

PROPOSAL FOR DERBY COUNTY FC SUPPORTERS BOARD

David Clowes and the Derby County FC (DCFC) board, in consultation with the existing Supporters' Charter Group (SCG) - having taken advice the Football Supporters' Association (FSA) - are proposing the introduction of a Supporters Board (SB) for the purpose of ensuring supporters can engage in dialogue with the Club on strategic and governance issues. This body would sit alongside, and complement, the existing SCG.

David said, "When we purchased the Club, my immediate belief was that whatever Derby County had suffered in the darkest period of its history must never be allowed to happen again.

"I strongly believe that the introduction of a Supporters' Board will give fans a transparency about the decision-making progress at the Club, will allow them to have a say in the areas of the Club's culture that matter and also to challenge the board and bring fresh ideas to bear.

"That can only be a positive as far as I see, and I made it clear from the outset there needed to be greater fan inclusion in everything we do."

The following proposal is in line with the existing Crouch Report and the current White Paper and has been carried out after full discussion and consultation with the FSA, the Government-mandated representative of supporters at every level of the game.

CLUB STRUCTURE

The Supporters' Board would sit alongside the SCG. Both fan-populated chambers would carry equal weight and importance but with separate responsibilities.

It is proposed that the SB would meet quarterly with the DCFC board while the SCG would continue its regular schedule of meetings.

The Club will retain a two way dialogue with both the SB and SCG, and the SB and SCG will ensure close collaboration with one another (particularly where issues overlap).

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SB

The SB will have two layers of responsibility in terms of club governance.

CONSENT TOPICS (where power of veto rests)

1. DCFC shall not undertake a move away from, or sale of, Pride Park without fan consent

2. DCFC shall not undertake to change the club colours away from black and white without fan consent.
3. DCFC shall not undertake to make **significant** changes to the club crest without fan consent.
4. DCFC shall not become a member of a Breakaway League without fan consent.

DISCUSSION TOPICS (where the SB is consulted but has no power of veto)

1. Financial accounts
2. Delivery of, and participation in, key elements of the Club's off pitch strategy (eg against diversity targets)
3. Sponsorship principles/core values
4. DCFC corporate social responsibility

For clarity, 'football' is not an area of discussion for the Supporters Board where it pertains to training, academy, transfers, team selection, manager etc.

While the SB has no power of veto in the above areas, there is protection under protocols to report to either an Independent Regulator (on its appointment) or to the FA, Premier League or EFL.

Furthermore, the overall responsibilities of the SB is

- To represent the views of the group and wider fan base while balancing these against financial and practical realities.
- To provide a wide range of skills, knowledge and experiences to the Board.
- To provide leadership and help to set the overall strategic direction of the Board.
- To take and accept collective and collegiate responsibility for all decisions made by the Board meaning no individual will speak against majority decisions taken by the Board.
- To always be mindful of the responsibility to maintain and develop the ethos and values of the Board.
- To accept that no individual has the legal authority to act on behalf of the Board.
- To acknowledge the role of a Board member involves the commitment to a significant amount of time and energy.
- To strive to work as a team in which constructive working relationships are actively promoted

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCG

The SCG would be the primary discussion chamber for the following:

1. Significant changes to match day arrangements
2. Significant change to ticketing and/or membership in relation to DCFC

3. Discussion on kit design
4. Pride Park stadium issues and/or plans which have a major impact on fans
5. All other supporter experience issues.
6. Heritage matters apart from those specified in the Supporters' Board responsibilities.

While the above areas are perceived as those most affecting DCFC fans, there is no limit of the scope of the SCG in terms of an operational overview.

FORMATION OF THE SB

The impetus behind the implementation of a two-chamber system is that it helps provide a greater degree of transparency around Club matters and ensures governance issues are given a platform for discussion not currently available at SCG level.

The SB will require fans with a certain skill set not necessarily required at SCG level as well as a degree of confidentiality around certain subjects which warrant a smaller group (eg pre-publication of financial accounts).

In line with the FSA's recommendations, it is proposed that the SB consists of six members, constituted as follows.

1 x member from Rams Trust as the official supporter group focussed on governance issues (as per guidance in the White Paper).

2 x existing members from the groups that make up the SCG which meet (or plan to meet) FSA core principles.

3 x independent members

It is proposed that the three independent members of the SB be selected on an application process, against an agreed role specification (to be agreed with the final selection to be made by a three-person panel consisting of:

1 x DCFC representative (likely to be a board member)

1 x FSA representative

1 x independent local person of standing (business/local government etc)

Independent members may also be members of one or more DCFC Supporters' Groups but must not be Directors or Trustees of those groups during their time as an independent member of the Supporters' Board.

The application process would be open with the role specification widely published and distributed. A long-list and then short-list would be drawn up with input and advice from the SCG. The final interviews would be carried out by the three-person panel with consideration given to gender equality on the panel to the fullest extent possible.

Consideration of a move to a supporter vote from the short-list is envisaged in the future but the initial election process is that advised by the FSA.

Members of the SB would be governed by confidentiality in certain areas (finances/business plan/commercial decisions) but it is proposed that, after an agreed time-lag, ALL matters discussed at DCFC/SB level would be made public.

A constitution will be drawn up with the SB likely to be enshrined in the Club's Articles of Association or similarly binding contract.

SB members would serve a set term (to be decided) with a chair elected from within the SB.

FAMILIARISATION PROGRAMME AND PURPOSE

DCFC undertakes to implement a process designed to familiarise and help the Supporters Board gain a deeper understanding of the club.

Supporters Board representatives will

- Meet key leaders within DCFC to understand their remit and forge relationships.
- Understand Club strategy.
- Understand Club priorities and key projects.
- Understand the Club financial structure and results.
- Understand the critical relationships and partnerships maintained by the Club.