



ELECTION POLICY

Introduction

This policy governs the conduct of elections and shall be made available on the Supporters Direct website for scrutiny. A copy shall be sent to all candidates upon successful nomination. It may be changed from time to time by the Board or by the members requesting and approving such a resolution at a General Meeting under the rules of Supporters Direct.

Election Control

1. The election process will be undertaken by the Secretary of Supporters Direct. Voting instructions and supplementary papers shall be sent to Full members. The count shall be conducted under a single majority system, with each voter having the ability to indicate support for as many candidates as there are places to be elected. They shall conduct their role in accordance with this policy
2. Decisions made by the Secretary under this procedure may be appealed using the complaints procedure detailed in the Rules of the Organisation.
3. All candidates agree to abide by these rules and accept that by their nomination they shall be deemed to have accepted these rules and agreed to be bound by them

Candidates

4. Candidates must not:
 - a) Be an employee of Supporters Direct
 - b) Have been adjudged by the Board to have brought the Organisation into disrepute in the last 5 years;
 - c) Be the spouse, cohabitee, brother, sister, child, father or mother of a member of the Board or another candidate for election to the Board or employee of Supporters Direct;
 - d) Be currently declared bankrupt or compounded with their creditors;
 - e) Be subject to a disqualification order made under the Company Directors Disqualification Act;
 - f) Have been convicted of an indictable offence, subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1972;
 - g) Have been removed from membership of a recognised professional body and not reinstated.

Nomination

5. A notice of the election shall be sent to the nominated contact at all member organisations at least 2 months before the close of voting. This notice will also be placed on the Supporters Direct website. The notice will advise of the procedure for nomination, the closing date for nominations and the number of candidates to be elected in the poll and the eligibility criteria for candidates. It shall also include a copy of this policy for information.
6. Nominations shall be sent to Supporters Direct national office and must be received before or on the closing date advised in the notice of the election. Candidates shall submit a recent photograph of themselves and a statement with their nomination of at least 400 words and not more than 1000 words. These statements shall be copied and included with ballot papers and shall be placed on the Supporters Direct website (www.supporters-direct.org) and such other media as appropriate. Candidates must not in their statements make threats, abusive, racist, sexist, or homophobic statements; if such statements are made, then the candidate

shall be invited to make a new statement; if they refuse or time does not allow, the statement shall be edited by the Secretary as appropriate and notice shall be added to the statement to indicate that this has been done. Candidates also agree to indemnify Supporters Direct for any action resulting from the publication of their statement. Candidates who are currently Board members will have their attendance record and any participation in sub-committees included for members' information.

7. Nominations shall only be valid if supported by one proposing organisation and at least one supporting organisation. All such nominating organisations must be in Full Membership of Supporters Direct.
8. A proposing nomination shall be valid if the proposing organisation demonstrates that it proposes the individual being nominated.
9. A supporting nomination shall be valid if the nominating organisation demonstrates that it supports the nomination.
10. Supporters Direct may investigate nominations to verify their validity. Any candidate submitting a fraudulent nomination shall be excluded from the election.
11. The receipt of a nomination shall be taken as certification that the candidate has met the relevant criteria. Supporters Direct may undertake enquiries to verify that the candidate has met the criteria. If a candidate is discovered to be ineligible under those criteria then the following action will be taken:
 - a) If the discovery of the ineligibility is before the closing date, the nomination is ruled invalid
 - b) If the discovery of the ineligibility is after the closing date but before the close of voting, the votes of the excluded candidate shall not be counted.
 - c) If the discovery of the ineligibility is after the close of voting and the individual has been successfully elected, then the person shall be removed from the Board of Supporters Direct.
 - d) Individuals involved in submitting a fraudulent nomination on behalf of a Member shall be reported to the respective member for them to take action and Supporters Direct reserve the right to declare such person as having brought the organisation into disrepute.

Campaigning

12. Statements in support of candidates, or which might lead voters to infer that endorsement had been given to a candidate or candidates, shall not be the responsibility of the Supporters Direct, save that official Supporters Direct media may be used to publish the candidates' statements. Candidates using electronic media operated under the auspices of Supporters Direct for campaigning purposes are free to do so, but Supporters Direct reserve the right to edit, remove and suspend the ability to use such media should the Secretary determine that the facility is being abused.
13. Supporters Direct as a corporate body shall remain neutral during the election. Any comments made, regarding the candidates, by members of the Board not taking part in the election, as a candidate, or by staff of Supporters Direct shall be clearly stated as being in a purely personal capacity. Breach of these terms shall be deemed as a matter for the Board to consider as bringing the organisation into disrepute.

14. Supporters Direct will provide an opportunity for candidates to respond to questions submitted by members and responses will be circulated with ballot papers and published on the organisations website.

Voting

15. Voting instructions will be issued if the number of valid nominations at the closing date exceeds the number of positions to be elected. If the number of valid nominations is the same as or fewer than the number of positions, those candidates shall be deemed elected. In the event of the same number or fewer candidates than available positions advertised, an affirmative ballot will be held to confirm them in post at the Annual General Meeting.
16. The ballot will be prepared in order to enable both the secrecy and integrity of the ballot to be maintained.
17. A vote shall only be counted if it is cast by the advertised closing date and is accompanied by a declaration that the person casting the vote has the authority of their trust to do so.
18. Supporters Direct may make enquiries to verify that a ballot has been submitted properly. Anyone found to have participated in deception shall be deemed to have brought Supporters Direct into disrepute and their activities shall be reported to the member organisation (if appropriate). If such a person is also a candidate, they shall be disqualified from the election of the Board of Supporters Direct as appropriate under the procedure 10.
19. Ballot papers shall be retained for 12 months after the close of voting.