respond within 14 days. However, should the complaint relate to personal behaviour during a formal meeting of the Trust or any properly constituted committee, then the meeting can consider a verbal motion to exclude the offender from the rest of the meeting without notice.
- The TB, or any properly appointed sub-committee, will make such enquiries as deemed necessary, including the right to call a hearing of all interested parties and will rule on the outcome of those enquiries and report the findings to the TB for ratification and/or further action. In the case of calling a hearing, all parties will receive 14 days-notice of the date, place and time of such a hearing.
- Sanctions available to the TB will include formal reprimand, orders of specific performance, suspension and ultimately, recommend expulsion from the TB.

### 5. Getting Nominated....

The final page of this pack is the nomination form and manifesto statement<sup>1</sup>. This should be detached, completed, and returned in accordance with the deadlines set in the election timetable (see page 12).

Nominations should be sent to the Returning Officer at:

ECFC Returning Officer  
10 Chariot Drive  
Kingsteignton  
TQ12 3GF

e-mail: [rx8man@btinternet.com](mailto:rx8man@btinternet.com)

Nominations should be despatched to arrive no later than noon September 13<sup>th</sup> 2016.

The candidate must return the original form, signed and dated by themselves and three members supporting the nomination.

Alternatively, the candidate may return the nomination form completed but unsigned by the supporters, instead providing the e-mail address of the supporter(s) as recorded against that member's details on the Trust database. The nomination will be considered valid upon receipt of an e-mail by the Returning Officer from that address confirming the nomination. The e-mail should include that member's name, postal address and priority number.

By submitting a nomination, candidates will be deemed to have accepted the election policy and rules as described in this pack, and have agreed to be bound by them.

A check will be made against the candidate and supporters to ensure that they are current members of the Trust as at the closing date for ballots.

Supporters should not normally be serving Trustees, officers, or members of the Club Board.

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<sup>1</sup> The manifesto may be submitted in handwritten format, in WORD, plain text, or by E-Mail if preferred.

## **6. Policy on Election Campaigning**

### **Introduction**

The Supporters Trust must have a policy that clearly defines the parameters to which an election campaign is carried out. This policy must be enforceable and any restrictions capable of speedy and accurate evaluation. Elections should be vibrant and members should have a sense of their importance and they should not send out a message of bureaucratic duty or irrelevance to the issues.

The Supporters Trust should provide additional opportunities for members to communicate directly with candidates, where members can ask questions of candidates. This could be through a set-piece debate event or, and as well as, an on-line Q&A. Members will be made aware of such activities via on-line promotion and in official AGM/Election documentation sent to the members.

Typically, the Supporters Trust would seek to arrange an 'in-person' debate to which members could attend or submit written questions for consideration.

### **Funding**

No costs, or free of charge benefits, are to be incurred by any candidate in relation to campaign literature or advertising.

### **Negative Campaigning**

Candidates should respectfully refrain from implicitly or explicitly referring to other candidates in order to prevent the political practice of negative campaigning. This is to protect everyone's interests, to prevent defamatory statements and so that successfully elected candidates can work together without prejudices being created at a campaigning stage.

### **Election Manifesto**

All candidates will be required to submit an election manifesto not exceeding 400 words with their application. This manifesto must conform to the conditions included within this policy.

### **Hustings**

A hustings event will be arranged for all candidates to answer questions that will be given in advance to the candidates. These questions will be drawn from the Trust membership and selected by the Election Officer and a nominated Trustee (who is not eligible to stand in the election). Time permitting, questions from the floor may be allowed.

The hustings event will be held during the morning of Saturday 8th October 2016 at a time and venue to be advised.

Nominee attendance at the hustings is voluntary and non-attendance does not preclude a candidate from the election process.

### **On-Line Campaigning (including Social Media)**

Candidates will be permitted to make statements on-line that support their manifesto provided they do not campaign negatively against other candidates. However, these statements must be made via a number of Trust related media. These include FACEBOOK, TWITTER and the Trusts own WEB site.

### **Breaching the Rules**

Any breach of the above rules will be considered within 14 days by the TB.

Sanctions available to the TB may include a written warning or should the breach be considered serious enough the candidate may be removed from the election process. A two thirds majority vote of the TB will be required for a candidate to be removed. In any event the Trust membership will be informed of this breach through the Trust WEB site.

## 7. Trustee Election Timetable

	Completion Date	Activity	
1.	13 <sup>th</sup> September 2016 (Noon)	Deadline for Candidate Nominations and Manifestos	
2.	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2016	Dispatch ballot papers & related documentation including request for Hustings Questions	
3.	1 <sup>st</sup> October 2016	Deadline for Hustings Questions	
4.	8 <sup>th</sup> October 2016	Election Candidates Hustings	
7	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2016	Deadline for return of ballot papers	
9	22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2016	AGM	

**Exeter City FC Supporters Trust Elections – 2016**

**8. Nomination Form**

Nomination Form for election as Trustee.

**CANDIDATE (Full Name):**

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**Candidate Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Priority Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby agree to my nomination for an elected place on the Trust Board and I agree to be bound by the provisions of the Trust Rules and the Trust Board Membership & Conduct Policy. **I confirm that I have read and understood the Trustees duties and responsibilities letter.**

**Signed:**

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**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Supporters**

- All sections must be completed to be valid
- Copies of the Trust rules can be accessed via the Trust's website ([www.ecfcst.org.uk](http://www.ecfcst.org.uk)) or from the Secretary ([nick.hawker1392@gmail.com](mailto:nick.hawker1392@gmail.com)).
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	Name	Priority No.	Signed	Date
1				
2				
3				

**These two pages must be returned to the Returning Officer by post as an original with original signatures. If the nominee is unable to obtain the original signatures of their supporters then please refer to the e-mail procedures on page 9 where you will also find the Returning Officer's details.**

### **Exeter City FC Supporters Trust Elections – 2015**

Use the space below to type or write your candidate manifesto. This will be published and circulated with ballot papers. Do not use more than 400 words. Please try to e-mail a copy to the Returning Officer to save retyping to [rx8man@btinternet.com](mailto:rx8man@btinternet.com).