



Spirit of Shankly

**The recognised Supporters Trust
of Liverpool FC**

**Government
Fan-Led Review
June 2021**

Spirit of Shankly: The Recognised Supporters Trust



Established in 2008, Spirit of Shankly exist to represent the views of our members and by extension all supporters of LFC.

We have proved, that if we as supporters stand together and speak with one voice we can make a genuine difference.

Our reputation is strong and our voice is listened to and heard.

Our primary purpose is to strengthen the influence of supporters in the running of LFC and to be actively involved in the wider community.

We have 282,300 social media followers.

Our ESL / fan involvement campaign had:

- 12.175m reach
- 934k engagements
- Over 60,000 website visits
- Our email open rate is 74%

Our affiliates include:



A total reach of 500k followers

Our community work includes:

- Co-founding Fans Supporting Foodbanks
- Supported production of 142,000 items of PPE
- PPV campaign raised £250,000 for local charities



We asked for:

1. Two SOS representatives at Board level
 - Not tokenism
 - With a golden share or veto
2. A recognition agreement for SOS with LFC
3. Collaboration between FSG / LFC and SOS to lead the reform agenda as part of the national fan-led review
4. Commitment from FSG to fund all costs associated with the ESL

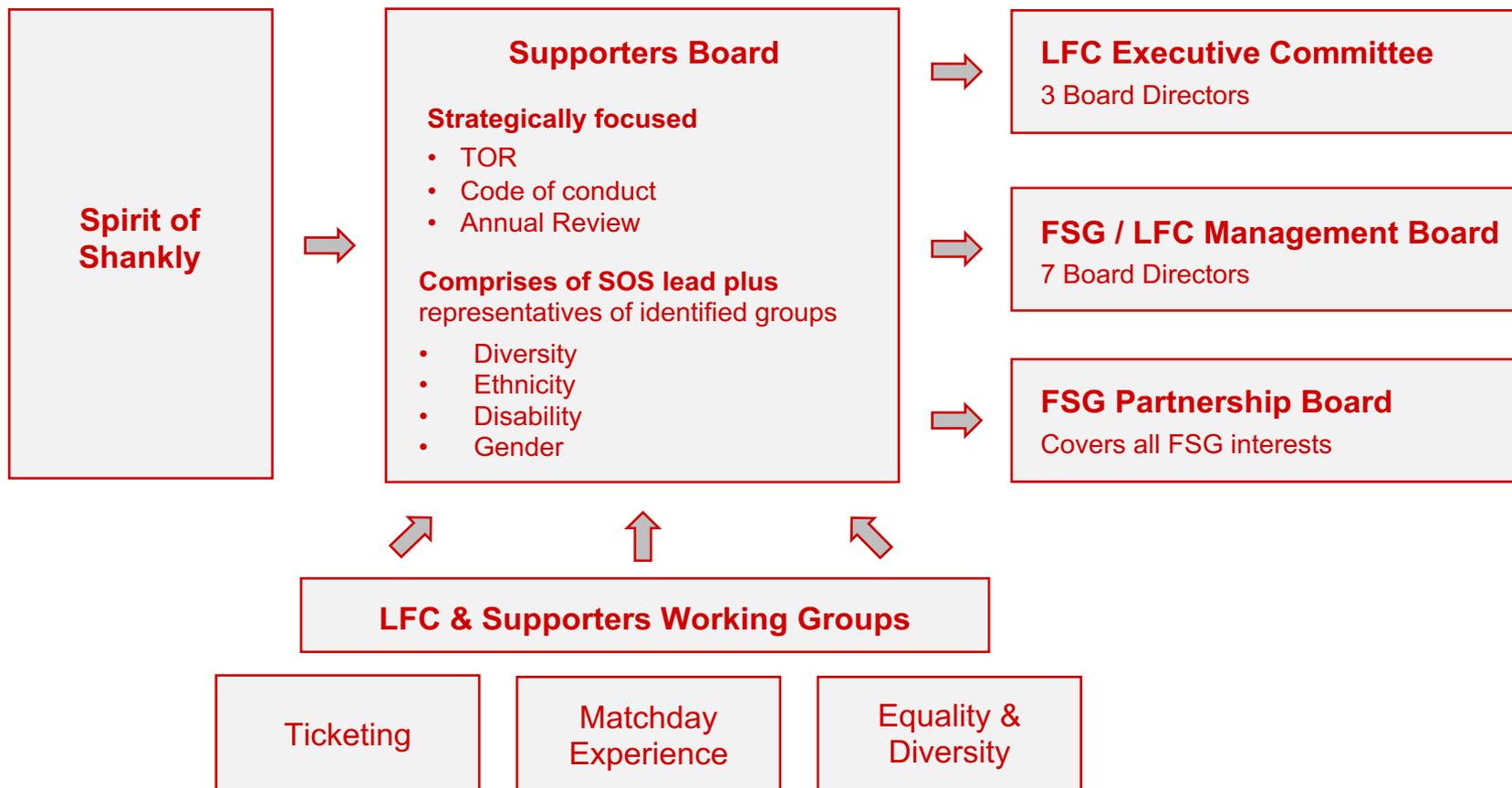
We have been offered:

1. A new engagement structure including access to the board of FSG and LFC
2. The right of consultation enshrined in the club's articles of association. LFC will formally and contractually recognise SOS as the body responsible for supporter consultation
3. Confirmation that LFC and SOS will work collaboratively on the national fan-led review
4. Confirmation that FSG will meet all costs, including fines, associated with joining and withdrawing from the ESL

3. Is this better than our requests? Yes

- We believe board representation is better than board membership as it:
 - Reduces risk to individuals
 - Increases our influence while maintaining our independence
- Supporter consultation being written into the Articles of Association means:
 - Legal duty to consult with us
 - Early notice of decisions being considered and the potential to stop them
 - Future proofing of SOS status should there be a change of ownership
- Engagement with SOS is contractual and not simply an agreement
- The two other requests were met in full

Proposed Model: Greater influence, strong independence





We believe in stringent Independent regulation that is not the FA / PL / EFL:

- It should be a legal requirement to consult with fans
- Fans should not be dictated to, but be involved earlier with key decisions ratified by fans
- Fans can veto, and have a say, on agreed issues
- Rules should apply across the board at all levels
- Regulation should be responsible for administering punitive fines. When appropriate, such as ESL, fines / punishment should be levied against owners

We don't believe the 'fit and proper' tests are fit for purpose:

- There is no clarity around what those tests are
- Evaluate purchasing / ownership organisations rather than 'individuals'
- Stringent tests required around human rights, finance, equality; stress testing the finances and plans for running sustainable clubs
- This should be applicable at all levels in the game

An FFP model should be strictly enforced to enable competition:

- Look into outside Investment into clubs / expenditure
- Fan groups would support and work with clubs to achieve this
- Leveling of financial rewards but where clubs strive for and are rewarded for success
- We believe parachute payments hinder competition
- A European wide model is preferred

It should provide more financial support for grass roots football:

- Fund free to access facilities
- Stop the exclusion of people in poverty from unaffordable facilities
- Help promote participation, health & well-being
- Funded from parachute payments / agents tax

Regulator should be modern, fast moving, reflective of society:

- Should be a fully resourced independent regulator that has power and addresses issues throughout the pyramid
- Look at the health of the game
- Football as a force for good – we have seen fans do this through the pandemic why can't football follow suit?



We recognise, given finances, supporter ownership at PL clubs is a long way off:

- Purchasing minority shares or seats on boards protected by confidentiality, are tokenistic if there isn't a veto or significant voice on key issues
- The 2014/16 working group and much 'fan consultation' is a tick box exercise real change is required

We believe the model we are creating is a big step forward:

- Legally embedding supporters into the fabric of decision making
- Could be replicated across the PL and football
- We want to remove the them and us – this is not about objecting to commercialisation
- We want to work together for the good of the game and the communities they serve

'Veto' or 'Golden Share' would include any and all existential threats to the club:

- ESL or similar changes
- Moving 'club' from Anfield
- Moving home games from Anfield
- Ground sharing
- Type of new owners / organisations
- Leveraged buy outs
- State ownership
- Unethical owners / sponsorship
- Human rights issues

Fans should have a 'meaningful say' and influence earlier:

- Issues such as ESL, furlough trademarking 'Liverpool' were poor, embarrassing and caused reputational damage
- They were vetoed through backlash but could and should have happened earlier
- Must also happen at 'smaller' clubs where fans have less of a voice / access to mainstream media

Regulator should work with fans on:

- Fixture calendar, timings & TV
- All games accessible via public transport – fan rail services
- Only travel agreed distances on 'x' day
- Ticket prices
- Improved carbon footprint
- Costs & availability of live TV football
- Easy wins with big impact for fans

We believe there is not a one size fits all:

- Smaller clubs have different challenges and opportunities than high profile clubs
- Supporter ownership and shares may work better at smaller clubs
- Individual clubs / fan bases have their own 'DNA' and approaches
- Other clubs name, club badge, colours issues



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