

Why members should think before they vote for constitution change

THE Wycombe Wanderers directors are said to have stated that, if accepted, the present proposals would be an interim measure which would be submitted for revision at the next AGM in October to address members' concerns.

Despite this, the members would do better to reject the proposals in their present form and to consider revised proposals at the AGM.

Wanderers members should be aware that, if the current proposals were to be voted through, then those who have not been season ticket holders for each of the last three seasons would be liable to be expelled before the AGM, and would not be able to vote on the revised proposals.

The following areas give rise to

ON July 15, the 500 members of Wycombe Wanderers Football Club will vote on proposed amendments to the club constitution. Here, JAMES GOLDBLATT, director of Hermes Corporate Information Ltd, offers his view on the dangers posed if the changes are agreed

legitimate concerns, and they are not the only ones.

First, the proposals relating to the powers of the directors to approve or to reject applications for membership could be changed to give a person whose application was refused to challenge that refusal by calling a meeting of the members to vote on it.

This would be at their own financial risk. If they lost, they would then have to pay the cost of

calling the meeting. If they won, the company would have to carry the cost.

The proposals would also allow the directors absolute discretion to suspend or expel members. This discretion could be open to abuse if the present board of directors, who would be trusted to exercise it honourably, were to be succeeded at any future date by a new set of directors who chose to exercise the discretion in a dishonourable fashion. The

proposals do not at the moment say that the directors have to act reasonably, so it would be sensible to change them so that they do say this, to try to stop a set of directors from acting arbitrarily or unfairly.

No one would seek to deny to the directors the power to suspend or expel a member when it was appropriate to do so. However, a member whose only 'crime' was that they disagreed with the view points of the directors should not be vulnerable to suspension or expulsion just for being a 'dissident'.

In their present form, the proposed changes would make this possible.

It would therefore be sensible to introduce a procedure relating to expulsions and suspensions, which

would set out a timetable under which a member who was suspended or expelled would have a chance to challenge the decision of the directors by calling a meeting of the members to vote on it.

As with a challenge to a decision by the directors to turn down an application to become a member, the calling of a meeting would be at a member's personal financial risk.

The proposals also introduce a series of undefined categories of potential new members, such as sponsor, corporate sponsor and box holder. These terms should be defined clearly. Perhaps there should be some extra definitions too, such as qualifying sponsor, qualifying corporate sponsor and qualifying box holder.