

SOMERSET FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION LIMITED (“THE ASSOCIATION”)

MEMBERSHIP RULES

These Membership Rules are made pursuant to the company’s Articles of Association. Where there is an inconsistency between these Rules and Articles of Association, the provisions of the Articles of Association shall prevail.

1. MEMBERSHIP

1.1 All Clubs and Competitions playing under Association Football rules, having their grounds or headquarters in the area of Somerset shall be eligible for membership, subject to the approval of the Council.

An affiliation fee shall be paid by all clubs for membership relative to the level of the respective club as decided by the board of directors from time to time, this will include within it, a levy on all adult clubs to be used for the development of youth football. The fees for the current year can be found in the table of Fees and Fines at the end of these rules

1.2 The playing ground shall constitute the Headquarters of Clubs with the following exceptions:

- a) Clubs which have not a recognised playing ground.
- b) Clubs which cannot obtain a suitable and convenient ground within the area of their County Association.

1.3 The Headquarters of the excepted Clubs shall be within the area of the County Association to which they claim to belong.

1.4 All members of the Somerset FA Board and Council

2. Vice Presidents

Vice Presidents shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting, nominations for this post must be made in writing to the Chief Executive and must be received no later than 30th of April. A Vice President shall serve a 1 year term but be eligible to stand again. Incumbent Vice Presidents shall not need to be renominated but simply express that they wish to stand again. Vice Presidents, who are not a member of council in their own right, shall not be eligible to attend council or any other privilege/right of a councillor other than the option to purchase cup final tickets (see below).

3. COMMITTEES, SUBCOMMITTEES & WORKING GROUPS

The Board and or council shall from time to time, form such committees, subcommittees and working groups as they see fit to conduct the business of the Association which may include (but not limited to):

- Board of Appeal
- Leagues’ Board of Appeal
- League Sanction Committee
- Property Management Committee
- Disciplinary Committee

- Referees Steering Committee (“RefCo”)
- Representative Team Committee
- County Cup Committee
- Clubs and Leagues Committee (Renamed CS Committee)
- Benevolent Sub-Committee
- Inclusion Advisory Group
- Youth Council
- General Purposes Committee (To be formed if required)

4. MISCONDUCT

All disciplinary issues are dealt with in line with FA regulations, including cautions, standard offences, misconduct, suspension, fines and football debt recovery; please refer to the FA Memorandum of Procedure for Dealing with on field offences and other disciplinary/misconduct matters

5. RULES RELATING TO PLAYERS WITHOUT CONTRACTS

Regulations to players without contract, including but not limited to approach of player, are defined by FA rules and can be found in the FA Handbook

Any club wishing to register a player who has played abroad (abroad shall mean any association other than the Football Association of England) must seek permission from the FA before any registration will be allowed

6. PROTESTS

No protest will be entertained unless the protesting Club has paid the affiliation fee for the current season. Protests must be made within seven days of the incident occurring. Should any protesting Club be found to be in possession of any knowledge which, if properly used, might have obviated the protest, or having been guilty of any breach of rules during or arising out of the match or matter in dispute, the Council (or Committee) shall take this into consideration and shall have power to dismiss the protest and deal with the protesting Club as they think fit.

Should any Official or Member of the Council be a member of any Club or Competition or any interested party concerning which there is any protest, dispute or question, the said person shall not be eligible to sit on the Council, Sub-Committee or Commission while the said protest, dispute or question is being considered.

7. APPEALS AGAINST THE DECISIONS OF THE COUNCIL

Aggrieved Clubs and Competitions may refer any decision of the Council (for clarity this excludes any disciplinary and Leagues Board of Appeal) to the Board of Appeal consisting of seven persons (three to form a quorum) elected at the AGM. Notice of appeal must be sent to the Chief Executive within seven days of such decision, or within such time as the Council may direct, accompanied by a fee as set out under the Fees and Fines Section. The appeal MUST be signed by the Chairman of the Club or competition, or their deputy, and by one member of the Club Committee. If either Club or competition wishes to bring forward evidence that was not given when the case was heard by the Council, particulars of such

evidence (in duplicate) must be sent to the Chief Executive not less than 48 hours before the meeting of the Board of Appeal, in order that the Clubs or Competitions concerned may be informed. In the event of an appeal being rejected the fee shall be forfeited, but should an appeal be sustained the appeal fee together with any original protest fee shall be returned. The Board of Appeal may at its discretion make an order as to payment of the expenses of the hearing. The travelling expenses of the Board of Appeal shall be payable out of the funds of the Association.

The decisions of the Board of Appeal shall be final. Any Player or individual wishing to appeal against a decision of the Council of this Association may appeal to The Football Association, Wembley Stadium, P O Box 1966, London SW1P 9EQ and The Football Association Council shall decide in what manner and by whom the appeal shall be heard, but the operation of such decisions shall not be suspended pending the hearing of an appeal unless The Football Association Council so orders. Every appeal must be lodged within 14 days from the date of the meeting at which this Council gave its decision, by letter and accompanied by a deposit as set out in the Memorandum of Procedures Part II (in accordance with FA Rule Section H). At the same time an exact copy of the appeal must be sent to the Chief Executive of the Association. The appeal must be signed by the Chairman of the Club or competition, or their deputy and also one member of the Committee

The Appeals Board appointed by The Football Association shall have power to order the deposit in full to be forfeited, if it thinks fit, and may in addition order the appellant concerned to pay the cost of the hearing of the appeal.

NB Appeals cannot be made in regard to matters arising out of the Competitions of this Association in which the Rules provide that the decision of this Association shall be final.

8. LEAGUES' BOARD OF APPEAL

The Board of Directors shall appoint annually a Leagues Board of Appeal, a chair shall be appointed to each respective appeal board from its membership. Any commission will consist of no less than three and no more than five members.

The Leagues' Board of Appeal shall deal with appeals from Clubs aggrieved by decisions of any League or Competition. The decision of the Leagues' Board of Appeal shall be final. Appeals Must be signed by the Chairman of the Club or their deputy and by one member of the Club Committee and forwarded to the Chief Executive of this Association within 14 days of the date of a disputed decision made by an Affiliated League Competition or within 14 days of a disputed decision made by any sanctioned Cup Competition, together with an appeal fee as set out under the Fees and Fines Section which may be forfeited if the Board thinks fit. An exact copy of the appeal must be sent to the League or Competitions Secretary. The Board may in addition order the appellant to pay the cost of the hearing of the appeal.

9. REGISTERED REFEREES

All Associations and Competitions within the jurisdiction of the Somerset Football Association Ltd must be duly approved according to the rules of The Football Association

and appoint none other than Referees registered with the Somerset Football Association Ltd or other County Associations to officiate in all their matches.

10. COUNTY CUP COMPETITIONS

The Association shall run County Cup Competitions as sanctioned by the board of directors; these competitions shall be managed by the County Cups Committee or any other body so designated by the Board of Directors. All rules and regulations relating these competitions can be found in the County Cups Handbook

11. COUNTY CUP COMPETITIONS: OBLIGATORY ENTRY

All Clubs of Western League status and above must enter the Association Premier Cup Competition provided they comply with the requisite conditions of entry and all Senior Clubs must enter the Association Senior Cup Competition before they can compete in any Competition outside the Association. All Junior and Intermediate Clubs (except any competing solely in mid-week matches) must enter one of the Association Competitions before they can compete in outside Competitions.

12. SELECTION OF GROUNDS

The Association shall have power, while paying due and fair regard to Club's commitments in competitive football, to select any ground in the Association which it may deem fit for Association matches, Semi-final and/or Final ties. Any Club whose ground has been used by the Association shall be paid a fee.

13. PLAYERS SELECTED TO REPRESENT THE ASSOCIATION

Club Secretaries shall be notified of the selection list 14 days prior to game and it shall be the Club Secretaries' responsibility to notify selected Players within 24 hours of the receipt of same. Furthermore, it shall then be the Club Secretaries' duty to confirm or otherwise the Players' acceptance to the Team Manager for the time being within 72 hours of the original notification being sent, i.e. a further 48 hours only shall elapse before the Team Manager is notified. Failure on the part of the Club shall result in the Club being charged under FA Rule E10.

A Player selected to play for the Association and failing to do so shall not play for any Club on that day or 48 hours before or 48 hours after that day unless he/she first obtains the consent in writing from the relevant Committee. A Player breaking this Rule may be charged under FA Rule E.1 - E.3.

Any Club having a player selected to play in an Association or Representative match of a Competition in which it competes may apply to have its League or County Cup match postponed. Such application must be made in writing to the Secretary of the SFA Affiliated league in which the match shall take place, no later than SEVEN days prior to the match in question (email will suffice). Such application is at the discretion of the Association.

N.B. Leagues not affiliated to SFA are not bound by this regulation and may therefore refuse any such request

14. AWARDS TO THE PLAYERS SELECTED TO REPRESENT THE ASSOCIATION

A Player playing for the Association will qualify for the following:

- 1 appearance 1 Tie/Scarf/ badge/medal
- 5 appearances 1 Polo shirt
- 8 appearances 1 Cap
- 15 Appearances Tankard/Goblet

15. COUNTY ASSOCIATION AGM

The County Association AGM shall take place no later than the second week of July, as decided by the Board of directors, aside from exceptional circumstances.

16. CLUBS AND COMPETITIONS: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Clubs and Competitions must hold their Annual General Meeting prior to the County AGM each year.

17. CLUBS PARTICULARS

17.1 Each Club Secretary shall submit to the Chief Executive, by the online affiliation process as determined by The FA, in compliance with the current FA Regulations, annually no later than 30th June. Defaulting Clubs shall be fined as set out under the Fees and Fines Section.

Clubs will not be allowed a change of name during the season

Any club failing to provide Personal Accident Insurance shall not be allowed to affiliate, until such time as it can be evidenced this insurance is in place. Said insurance shall provide a minimum level of cover that shall be prescribed by the County Association from time to time, such definition shall correspond to that instructed by the FA where existing unless the County Association shall deem this insufficient and prescribe higher

17.2 Clubs shall play in the colours registered by them for publication in the Association Handbook. The association reserve the right to request photographic evidence to confirm the colours and where the front & back of a shirt may be different.

17.3 Clubs shall provide their Players with individually numbered shirts.

17.4 Any club seeking to play abroad or seeking to play foreign opposition in this country must seek permission from the FA on the requisite form, said form to be returned to the County FA to sign and forward to the FA

17.5 Any club who have players aged under 18 in membership shall form a council or other body for their representation within their club or shall conduct an annual survey to gather the views of Children and Young People (CYP) in their club and use information and views gathered to better meet the needs of those CYP in their club

18. LEAGUE AND COMPETITION PARTICULARS

18.1 Each League Secretary shall submit League and Competition Particulars to the Chief Executive, by the online affiliation process as determined by The FA, in compliance with the current FA Regulations, annually and no later than 31st July.

18.2 Leagues must complete their constitutions via the FA system so designated prior to the commencement of their playing season, Defaulting Leagues shall be fined and shall not be permitted to play until such time as this is completed.

19. DISBANDED CLUBS

In the case of a Club or Competition being disbanded, a financial statement, together with all books, monies, and/or trophies shall be forwarded to the Chief Executive or to an appointed member of the Council, within six months. Such monies shall be deposited in the Associations 'Disbanded Clubs and Competitions fund' and such trophies held by the Association until such time that the Club or Competition be satisfactorily reformed.

20. CLUBS ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL RECORDS

Clubs must retain all accounts and financial records for at least two seasons preceding the current season ready for production whenever required by the Association. At least two Clubs each season shall be required to produce their accounts and financial records for examination.

21. PUBLICATION OF PROCEEDINGS

The Association shall be entitled to publish in the Public Press, or in any other manner it shall think fit, reports of its proceedings, acts and resolutions, whether the same shall or shall not reflect on the character or conduct of any Club, Official, Player or Spectator.

22. COPIES OF THE RULES

A copy of the Rules embodied in the Association Handbook shall be sent to the Secretary of each Club and League affiliated to the Association and Referee registered to the Association

23. PARTICIPANT FINANCIAL HARDSHIP FUND

From the income received from misconduct 5% shall be transferred to a separate account and used exclusively for financial assistance when deemed necessary.

24. MEMBERSHIP OF ASSOCIATION FOR 100 YEARS AND SUBSEQUENT ANNIVERSARIES

When an affiliated Club or League has been in membership of this Association for 100 years, an award will be presented by an Officer of the County Association and will be retrospective for any Club or League already qualified upon request by the club or league.

A further award may be requested by an affiliated Club or League reaching subsequent 25 year anniversaries in membership of the association, this too will be retrospective for any Club or League already qualified. Clubs must apply to the Chief Executive providing evidence of such membership (for example copies of minutes, league tables or other such contemporaneous documents, that will prove the existence of the club from the supposed date of its formation) if they wished to be considered for the awards (Clubs are advised to apply as early as possible in order to allow time to get the requisite mementoes procured, in particular if there is a date of an event where the award is scheduled to be presented)

25. INFRINGEMENT OF RULES

It is the duty of members of the Council, Officials of Clubs and Referees to report to the Council all cases of misconduct likely to bring the game into disrepute, and officials of Clubs must report to the Council any infringement of Rules without delay.

All participants in football must report any safeguarding concern in line with FA rule 14

26. FA CHALLENGE CUP FINAL

Vice Presidents of the Association, Leagues, Clubs and Referees affiliated to the Association may apply to purchase tickets to the final tie of the FA Challenge Cup. Applications for tickets must be submitted in writing (email will suffice) to the Chief Executive no later than the 31st December of the current playing season.

Please note any such application does not guarantee that you will receive the opportunity to purchase tickets and they will be subject to availability

Members of the Board and Council shall be offered the opportunity to purchase tickets and need not apply as above

27. MATTERS NOT PROVIDED FOR IN THESE RULES

Any matter not provided for in these Rules shall be governed by the Articles of the Association and the Rules and Regulations of The Football Association Ltd.

28. ALTERATION OF THESE RULES

These Rules may be altered in accordance with the Articles of Association. Any proposed amendment to the Articles of Association, Rules of the Association or County Cup Competition Rules, must be made in writing countersigned by two officers of the affiliated club, league or affiliated body, or signed by the Life member or SFA Councillor, and received by the Chief Executive no later than 30th April in the current playing season

(These may be submitted via email provided there is a scanned copy of the document clearly showing the signatures as mandated above)