



CAMBRIDGE UNITED FANS' PARLIAMENT – SCOPING WORK PLAN

This work plan outlines how a CFU-lead group will scope the proposed Cambridge United Fans' Parliament, and the associated timetable.

THE WORKING GROUP

Nigel Pearce (CFU Deputy Chair) will lead the work supported by a group comprising Dave Matthew-Jones (Fans Elected Director), Godric Smith (Director, Cambridge United FC) and a number of non-CFU Trust Board members.

The working group will report to the CFU Trust Board.

THE WORK PLAN

The work will be undertaken in five stages:

Stage 1: Consulting fans

It is essential that United fans are consulted on the development of the Fans' Parliament regularly and from the word go. An early round of publicity will:

- outline, in general terms, the proposed purpose and role of a Fans' Parliament (the terms of reference)
- invite comments and suggestions on the concept and the terms of reference (including, crucially, whether fans support it), what it should be called (whether there are better / more appropriate titles we could use) and the possible constituencies (the groups of fans to be represented at the Parliament), and
- invite expressions of interest (from those who might be prepared to stand for election to one of the constituencies).

We will draw on the support of the official CUFC media and the media groups represented on the new CUFC Communications Group, to help it maximise the number and range of United fans that it can reach.

The consultation will kick off without delay (see timetable, below) but the Bury home game on 24th November will be used to focus the publicity - we will publish an article in the matchday programme, put up posters around the ground and hand out leaflets (all to supplement a wide range of other media).

The club and CFU propose to define the Fans' Parliament as follows, but these terms of reference will be tested as part of the fans' consultation:

The Cambridge United Fans' Parliament will allow elected fans' representatives to meet regularly with officials and directors of the football club to discuss a wide range of topics. This will be in order to:

- *allow fans to ask questions of the club*
- *allow the club to listen to, and understand the views of, its supporters*
- *allow fans to influence decisions made by the club*
- *to ensure that decisions are made with a full understanding of supporters' views*
- *to allow fans to better understand the reasoning behind decisions that may be unpopular.*

In doing this the Fans' Parliament should improve fan engagement, and a higher level of trust should develop between the club and the fans.

The Fans' Parliament will not run the club nor make key decisions.

We suggest that the constituencies should be built around the home areas of the stadium (the NRE, the Habbin and the Main Stand – and possibly the Family Stand blocks) and that each member of Parliament is elected by the fans that normally watch home games from that part of the ground.

Each of these constituencies could have more than one elected fans' representative.

Other potential constituencies include Season Ticket holders, shareholders, the Supporters Club and Club Cambridge. There will, no doubt, be others.

We propose that suitable elected members are then chosen to additionally represent a range of other groups of fans, to maximise the diversity and coverage of the Parliament – ideally these groups will include female fans, disabled fans, LGBT fans, ethnic minority fans, U23 fans and senior citizen fans.

However, as well as listening to our own supporters, to identify the most appropriate constituencies we will undertake research with other clubs that already operate a Fans' Parliament or something similar – see Stage 2 below.

For the youngest fans we propose a separate Junior Fan's Parliament, to be established once the adult version is up and running.

Stage 2: Research

We will seek advice and guidance from those involved with active Fans' Parliaments at other clubs, from Supporters Direct and from any other relevant source. It will be vital to find out from those with experience what works and what doesn't, and to identify good practice.

In particular we will consult on the following issues:

- Should we stick with the title "Fans' Parliament" or go with something else?
- What constituencies work and which don't?
- How are fans' representatives elected?
- How will elected representatives consult their constituents?
- How frequently should the Fans' Parliament meet?
- Who from the club should attend the Fans' Parliament meetings?
- What restrictions, if any, should there be on topics for discussions and/or information provided by the club to the Fans' Parliament ?
- What rules should be applied on the behaviour of members of the Fans' Parliament , and what rules for the expulsion of elected Fans' Parliament members? Should members of parliament sign a contract of some sort?
- Is it appropriate for the SLO to chair the Fans' Parliament meetings? If not, who should?

- How often should Fans' Parliament elections be held?

We will also be interested to understand from other clubs the impact of setting up a Fan's Parliament on a supporters' trust, and on the role of an FED.

The club will make independent enquiries with other clubs at official level as to how their Fans' Parliaments work, and the benefits they have delivered. Towards the end of this stage we will compare notes.

Stage 3: Emerging findings

We will then pull together and analyse the findings from the first two stages, and prepare an emerging findings report for the club's consideration (and that of the Communications Group). This will include our initial recommendations and areas where we would appreciate a steer.

If, from our research, it is clearly evident there is insufficient appetite for a Fan's Parliament among United fans then we will recommend that the plan is dropped.

If we are to proceed, and once we are in agreement, we will make the emerging findings public and ask for further comments and suggestions from fans.

Stage 4: Final report and recommendations

Based on the outcome of Stage 3 we will undertake any necessary further work, and then draft and submit our final report and recommendations to the club and the Communications Group for consideration and, when we are in agreement, for sign off.

Details as to how the Fans' Parliament will operate will then be made public.

Stage 5: implementation

The final stage will involve confirming the constituencies and the candidates wishing to stand for election, making arrangements for and running the elections, and then organising the first meeting of the new Fans' Parliament.

TIMETABLE

The work will be undertaken to the following timetable:

- Stage 1: With immediate effect
- Stage 2: With immediate effect

- Stage 3: Present emerging findings no later than 14th January 2019
- Stage 4: Submit final report no later than 31st January 2019
- Stage 5: Elections completed no later than 25th March 2019, first meeting of the Fans' Parliament to be held no later than 30th April 2019