



## **SALTIRE THISTLE FOOTBALL CLUB CONSTITUTION**

### **1.0 OBJECTIVES**

1. To promote participation in football throughout the LGBTQI+ community encompassing all ages (18+) and abilities in Scotland and to act as a social network for all LGBTQI+ football fans.
2. To play competitive games against LGBTQI+ and non – LGBTQI+ teams locally, nationally and internationally.
3. To act as a reference point and channel of communication on football related matters within the local LGBTQI+ community.
4. To represent the interests of LGBTQI+ football in Scotland within appropriate national and international bodies
5. To act as a facilitator for LGBTQI+ football events and competitions.
6. To raise funds and obtain sponsorship for the general running of the team and for participation in events.
7. To compile and maintain a register of members.
8. To raise fees for membership as determined by the Committee.
9. To promote good relations between the LGBTQI+ and non-LGBTQI+ communities through the medium of football.
10. To do all such other lawful things as may be deemed necessary.



## **2.0 MEMBERSHIP**

1. Membership shall be open to all who pay the club subscription (see finance) and subscribe to the objectives of the club and the members Code of Conduct
2. Membership will run from 1<sup>st</sup> August to 31<sup>st</sup> July for Season 25/26 only.
3. Membership fees shall be set by 'The Committee' (see Pt 3.1) and will be paid annually, by the 30<sup>th</sup> of September, or within 1 month of joining the club should members join after 1<sup>st</sup> October.
4. A 'pro-rata' membership will be available to members who join with less than 6 months to go in that year i.e., after Feb 1<sup>st</sup>.
5. The club is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all within its care. It recognises the responsibility to promote safe practice and protects members from harm, abuse and exploitation.
6. The club operates an Equal Opportunities Policy where no-one is denied the right to equal access on the grounds of age (18+), race, creed, gender, disability, occupation, gender identity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, political persuasion or marital status or having or not having dependants. All members will work together to embrace equality and diversity and respect the rights of others. The Equal Opportunities Policy also provides equality of opportunity in terms of the playing rights (also see member's CoC) and the rights of members to attend general meetings, vote and hold office.
7. The club shall work to include members regardless of their geographical location throughout Scotland.
8. All members will be entitled to :
  - a. Stand for election to the Committee
  - b. Put forward motions for determination at an AGM and Committee meetings
  - c. Vote in AGM/EGMs
  - d. Receive information on the activities of the team

## **3.0 COMMITTEE**

1. The organisation and administration of the team shall be directed by an Executive Committee which shall consist of a Chairperson (In all later text the term Chairperson is deemed to mean the Chairperson of the Saltire Thistle Football Club), Secretary, Treasurer, Chair of Events Committee, Inclusivity Officer and Team Manager(s). An invite to Committee meetings will be extended to any Sponsors and attendees from them shall be a non-elected member of the executive committee.
2. All Executive Committee positions shall be elected at the AGM (or EGM, see pt 3.6) where candidates stand. Any unfulfilled posts will be assessed, and any essential duties will be divided between the elected members.
3. All Executive Committee members will adopt their own job remit and attempt to adhere to this as best practice.



4. The Executive Committee can nominate up to a further 4 committee members to aid them in the running of Saltire Thistle F.C. Subcommittees can also be sanctioned to perform specific tasks.
5. Committee decisions are ratified by a majority of the Executive Committee's votes. If there is a tie the club Chairperson will have the casting vote. Opinions, and if asked for, votes can be sought by the other committee members if sanctioned by the Chairperson. They do not override the votes of the Executive Committee.
6. If a vacancy occurs between AGMs, the Committee shall have the power to appoint a replacement on an 'acting' basis pending formal election at the next AGM or if preferred by the existing Executive Committee through an EGM at their earliest convenience.
7. The quorum for Committee meetings shall be no less than three Executive members, including the Club Chairperson and have at least 4 members in total.
8. The Committee will hold no less than six meetings per year, (as best practice will seek to meet at least monthly) all work undertaken by such should be at least seen and approved by the Chairperson, or a representative of, before its release unless expressly mentioned otherwise.

#### **4.0 COMPLAINTS & DISCIPLINARY**

1. The Executive Committee will be responsible for investigating complaints and disciplinary matters for members who have been alleged to have infringed upon the constitution and/or code of conduct. It is noted that such complaints or disciplinary matters can be received from members within the club and externally. Both relating to conduct on or off the pitch.
2. All complaints should be directed to the Chairperson of the club in the first instance or, if this is not possible, should be passed to the Chairperson by the individual that became aware of or received the complaint in the first instance at the earliest opportunity.
3. It is the responsibility of the Chairperson to establish the Executive Committee. In establishing the Executive Committee, no action will take place until:
  - a. The Executive Committee has been formed.
  - b. The Executive Committee has been informed of the allegations/complaints made.
  - c. The Executive Committee will consider if there has been any possibly criminal behaviour and if so, report the conduct to the Police as soon as possible. Where the Police have been notified, the Executive Committee will not take any further action unless advice has been sought from the Police. This is to avoid jeopardising any possible criminal investigation.
  - d. The Executive Committee has agreed on where the potential breaches could have occurred within the relevant policy, who has been involved and who may have been witness to such events.
  - e. The Executive Committee will consider if a precautionary suspension is to be put in place. Any member may be suspended on a precautionary basis whilst an investigation is carried out. Suspension is not a form of disciplinary action but may be carried out where, for example, the concern indicates criminal behaviour or serious poor practice.
  - f. The Executive Committee has agreed on the next steps to investigate such matters (see point 7 below) and set a timescale for the investigation to take place, if possible. (Best practice would indicate that the complaint is completed within 28 days from the date of receiving the complaint – should it become apparent that it will take longer than



28 days, this will be communicated to the relevant parties).

4. The Executive Committee will treat all complaints and disciplinary matters confidentially.
5. Where there may be a conflict of interest on the Executive Committee such the complaint made being against a member of the Executive Committee, a member being witnessed to said complaint or for any reason that may bring a conflict to any procedures, said Executive Member must excuse themselves or the Chairperson will remove them from the Executive Committee. In doing this, a non-executive member(s) can then be voted onto the Executive Committee by majority.
6. It is the responsibility of the Chairperson in the first instance to investigate the complaint. Should the complaint be about the Chairperson or the Chairperson is unable to investigate matters, the following hierarchy will then take precedence in who should investigate such matters:
  - a. Secretary.
  - b. Treasurer
  - c. Inclusivity Officer
  - d. Chair of Events Committee
  - e. Team Manager.
7. Should there be any reason where all members of the Executive Committee are unable to investigate matters then a non-executive member or an appropriate external organisation should be engaged to lead the investigation.
8. Where "Chairperson" is referenced in subsequent paragraphs, where they may not be investigating such complaints, this will mean the person who is the Lead Investigator.

Complaints Procedure – (please note that steps should be considering in a case-by-case basis and may change in order of action from time to time):

9. Once the above parameters have been considered and agreed upon. The Chairperson will follow the next steps:
10. Review the allegations made and contact the original complainant (if required) to better understand the complaint and establish the facts set out in the complaint.
11. They will try to make verbal contact with the member under investigation, either face to face, virtually or over the phone, to:
  - a. Inform them that the Executive Committee is in receipt of a complaint.
  - b. Outline of the complaint made against said individual (if possible, Police involvement may mean the Executive Committee are unable to confirm the allegations)
  - c. Confirm if a precautionary suspension is in place and the reasons why, if possible (see b above)
  - d. Explain that the Executive Committee will formally write to them via email to obtain a written response to the allegations made.
  - e. A nominated member of the Committee who will be a point of contact for support and take all reasonable steps to support that member.
  - f. The next steps of the investigation
  - g. If possible, a timescale in bringing the investigation to a close and when a decision will be made.
12. If unable to verbally speak with the member under investigation, the Chairperson will follow step d above and formally write to said member.



13. If through contacting the original complainant and member under investigation, if it has become apparent that there are possible witnesses who may be able to speak to or disprove the allegation made, the Chairperson will make efforts to contact them to obtain their point of view to establish the facts of the case.

#### Decision Making

14. Once all statements and/or information have been obtained by the Chairperson, they will then present this to the Executive Committee for their consideration. The Executive Committee will review all information to better understand if in their opinion, there is breach of the Constitution or the Code of Conduct.
15. The Executive Committee may wish to form a Disciplinary Hearing where they may invite all parties to a meeting that will be held virtually (this is to manage the entry and exit of parties appropriately). A Hearing will only be held to clarify the facts and information collected through the investigation; it will not be used to investigate matters further. In holding a Hearing, the Executive Committee may wish to come to a decision (point 16) at the end of the Hearing which will then be communicated to the member under investigation (point 17).
16. The decisions that the Executive Committee can come to are as follows (this list is not exhaustive):
  - a. The facts do not substantiate the concern and therefore no further action will be taken
  - b. No further action required e.g. the member has recognised that their conduct was inappropriate and has already taken steps to ensure it does not occur again.
  - c. Informal discussion
  - d. A written warning
  - e. Formal discussion, with a record being retained.
  - f. Training and support being required, with a record being retained.
  - g. Information should be shared with statutory services.
  - h. Dismissal from their membership of the club
17. Once a decision has been made by the Executive Committee, this will be confirmed in writing to the member under investigation outlining:
  - a. A timeline of events regarding the investigation
  - b. The decision of the Executive Committee and the reasons for why it came to the decision it did.
  - c. If applicable, the Appeals Procedure
18. Following the decision, the Chairperson will communicate with the original complainant to inform them that the investigation has been completed, whether their complaint was substantiated or not and confirm that action has been taken.
19. It may not be appropriate for the Chairperson to disclose the action taken with the original complainant in the interests of confidentiality.



### Appeals Procedure

20. In the event of a member receiving a judgment from a disciplinary matter or complaint (the Appellant), they may submit an appeal to the Executive Committee.
21. This must be put in writing to the Executive Committee within 7 days of the decision being issued. The appeal must explain why the decision meets sufficient grounds (see 22 below).
22. In the case that appeal is received, it will be assessed for sufficient grounds, these being:
  - a. The Executive Committee failed to give the appellant a fair hearing.
  - b. The Executive Committee acted out with its power
  - c. The Executive Committee issued a decision which it could not properly have issued on the facts of the case.
  - d. The decision imposed was excessive or inappropriate.
23. Should the appeal be deemed fit to proceed then an Appeals Committee shall be formed with the non-executive members of the Committee which will have quorum of at least 3 people. In any instance where quorum cannot be met due to conflict, a full member of the club who has been identified as appropriate and independent from the complaint will be asked to join the Appeals Committee.
24. The Appeals Committee will review all information, statements and documents collated through the investigation only and will be required to come to a decision on the information presented. Should it be apparent that information has been missed, then the Appeals Committee may in exceptional circumstances be able to request it.
25. The decisions available to the Appeals Committee shall be:
  - a. Uphold decision.
  - b. Reconsider & reduce decision.
  - c. Overturn decision.
26. The Appeals Committee will aim to make their decision within 5 days of receiving the appeal. This may reduce or extend depending on the ability to form the Appeals Committee. The Chairperson will keep the Appellant informed of the formation of the Appeals Committee.
27. The Appeals Committee must write to the Chairperson of their decision, who will in turn relay the decision to the Appellant.
28. Once the Appeals Committee has made their decision, this will be final and binding.

### Records Management & Confidentiality

29. Where a complaint is founded and a decision is made, this will be held on the club's secure G Drive which only the Committee of the club has access to. This will be held for a maximum of 1 year, following the departure of the member from the club or for 5 years, whichever is sooner.
30. If a complaint is found to be malicious in its intent or false, all information regarding the complaint will be destroyed and deleted. The Chairperson will write to the individual impacted by the malicious or false allegations outlining an account of the circumstances and/or investigation and a letter confirming the conclusion of the matter.
31. Whether the club instigates an investigation against the individual who undertook the malicious allegation, this will be down to an agreement with the individual affected and the Chairperson who will then start the complaints procedure from its beginning.





## **5.0 MANAGER & COACHING STAFF**

1. Should the manager change at any time and for any reason, the executive committee will elect a replacement as a temporary measure until a new manager can be appointed. (EGM, see pt 3.6)
2. Applications may be taken both internally & externally.
3. The new manager will be appointed permanently at the AGM or EGM and will be elected by a majority vote of members as a member of the Executive Committee.
4. The new manager will have the right to select an assistant manager and coaching staff. The committee shall have an advisory role in this process and be available to provide advice.

## **6.0 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

1. The AGM shall be held during June and July each year and each member shall be notified at least 21 days in advance.
2. The business of the AGM shall include annual reports from the Executive Committee members and any other business as determined by the Committee. All office bearers/Executive Committee members will retire each year but will be eligible for re-election.
3. A quorum for the AGM shall be 20% of the membership. If a legitimate quorum is not present; the business of the meeting shall be presented at the next meeting of the Committee.
4. Members can only vote at the AGM if they were members on or prior to 31st May of the year of that AGM.
5. The Committee has the right to call Extraordinary General Meetings (EGMs) outside the AGM. Procedures for calling EGMs will be the same as for the AGM.

## **7.0 PROCEDURES**

1. Motions for discussion and nominations for the Executive Committee must be sent to the Secretary at least one week prior to the AGM.
2. All motions must be formally proposed and seconded.
3. Votes for motions and nominations shall be carried by a simple majority of paid-up members attending with the Chairperson having a right to a casting vote. However, a vote or selection process can also be done by secret ballot if this is requested or seen as the proper procedure for a given motion.

## **8.0 FINANCE**

1. The financial year for the team runs from AGM to AGM and as such is from August to July each year, in line with the membership year.
2. The team shall be financed by subscriptions, donations and sponsorship of cash or 'in kind'.



3. The Committee shall refuse sponsorship from any group or organisation which it deems to be in opposition to or in contravention of its objectives.
4. Subscription types and amounts (Membership Fees) shall be determined by the Committee.
5. Team funds shall be kept in a bank account deemed appropriate by the Committee. Any interest earned on bank deposits will be credited to the bank account for the benefit of the team.
6. Payments to and from the club shall be made via invoices, bank transfers or the Spond application wherever possible. The use of cash is to be considered a last resort. This is to ensure that the clubs bank statements become an accurate audit trail of finance including revenue and spend. Where cash is used or received an audit trail should be provided to the executive committee with relevant details (e.g. receipts and invoices).
7. Cheques or other written instructions to make payments from the bank account must be made by two authorised signatories. These will be members holding the post of either Chairperson, Treasurer, or another specified member of the Executive Committee, nominated by the Executive Committee.
8. The treasurer shall keep accounts up to date for the club and have them available for presentation within reasonable notice by any member of the Executive Committee and at least yearly for the clubs AGM.
9. The team accounts shall be independently examined for presentation at the AGM.
10. No member can amass debts to the club of beyond £10 at any one time. If unable to pay each week, notice must be given to the treasurer or committee member. Any member that has attained this level of debt will be removed from consideration for training and matches in order to prevent their own continued exposure as well as the clubs.
11. If unable to pay on time, members will not be able to participate as a member of the club.
12. Members who wash the strips are solely responsible. Any lost kit will be charged. £5 in kind will be given to those that wash kits. This can be given more than once and to the same person.

## **9.0 DISSOLUTION**

1. Proposals and grounds for dissolution should be submitted to the Committee for assessment as to the position.
2. Should the Committee recommend dissolution it must be passed by a majority vote of the Committee.
3. At this point a dissolution vote will be issued to the existing members.
4. In the event of dissolution of the club assets and equipment would be given to an organisation with similar objectives or to Waverley Care.





#### **10.0 ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

The constitution may only be changed by a majority vote of the Executive Committee in response to issues or concerns from engagement with the wider members.

#### **11.0 DECLARATION**

Saltire Thistle Football Club hereby adopts and accepts this constitution as a current operating guide regulating the actions of members.

**Approved by Saltire Thistle FC Membership and its Executive Committee at the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 14th June 2025 at The Social Hub, 15 Candleriggs, Glasgow, G1 1TQ.**