



## Terms of Reference

### **Introduction**

The West Ham United Official Supporters' Board (WHUSB) has been established to create an open, transparent and ongoing dialogue between the Club and supporters and ensures that the views of the fanbase are heard at the highest level of the Club.

The Club decided that the end of the 2017/18 season offered a natural opportunity to look at how best to develop our approach to supporter consultation and engagement. We began by consulting Supporter Representatives on the Supporter Advisory Board (SAB) to understand how we could create the best possible environment for our supporters, Board members and senior staff members to discuss and act upon the points that have been raised to the Club.

In addition to this, the Club considered the guidance set out by the Government's 2015 Expert Working Group and consulted the Premier League to develop a constitution that was fair, transparent and representative of the West Ham United fans. After taking on board fan feedback and official guidance, the Club decided to improve on the former SAB model and establish the Official Supporters' Board (WHUSB).

The new WHUSB will provide supporters with an opportunity to directly engage with their Supporter Representatives, each representing one key area of interest, who can then raise their questions or relay their feedback to Board members and senior staff from West Ham United. Additionally, the Official Supporters' Board also enables the Club to open positive dialogue with supporters and use feedback to help steer the strategic direction of the Club.

### **Aims of the Official Supporters' Board**

- To facilitate a platform for meaningful engagement between West Ham United supporters, the Board of Directors and senior management
- To enable the broadest representation possible of West Ham United supporters

- To ensure a fair and accountable selection process for representatives that meet the Club's equalities objectives
- To build a positive and closer relationship between West Ham United and its supporters
- To develop a greater understanding of the issues that are most important to the West Ham United fanbase and to consider them in Club decision making
- To enable fans to play a key role in improving the supporter experience and shaping the future of West Ham United
- To create a platform for the Board and Senior Management to consult with supporters and to use this feedback in steering the strategic direction of the Football Club
- To be the official conduit between the supporters and the Board of Directors

## **Mission**

Working together to develop and maintain a positive relationship and the best supporter experience for all West Ham United fans

## **Supporter Representative application process**

Applications for the WHUSB are open to all West Ham United supporters who can demonstrate that they are representative of their chosen category under the Supporter Representative Guide.

Supporters wishing to apply for a role as a Supporter Representative on the WHUSB will need to complete all areas of the WHUSB application form, including being nominated by a minimum of five (5) Season Ticket Holders or Claret members.

All applications will be considered by an independent panel as outlined in section-Independent selection of Supporter Representatives.

Supporter Representatives will be required to attend all meetings and provide advanced notice of at least seven (7) days to the Club and the WHUSB Chair and Vice-Chair when they are unable to attend a meeting so that the views of the supporters they represent can still be raised for discussion.

Supporter Representatives will be asked in advance of each meeting to provide a maximum of two questions on behalf of their key areas of interest. This is to ensure

that all Supporter Representatives have the opportunity to discuss the subjects that are most important and relevant to the supporters that they represent.

Upon application to the WHUSB, Supporter Representatives agree that they are committed to being directly contactable by fellow supporters in order to;

- Raise the relevant subject matters and questions on behalf of the supporters they represent at meetings
- Liaise with the Club's Supporter Services team in respect of every day issues, feedback or complaints that require the assistance of the Club

Upon application to the WHUSB, Supporter Representatives will be giving consent that all contents within their application forms can be shared with the Independent Panel as expressed in the section – Selection of Supporter Representatives.

The Club will provide a mechanism to the fanbase for contacting each Supporter Representative that is fully compliant with General Data Protection Regulation (2018) and ensures the protection of personal information and contact details.

### **Selection of Supporter Representatives**

All applications that meet the criteria listed in the Supporter Representative Guide will be submitted to an independent panel consisting of;

- Sir Trevor Brooking
- Carlton Cole
- Mandy Lane, Director at Visit Football (Premier League Quality Assurance Stadium Scheme)
- Paul Richman (Chair of the Official West Ham United Supporters' Club)

All applicants must be nominated by a minimum of five (5) Season Ticket Holders or Claret members. Nominations, including name and client reference number of each nominee must be stipulated on the application form. Any applications forms received without the minimum five (5) nominations will be considered void.

The Club has the right to decline applications received from supporters who are;

- Under investigation for any breach of stadium regulations or matters concerning the Police that are relative to football
- Currently serving a football, Club or stadium related ban
- In arrears of any payments to West Ham United Football Club Ltd

Applications may not be progressed should there be any other reason that may bring the Club, the WHUSB or its members into disrepute.

The Club will provide means of application via WHUFC.com, by post, in large print and braille forms. Applications cannot be altered or submitted after the advertised deadline for applications.

## **Chair/Vice-Chair application process**

Supporters wishing to apply for the role of Chair or Vice-Chair of the WHUSB will need to complete the Supporter Representative application form as well as the additional form overleaf to apply for the position of Chair or Vice-Chair.

All areas of the application form must be completed to stand for election.

## **Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

Supporters wishing to stand for the position of Chair or Vice-Chair will need to complete the relevant fields upon the WHUSB application form.

Elected Supporter Representatives will be asked to nominate their preferred candidate for the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair at the first meeting of the season based on the statements supplied within each candidate's application form. Each candidate will need to be willing to read their statements out at the meeting.

Supporter Representatives will nominate their preferred candidate for the role of Chair and Vice-Chair and place votes into a ballot box to be drawn and counted at the meeting.

In the event of a tied vote, Supporter Representatives will convene to elect a Chair and Vice-Chair from the tied candidates based on the cases made on each supporter's application form.

In the event that no nomination(s) are forthcoming for the position of Chair or Vice-Chair, the independent panel will convene ahead of the next WHUSB meeting to elect suitable candidates based on the cases made on each supporter's application form.

The positions and roles of Chair and Vice-Chair of the WHUSB cannot be shared and must be held exclusively by individuals who are not elected to the committee of any other political or independent supporter groups.

In the event of vacancies suddenly arising the vacant position will be decided upon by Supporter Representatives through a public vote at the next WHUSB meeting.

## **Role of Supporter Representatives**

Supporter Representatives play a crucial role in advising the Club on the matters that are most important to the West Ham United fanbase and providing suggestion as to how we can improve the overall experience for supporters.

To support the success of the Supporter Representative role, the Club will provide each representative with the platform to liaise with and put forward the suggestion, viewpoints and feedback received from supporters on matters that fall under their key areas of interest. Additionally, Supporter Representatives will have the opportunity to meet with supporters as part of our specialist subgroups and help lead the discussion and debate amongst their fellow fans to help further inform the WHUSB.

Key areas of interest for the 2018/19 season are;

- Families & juniors
- Under 25s
- Over 65s
- LGBT+ fans
- Women
- Accessibility X2
- Bondholders
- Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) fans
- Official Supporters Clubs
- Club London
- 1966 Season Ticket Holders
- Bobby Moore Stand
- East Stand
- Sir Trevor Brooking Stand
- West Stand
- Away Season Ticket Holders
- Claret Members
- Other representative groups
- Junior Supporters' Board representative

The independent panel will use the key areas of interest to ensure that all categories are represented on the WHUSB.

Larger West Ham United supporter's groups can also apply for a position on the WHUSB. All group applications will be considered by the independent panel on their own merits.

All Supporter Representative categories, will be confirmed by the Club following consultation with outgoing Supporter Representatives at the final meeting of the WHUSB each season.

## Supporter Representative Guide

It is important that each member on the WHUSB is fully representative of their chosen category and will be prepared and readily able to raise and share the views of the wider West Ham United fanbase.

To this end, the Club will support each Supporter Representative as much as possible to ensure they are successful in their role as covered in the section - The Role of the Club. However, supporters should feel confident that their Supporter Representative is fully committed and capable of representing them through their work on the WHUSB.

Supporters who wish to apply for a role on the WHUSB should demonstrate clearly within their application form that they meet each of the points listed within the Supporter Representative Guide to ensure that they can successfully represent the supporters in their chosen category.

Each supporters' application should answer the following:

- Why you are applying to be on the WHUSB
- Why you are the best representative for your chosen category
- How you will ensure that supporters in your chosen area will be fully represented
- What skills and experiences you have that you feel would make you the best Supporter Representative for your chosen area
- List the key points you wish to champion on behalf of your group

To ensure that all WHUSB members effectively represent the supporters in their area, each Supporter Representative must;

- Hold a Season Ticket or Claret membership for the 2018/19 season;
- Attend a minimum of 10 games per season;
- Attend all WHUSB meetings, subject to exceptional circumstances and, in such absence, ensure your questions are passed to the WHUSB Chair for representation at any meetings;
- Submit questions on behalf of your group to help inform the agenda at meetings;
- Assist WHUFC to greater understand the needs of the supporters within your key areas of interest;
- Possess strong communication skills with a willingness to speak and share the views of the supporters you represent at meetings;
- Be available to meet Supporter Services outside of meetings as and when necessary;
- Raise urgent individual issues, feedback or complaints with the Supporter Services when applicable;
- Act as a representative and as the main point of contact for supporters to raise issues or concerns directly with the WHUSB;

- Support the success of the WHUSB by positively representing its work amongst fellow fans when applicable;
- Provide feedback to your represented supporters following WHUSB meetings;
- Be vigilant around the following areas, especially how they impact your group:
  - Stewarding;
  - Concourse facilities and access
  - Services;
  - Security;
  - Ticket checks;
  - Safety;
  - Matchdays at London Stadium;
  - Family engagement/entertainment;

Supporter Representatives will need to preserve the integrity of the Terms of Reference and the Equality and Diversity statement at all times.

### **Specialist Seats**

To ensure the best possible representation of West Ham United supporters from geo / demographic, equality and diversity perspectives each of the following categories will be entitled to a position on the WHUSB:

- Accessibility supporters x2 (from Disabled Supporters' Board)
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic fans (BAME)
- Women
- LGBTQ+ supporters
- Youth (under 25)
- Senior (over 65)
- Families and juniors

### **Role of Chair of the WHUSB**

The role of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the WHUSB is to support the structure and focus of the meetings and to build relationships between the Club and supporters.

Naturally there are some additional responsibilities for the Chair to assume on behalf of their fellow Supporter Representatives and the wider fanbase. These include;

- The Chair will need to preserve the integrity of the Terms of Reference and the Equality and Diversity statement at all times
- Liaise with the Club's Supporter Services team to ensure that Supporter Representatives are fully and appropriately representing their key areas of interest
- Chair and Vice-Chair will meet with the Club separately where required on behalf of group

- Liaise with the Club's Supporter Services team to help arrange the agenda, invitations, structure and minutes of the meetings
- Be responsible for assisting the Supporter Services team in circulating the agenda and all other relevant papers to those who will be present at WHUSB meetings prior to commencement of the meeting
- Ensure that the views of all Supporter Representatives present at meetings are equally heard and to maintain an atmosphere conducive to furthering the WHUSBs aims as outlined in the section - Aims of the Official Supporters' Board
- Ensure the views of members not present, but communicated to the WHUSB, are given due weight in debate and decision making
- In the event of a tie the Chair shall have an additional casting vote at all WHUSB meetings

### **Role of the Vice-Chair**

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair will be able to take upon the responsibilities of the Chair on behalf of Supporter Representatives.

In the absence of both Chair and Vice-Chair, Supporter Representatives will democratically appoint, temporarily or otherwise, a Supporter Representative to the position of Chair. Upon casual vacancy of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall assume the position until the end of the football season or as notified by the Club.

### **Role of the Club**

The Club is keen to consult with supporters through the new Supporters' Board and will provide opportunities for Supporter Representatives to liaise with the wider supporter base in order to build relationships and to gather their views and suggestions to present to the Board of Directors.

The Clubs commitments include;

- The Club's Supporter Services team will provide a point of contact and support for the Chair, Vice-Chair and all Supporter Representatives of the WHUSB.
- Providing a mechanism for all Supporter Representatives to be contacted by the wider fanbase
- Meetings of the WHUSB shall be convened by the Supporter Services team in conjunction with the Chair of the WHUSB, on a date confirmed with all Supporter Representatives.
- The Club's Supporter Services team will make all the arrangements for the meeting including giving proscribed notices, in addition to provision of appropriate venue, food and beverages and guest speakers where appropriate.
- All subgroups called upon by WHUSB Supporter Representatives during the season will be announced by the Club's Supporter Services team



- The Club will ensure full compliance with the General Data Protection Requirements (2018).

## **Communications**

Invitations for meetings will be sent out no later than 28 days prior to any meeting, unless an Emergency Meeting is called in accordance with section 13-Emergency WHUSB Meetings.

The agenda for each meeting will be decided by the Club in conjunction with Supporter Representatives and sent out no later than seven (7) days prior to the meeting date.

The minutes of meetings will be distributed by the Club within seven (7) days of the meeting to enable Supporter Representatives to provide feedback prior to publication. Supporter Representatives will have three (3) days to provide feedback on the minutes once received. Minutes will be published within a maximum of 14 days of the meeting.

All communications relating to WHUSB will be announced in a timely manner via official Club communication channels.

The Club will provide an area on WHUFC.com dedicated to the WHUSB, DSB and JSB. Public profiles for Supporter Representatives will also feature across official Club channels in order to raise the profiles of each supporter amongst the wider fanbase and to further the aims and the success of the WHUSB.

The WHUSB section of the site will also provide a central hub for feedback and new initiatives, interviews with Supporter Representatives and updates on actions from meetings.

The Club will also use direct email where necessary to create awareness of the work of the WHUSB and to highlight any updates or actions that are important to supporters.

## **WHUSB meetings**

The WHUSB will meet a minimum of three times per season with members of the West Ham United Board of Directors and senior management.

Meetings will be held at the beginning, middle and at the end of the campaign, during the close season. The Club will issue approximate dates for all WHUSB meetings at the first meeting of the season.

The Club will provide appropriate representation from senior management at each meeting from the relevant sections (ticketing, supporter services, accessibility, operations, safety), who can speak with authority and take forward any actions.

The Club will ensure that all WHUSB members are sent notifications, (electronically or otherwise), of the date, time and venue for each meeting to be sent no less than 28 days before it is due to take place, unless an Emergency Meeting is called in accordance with section - Emergency WHUSB Meetings.

The Club will provide a copy of the agenda to all WHUSB members at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.

### **Subgroup meetings**

In addition to the three meetings of the WHUSB per season, subgroups will be formed to support the WHUSB in specialist areas.

A select number of Supporter Representatives will be nominated by fellow WHUSB members to attend and chair subgroup meetings.

The rest of the subgroup will be made up of supporters from the wider fanbase to share suggestions, viewpoints and feedback for discussion at the next WHUSB meeting. Information regarding each subgroup meeting will be communicated across Club channels as and when appropriate.

The nominated Supporter Representatives will be responsible for reporting back to the Club on the activities and discussions held by a deadline agreed in advance with the Club. The contents of the subgroup meetings will be brought forward to the next WHUSB meeting for discussion.

### **Emergency WHUSB meetings**

The Club may call an Emergency WHUSB Meeting at any point during the season to discuss topics and key decisions that are timely and important to the fanbase.

Meetings will be carried out in accordance with the process outlined in the Section-Meetings.

### **Terms of Office**

The period of office for the positions of Chair, Vice-Chair and Supporter Representatives will be for one football season 2018/2019, from the moment that notification is formally received by Supporter Representatives from the Club and until otherwise confirmed after the final WHUSB meeting of the season.

Supporter Representatives will be able to reapply again the following season but cannot hold a position for longer than three (3) consecutive seasons.

The WHUSB Chair has the right to suggest that a Supporter Representative be removed from the WHUSB in the event that a Supporter Representative;

- Fails to attend a meeting without seven (7) days' prior notice to the Chair or Vice-Chair of the WHUSB

- Continual non-attendance at WHUSB meetings as defined by the Chair
- Acts in a manner that contravenes the Terms of Reference or Equality and Diversity Statement
- Acts in a manner that brings the WHUSB into disrepute

The Club and WHUSB recognise that there will be extenuating circumstances where exceptions should be made and a decision will not be taken without discussion and due consideration.

The right to remove a Supporter Representative from the WHUSB will be determined at the next WHUSB meeting by a majority vote held by Supporter Representatives.

### **Profiles and contact information**

Board members will have a public profile on West Ham United channels, so that supporters know who they should contact to have their views or enquiries raised either at meetings or directly with the Supporter Services team for assistance.

Board members will be contactable by fellow supporters through the method supplied by the Club or by otherwise contacting Supporter Services with a request to get in touch with the relevant Board member.

Should a Supporter Representative receive any media or press enquiries, they should forward the enquiry to Jake Heath, Supporter Services Manager and respond with:

"Thank you for your enquiry/email/call. I have passed this to the Club and someone will be in contact with you directly".

### **Minutes**

The Club will provide a minute-taker and will share minutes for collective agreement with WHUSB members for their feedback prior to publication.

The minutes of meetings will be distributed by the Club within seven (7) days of the meeting to enable Supporter Representatives to provide feedback prior to publication. Supporter Representatives will have three (3) days to provide feedback on the minutes once received. Minutes will be published within a maximum of 14 days of the meeting.

Minutes from previous meetings will be archived under the Fans > Official Supporters' Board > Minutes of previous meetings.

## **Sharing of information and resources**

The WHUSB is set up to establish open discussion with supporters and to genuinely improve the supporter experience for the wider fanbase.

From time to time, there may be information which the Club cannot discuss as a result of its public knowledge being detrimental to business operations or it may contain commercially sensitive information. The Club will endeavour to provide members with clarity and context for the purpose of the meeting wherever possible.

All Supporter Representatives who represent other West Ham United supporters' groups are invited to discuss feedback with their respective members, but should only distribute the official minutes of the meeting that are agreed in consultation with all WHUSB members prior to publication.

Meetings will be recorded by an official minute taker for transcription purposes and the independent recording of any meeting by minutes, audio, video or otherwise is not permitted.

## **Review of processes**

The WHUSB and its processes, will be constantly reviewed to ensure the views of West Ham United fans are fairly and appropriately represented.

A seasonal review will take place as a matter of course.

The Club and Chairpersons in consultation have the right to transfer or terminate membership at any stage should it be used inappropriately or outside of the Terms of Reference under Section-Terms of Office.

## **Amendments to the Terms of Reference and Equality and Diversity statement**

The Club reserves the right to amend the Terms of Reference and the Equality and Diversity statement at any time and will consult WHUSB members.

Any amendments to the Terms of Reference and the Equality and Diversity statement will be confirmed in writing to WHUSB members and updated accordingly on Club channels.