Watford Supporters Board
Election Policy

1. Introduction

1.1. This Policy outlines the process for electing members to the Watford Supporters Board (the "WSB"). Its purpose is to ensure that the elections for the WSB are conducted in a democratic manner, and that the process and results are accepted as fair by all participants. This document has taken into consideration best practice from the Football Supporters Association (FSA).

1.2. The election process consists of four stages: application, shortlisting, interview, and election.

2. Application & Interview Panel

2.1. An Application & Interview Panel of at least 3 individuals will be formed to oversee the election. To ensure fairness and impartiality, the panel will be chaired by an independent person who is not on the WSB or connected to the Club (for example, a representative from the FSA).

3. Eligibility

3.1. Candidates must:

- 3.1.1. Be an existing supporter of the club with a Fan ID
- 3.1.2. Be over the age of 18
- 3.1.3. Demonstrate a commitment to the values and mission of the Club
- 3.1.4. Not have any record of misconduct or behaviour that goes against the WSB Code of Conduct, including any current football related bans or convictions; or
- 3.1.5. Not be an employee of the Club or an ex-employee subject to a compromise agreement
- 3.1.6. Be nominated by, and seconded by, existing supporters of the club with Fan ID's

3.2. Current WSB members seeking re-election must follow the same application and election process as new candidates.

4. Application Process

4.1. The Application and Interview Panel will announce open seats and invite applications from the Club's fans. Details will be available on the Club website and WSB channels.

4.2. The Application and Interview Panel will agree the content of the application form and confirm any additional eligibility criteria.

4.3. Applicants must complete and submit the application form on the Club website, answering the questions prompted on the site.

4.4. The deadline for applications will be clearly stated. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

5. Shortlisting Process

5.1. The Application and Interview Panel will review all applications and assess candidates based on the strength of their application and any criteria specified in the announcement.
5.2. The shortlisted candidates will be notified and invited to the interview stage.

6. Interview Process

6.1. Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed by the Application and Interview Panel.
6.2. The interview will assess the candidate's understanding of the WSB's responsibilities, their commitment and their ability to contribute positively.
6.3. Following the interviews, the Application and Interview Panel will finalise the list of candidates who will proceed to the election stage.

7. Election Process

7.1. The voting constituency for the WSB will be Club supporters with an active fan ID on the Club database on the date of the election announcement.
7.2. The final candidates will be publicly announced, and their profiles shared with the fan base.
7.3. Elections will be conducted via a secure voting mechanism.
7.4. The voting period and process will be clearly defined and communicated in advance.
7.5. Votes will be recorded and counted, and results will be announced within a reasonable timeframe after the voting period ends.
7.6. In the case of a tie lots will be drawn.
7.7. In the event of the number of candidates being equal, or fewer, than the number of vacancies, the profiles of those candidates will be published, and an affirmative vote will be held requiring over 50% of those voting to confirm the candidate's place on the WSB.

8. Recommendation to the WSB

8.1. In exceptional circumstances, the Application and Interview Panel may recommend a candidate be invited to be a member onto the WSB.
8.2. A recommended member must meet the eligibility criteria and demonstrate relevant skills or experience beneficial to the WSB.
8.3. A recommended member will serve for a defined period, after which they must stand for election if they wish to continue serving.
8.4. At all times, recommended members must remain in the minority compared to elected members to ensure democratic representation.

9. Additional Considerations

9.1. Candidates must adhere to the WSB Code of Conduct throughout the process. Any form of misconduct or unfair campaigning may result in disqualification.

9.2. This policy will be reviewed every 24 months or in response to legislative or regulatory changes to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

9.3. Any disputes regarding the election process will be resolved by the full WSB in conjunction with the independent chair of the Application & Interview Panel.

10. Unelected Trust and EDI Representatives

10.1. The representative from the Watford Supporters' Trust and the candidate representing 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' issues (the Appointed Representatives) will each be appointed for two year terms. During the close season at the end of each term their respective represented bodies will put forward their candidate for the following two year term.

11. Timetable

11.1. The election process for the initial formation of the WSB will commence during the 2024/5 season with a view to the initial WSB being in place until the end of the 2026/27 regular season.

11.2. The six WSB Members initially elected should expect to hold office for the following terms:

- 11.2.1. Finance – one until the end of the 2026/27 season, the other until the end of the 2027/28 season.
- 11.2.2. Commercial – one until the end of the 2026/27 season, the other until the end of the 2028/29 season.
- 11.2.3. Matchday & Supporter Engagement – one until the end of the 2027/28 season, the other until the end of the 2028/29 season.

11.3. Subsequent elections will take place during the close season with newly elected WSB Members in place prior to the start of the new season. The exact dates shall be decided by the WSB prior to the completion of each regular current season.

11.4. Prior to the end of each regular current season the WSB shall agree which WSB Members' roles will be elected. Those holding roles should expect to hold them for at least three years or until the end of their term of office. Unless otherwise agreed elections will follow the following pattern:

- 11.4.1. End of 2026/27 season: one Finance member and one Commercial member.
- 11.4.2. End of 2027/28 season: one Finance member and one Matchday & Supporter Engagement member.
- 11.4.3. End of 2028/29 season: one Commercial member and one Matchday & Supporter Engagement member.
- 11.4.4. End of 2029/30 season: one Finance member and one Commercial member.
- 11.4.5. End of 2030/31 season: one Finance member and one Matchday & Supporter Engagement member.

11.4.6. End of 2031/32 season: one Commercial member and one Matchday & Supporter Engagement member.

and so on.

11.5. The WSB shall ensure that the membership of the Application and Interview Panel has been agreed before the application process begins.

11.6. At least one week before the end of each regular current season, the Club will invite applications by publishing details on its website and contacting all fans on its database by email and advertising on social media, including links to the application form.

11.7. During the Election Period, the Application and Interview Panel shall manage the process, with the assistance of the Secretary as required.

12. Example of Election Process

March	WSB members stepping down determined (none in first and second years)
April	Election Vacancies announced
April	Application & Interview Board selected
May	Election announcement & procedures published on the Club website
May	Application window opens
May	Application window closes
May	Applications circulated to the Application & Interview Board
June	Shortlisting of candidates
June	Application & Interview Board meets to finalise shortlist for interview
June	Application & Interview Board meet with the club to share the shortlist & determine interview questions
June	Successful candidates are invited to interview, questions to be asked are shared. Unsuccessful candidates are informed. Communications to be scheduled to be sent at the same time
June	Interview window opens
June	Interview window closes
June	Application & Interview Board meets with the club to share interview outcomes
July	Candidates to be considered for election are informed & asked to provide a statement and photo for the election webpage. Unsuccessful candidates informed. Communications to be scheduled to be sent at the same time
July	Deadline for candidate statements and photos
July	Candidates for election announced on club website
August	WSB voting opens
August	WSB voting closes
August	Successful candidates announced