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# *University of* **HUDDERSFIELD**

The Business School

MA by Research (Business and Management Studies)

## **Exploring the collaboration between football clubs and their local community for corporate social responsibility activities.**

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Word Count: 15,598

27/08/2019

## i Declaration Form

# *University of* **HUDDERSFIELD**

Business School  
Department of Strategy, Marketing and Economics

### **Declaration of Original Authorship**

**This declaration of Original Authorship must be bound into both copies of your dissertation**

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>Name:</b>   | <b>Liam Huskins</b>                                     |
| <b>Course:</b> | <b>MA by Research (Business and Management Studies)</b> |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Dissertation Title:</b><br><br><b>Exploring the collaboration between football clubs and their local community for corporate social responsibility activities.</b> |
|---|

#### **In submitting this dissertation, I confirm that:**

(If you are unable to sign off any of the conditions (I – v)... you must refer this dissertation to the module leader).

- (i) The material contained within this dissertation is all my own work. Where the work of others has been drawn upon (for example: books; articles; unpublished papers including the work of staff and students; non-book materials such as videos and audio recordings; electronic publications on disk, CD-ROM or the internet), it has been acknowledged and properly referenced using APA 6<sup>th</sup> notation.
- (ii) The work has not already been accepted in substance for any other degree and is not being concurrently submitted in substance for any degree other than the one on which I am currently registered.
- (iii) My original (primary) data has been seen by, and discussed with, my dissertation supervisor.
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## **ii Abstract**

The English football league system contains a multitude of over 140 individual leagues and 480 divisions. The growth of football continues to accelerate throughout recent times and the importance of football clubs to work alongside the community in which they're based is becoming increasingly more important. In this sense, the football foundations are using collaborations with the local community to achieve their corporate social responsibility goals. This is a process that hasn't been extensively researched in the context of football as a separate entity, so the question therefore remains as to how exactly to do football clubs create and maintain these collaborations?

The purpose of the research is to develop an understanding of how one club conducts its corporate social responsibility activities through the use of collaborations with the local community, paying close attention to three main areas:

1. To develop an understanding of the relationships currently in place between the football clubs and their local community.
2. To understand the motivations of the foundations with regards to collaborative process.
3. To discuss the limitations the foundations face which could impact the collaborative process.

After discussing the data collected for these objectives, a fourth objective will be discussed, with recommendations being made as to the future of collaborations between the football club and the local community:

4. To provide recommendations on how the collaborative process can be managed or controlled in the future to create greater synergies between the football clubs and the local community.

### **iii Acknowledgements**

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# **1.0 Introduction.**

## **1.1 Foreword**

This introduction will explore the background behind the study being undertaken, before taking you through an overview of collaboration and corporate social responsibility, looking at how these can be defined and what constitutes as a corporate social responsibility activity. As well as this, the chapter will discuss the need for research in this area, and explain the current research aims and objectives of this study. It will finally take you through the structure of the study, and how this document will be set out.

## **1.2 Background**

The English football league system contains of a multitude of football leagues, with a system of promotion and relegation between the different tiers, which hypothetically even allows the smallest team on paper, to rise to the top leagues. There are more than 480 divisions, in more than 140 individual leagues. Although the exact number is variable, there is an average of 15 teams competing per division, there are more than 7,000 teams of about 5,300 clubs are the members of the overall English leagues (Naha, 2016). Football clubs are slowly becoming the centrepiece of many towns and cities in the UK, with their impact on the towns being clearer to see as times progress. There are clearly a number of both internal and external stakeholders for clubs. These include those employed in all areas of the business, the fans, the owner and even the other clubs they compete with. They all have differing interests – most people will be aware of the one obvious area in most clubs between the interests of say fans, who want their team to be successful no matter what and the owner who needs to achieve financial stability. Like any business, football clubs have to balance these interests appropriately. The culture, structure and control systems within the business determine how these conflicts, or trade-offs, are resolved on a day-to-day basis. (Cove, 2018). The ability for a big business like a football club to help its local community is massive, and this is achieved through corporate social responsibility activities. However, over the years football clubs have often turned their back on corporate social responsibility ‘requirements’, much like other large businesses. This has led to attention from the media and the community themselves, demanding a change in the way these businesses operate. It quickly became ‘common knowledge’ that businesses were expected to consider employees, suppliers, dealers, local communities and the nation (Johnson 1971). This led to a change to the way businesses and football clubs were operating with regards to their local communities, meaning that now they were looking to work together and collaborate to achieve their corporate social responsibility goals. This introduction will take you through an overview of collaboration and corporate social responsibility, looking and how these can be defined and what constitutes as a corporate social responsibility activity. As well as this, the chapter will discuss the need for research in this area, and explain the current research aims and objectives of this study.

## **1.3 Defining Collaboration**

“Collaboration occurs when a group of autonomous stakeholders of a problem domain engage in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms and structures, to act or decide on issues related to that domain” (Gray and Wood, 1991).

This definition of collaboration from Wood and Gray is based off of earlier work from Gray a few years earlier, which talked about a process involving two parties who see different aspects of a problem, which allows them to work together and search for solutions beyond their own limited vision (Gray 1989). The re-worked definition in 1991 offers a much more in-depth view, explaining how any stakeholders, which can be anyone who has a concern or interest on the problem, can work together, as long as they have the common problem. This highlights that they don't therefore have to agree on the outcome, but research suggests that differing interests along the collaborative process may cause conflict (Sequeira & De Carvalho, 2012).

The work of Wood and Gray is often seen as the starting point for the discussion of collaboration, and the basis of which a lot of other researchers founded their ideas. Bedwell et al. is a prime example of this, as he also discusses collaboration as an evolving process involving two parties. He then however discusses that not all goals have to be shared between the group, but there is need for at least one shared goal for the process to be effective (Bedwell et al., 2012). The need for co-operation and co-ordination is expressed by Bedwell, whether that be between two parties or just with different types of machinery, for example. This led to the development of the Collaboration Continuum (Austin, 2005), the basis of this study I am conducting. This will be explained fully in the literature review.

#### **1.4 Defining Corporate Social Responsibility**

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has been around since the working of Howard R. Bowen in 1953, where he said that CSR refers to the obligations of businessmen to pursue those policies, to make those decisions, or to follow those lines of action which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society (Bowen, 1953). Although the statement has progressed largely since these times, it is easy to see why the work of Bowen is considered as the starting point for modern understanding of CSR. Building on the work of Bowen, the Committee for Economic Development (CED), noticed and change in the relationship between business and society, believing that businesses were now being asked to assume broader responsibilities to society (CED, 1971). To demonstrate this, they created a definition of CSR using three concentric circles:

“The inner circle includes the clear-cut basic responsibilities for the efficient execution of the economic function – products, jobs and economic growth.

The intermediate circle encompasses responsibility to exercise this economic function with a sensitive awareness of changing social values and priorities: for example, with respect to environmental conservation; hiring and relations with employees; and more rigorous expectations of customers for information, fair treatment, and protection from injury.

The outer circle outlines newly emerging and still amorphous responsibilities that business should assume to become more broadly involved in actively improving the social environment. (For example, poverty and urban blight).” (CED, 1971).

These circles show a deeper understanding as to the levels of CSR a business can employ and shows the depth a business can go to if it really wants to make a difference in their local community. Building on the workings of CSR for businesses, the much more modern debate of CSR in football began in the early 2000's. CSR principles rely on the realisation of the businesses, in this case the football clubs, that they have a major impact on society and therefore must be responsible for it (Walker & Parent, 2010; Webb & Harris, 2001; Quazi, 2003). Football clubs gain the majority of their fans from the local area from which it operates, and therefore it would be beneficial from a clubs point of view to gain as much support as possible from the community (Rosca, 2011). The importance of the clubs was becoming more and more apparent as the years progressed, and the importance of CSR was finally getting through to the clubs themselves, as the developments of football foundations and other CSR based functions were being set up. They often offer support (Walker & Kent, 2009) through volunteers or philanthropy (Walker & Parent, 2010), using their increased financial power and links developed over the years to help the community. These foundations will be the main contact point of my research, as I look to understand how these operate on behalf of the club to carry out the CSR commitments to the local communities.

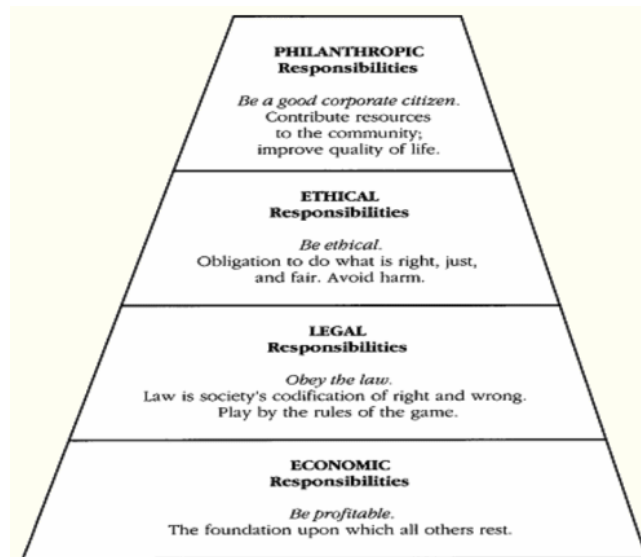
### 1.5 What are Corporate Social Responsibility Activities?

A corporate social responsibility activity is one in which the external community is the main focus, not just the profitability of the business. The triple bottom line model (See Figure 1) created by Elkington in 1997 shows how a business needs to manage 3 aspects in order to be sustainable and meet the CSR demands of the business and the community. Elkington (1997) believed that his model would allow a business to use the People, Plant, Profit approach to distinguish the different drivers in CSR, but ensure they all connected to create the overall CSR approach.



**Figure 1 – Triple Bottom Line (Elkington, 1997)**

Building on this, Archie Carroll (1999) later organised different CSR responsibilities into a four-layered pyramid model and labelled it the pyramid of responsibilities. The four responsibilities were categorised as economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic. According to Carroll and Buchholtz (2000), the diagram should be viewed as a whole and not as 4 separate entities, as to follow a strong CSR structure would involve including all 4 responsibilities. Both models are now widely used as the main models of CSR activities, and are what I used as a base for my research, as explained in my literature review.



**Figure 2 – Pyramid of Responsibilities (Carroll, 1999).**

## **1.6 Research Aims and Objectives**

As the media continues to scrutinise football clubs on their CSR policies and the community demands more from any local business, the importance of research into this area is apparent. The ability of a football club to completely understand the demands of their environment will give them a competitive advantage to really make a difference. This advantage can be gained through collaborating with the local businesses and community to effectively plan CSR work in the future. The current research into a strictly football context is limited, and therefore my objectives for this current study are:

- To develop an understanding of the relationships currently in place between the football clubs and their local community of businesses and charities.
- To understand the motivations of both parties with regards to collaborative process.
- To discuss the limitations the two parties have faced which could impact the collaborative process.
- To provide recommendations on how the collaborative process can be managed or controlled in the future to create greater synergies between the football clubs and the local businesses and charities.

## **1.7 Research Structure**

The study I am undertaking comes in the form of 5 main chapters, including this introduction. Chapter 2 focuses on a literature review of the theoretical underpinning of the study and how this has driven me to the study area I have chosen to move forward with. The literature review provides literature on both the theories of collaboration and CSR, as well as the limitations and boundaries faced when implementing this into a football club. The third chapter includes an assessment of the research being undertaken, including the philosophy, design, recruitment sample, ethical considerations and data analysis. The fourth chapter will then present the study's findings and relate them to the findings from chapter two and the theoretical knowledge already out there. Finally, the final chapter will conclude the research and will therefore highlight the key findings, make recommendations to the football clubs and highlight any further research that may need to take place.

## **1.8 Summary**

This chapter explained the definition of both collaboration and corporate social responsibility, discussing the rising demand for football clubs to follow suit with regards to businesses practices currently in place. The research aims and objectives were also displayed and justified, as well as demonstrating the need for research in this specific context. Chapter two will now explore the theoretical underpinning of the study and explore the literature that is currently available to support and challenge the study.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this Literature Review Chapter is to look into the existing literature related to Collaboration and Corporate Social Responsibility in the case of football clubs, and to identify the key underpinnings of my research to help me guide the purpose of this study. It will start with a review of the concepts of Collaboration and Corporate Social Responsibility, before looking into these in a strictly footballing context. I will then begin to look at the motivations for collaboration and finally look at the management of the collaboration and how this creates possible issues for the parties involved.

### **2.2 Collaboration**

When discussing the theory of collaboration, the widely accepted starting point for any research tends to come from the work of Wood and Gray. Their work is what really began to spark the ideas of collaboration into the worldwide phenomenon that it has become today. They believed that collaboration occurs when a group of autonomous stakeholders of a problem domain engage in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms and structures, to act or decide on issues related to that domain (Wood and Gray, 1991). This is based from some of Gray's earlier work, where he proposed that collaboration stems from a process involving two parties coming together to find a solution to a common problem, of which they both see different aspects of, which is beyond their own limited visions and capacities (Gray, 1989). Following these early workings and definitions, other researchers were then able to apply their spin on the debate, which led to writers such as Bedwell and Austin to have their say on collaboration as a theory.

Bedwell et al., agreed with Wood and Gray that collaboration in theory is about the coming together of two parties in an evolving process. The use of the word process is a widely accepted rule of collaboration in modern times, as it shows how the steps taken when working together can often be documented along a timeline or general plan of collaboration. However, Bedwell et al. then goes on to challenge the workings of Wood and Gray, by proposing that not all goals have to be shared between the group, but they have to share one common goal in order for the process to be effective (Bedwell et al., 2011). This new proposition allowed for a new wave of input, and probably one of the strongest debates to date, coming from Austin. The new propositions from Bedwell had opened the discussions of different levels of collaboration coming from the number of shared goals between the parties, as well as the potential for unsuccessful collaborations.

**Table 1 – Collaboration Continuum (Austin, 2005)**

| Relationship Stage     | ONE<br>Philanthropic | TWO<br>Transactional | THREE<br>Integrative |
|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Level of Engagement    | Low                  | >>>>>                | High                 |
| Importance of Mission  | Peripheral           | >>>>>                | Strategic            |
| Magnitude of Resources | Small                | >>>>>                | Big                  |
| Scope of Activities    | Narrow               | >>>>>                | Broad                |
| Interaction Level      | Infrequent           | >>>>>                | Intensive            |
| Managerial Complexity  | Simple               | >>>>>                | Complex              |
| Strategic Value        | Modest               | >>>>>                | Major                |

As you can see from Table 1 above, Austin was able to use earlier work to create the “Collaboration Continuum”, a visual representation of the different stages of relationships between two parties who are currently engaging in a collaborative process. The continuum shows how co-operation and co-ordination are key factors in the collaborative process, whilst understanding that varying levels of the above can lead to different degrees of collaboration, ranging from Philanthropic to Integrative. This research will use the workings of Wood and Gray, with the contributions of Bedwell et al., to define collaboration, whilst using the workings of Austin to drive the research and really find out what level of collaboration is really happening between the football clubs and their local community.

### **2.3 Collaboration in Football**

Collaboration is now becoming an integral part of a football clubs structure with regards to clubs Corporate Social Responsibility activities, as it often provides the clubs with various tools and outlets in which to implement their policies in the local communities. Walters and Panton state that “within the professional football industry one of the most prominent ways to address corporate social responsibility is through a social partnership involving a range of organisations such as a Community Sports Trust (CST), a professional football club, business organisations and local authorities”. This outlook shows that football clubs need to create positive collaborations with a wide range of stakeholders in order to effectively deliver their Corporate Social Responsibility activities, otherwise they risk the potential of missing out on opportunities to develop further links to the community. They then go on to add that these partnerships are responsible for the delivery of community initiatives around a range of social issues (Walters and Panton, 2014), showing the impact a club can have on a community.

Within the professional football industry (and the professional sport sector more broadly), one of the more prominent ways in which CSR is addressed is through a social partnership involving a range of partner organizations including a Community Sports Trust, a professional football club, businesses, local



authorities and other organisations. A club will choose to collaborate with local businesses and organisations for multiple reasons, with the Community Sports Trust often acting as the delivery vehicle for a range of initiatives targeting social issues such as inclusion, education, health and crime reduction (Walters and Panton, 2014). As well as social issues, football clubs will aim to reduce the negative stigma of issues in their field, for example hooliganism and a lack of community engagement. This allows the clubs to appear as the leader in change for the community, as well as building their brand image as they do so. (Watson, 2000 & Walters and Chadwick, 2009).

The use of a community sports trust as a driver for Corporate Social Responsibility means that the club and the community sports trust have to have a strong collaboration together themselves, by way of affiliation, before the community sports trust can act on their behalf in the community. The community sports trust will often draw on resources from the football club (both financial and in-kind) and will have a representative from the club on the board of trustees. (Bingham and Walters, 2013). In turn, football clubs have to create effective collaborations with their community sports trust, as they then rely on those trusts to create effective and achievable relationships with the community on their behalf, allowing their corporate social responsibility aims and objectives to succeed.

## **2.4 Collaboration in Practice**

Before commencing on this project, it was essential to understand the theory behind collaboration in practice. This will help to understand the different requirements for collaboration, as well as how to understand when collaboration is taking place. The main literature regarding this is the work of Gajda in 2004, who developed 5 principles to describe collaboration taking place:

- "Collaboration is imperative.
- Collaboration is known by many names.
- Collaboration is a journey not a destination.
- The personnel is as important as the procedure.
- Collaboration develops in stages." (Gajda, 2004)

These principles help to identify the complexity of collaboration, but also to help individuals and companies to understand when, why and how collaboration can take place. Collaboration requires commitment in order to succeed, and this is something that is seconded by Thomson, Perry and Miller (2008), who believed "trust is a critical component of collaboration". Commitment can often come when individuals buy in the project or goal of the corporate social responsibility activity. Austin (2010) states that "alliances are successful when key individuals connect personally and emotionally with the social purposes". On top of this, "collaboration may occur between groups, organisations, individuals and various combinations of these units" (Morris/Stevens, 2015), meaning that significant investments are required to ensure effective outcomes are achieved.

Gray (1989) expands on the process of collaboration, explaining the process as "problem setting, direction setting and then implementation". This theory is backed up by Gray and Wood (1991), who further the theory of a "process" being employed to carry out collaboration in practice. Imperial (2005) then extends the view of collaboration achieving a solution from the process, as he dictates that

“collaboration is a mechanism for ensuring that a greater range of interests is represented”, as well as acknowledging that “collaboration requires significant investments of time and effort to build relationships”. These relationships can therefore ensure future collaboration practices are much more likely to succeed.

## **2.5 Corporate Social Responsibility**

Corporate Social Responsibility is a much-argued feature of modern-day business, and something that has taken major leaps in recent years, especially in the United Kingdom. Increased media coverage and growing understanding has led to businesses having increased responsibility in their local and surrounding community, meaning many more activities are being carried out with corporate social responsibility in mind. Modern day corporate social responsibility is often used as a publicity-based project to gain more customers or a stronger brand image, but this was not always the idea. Work as early as Bowen in 1953 showed that businesses were having to work to benefit the “values of society” and not just their own profitability targets. This early interpretation is seen by many as the starting point for modern working of corporate social responsibility, and many further adaptations can be linked back to the early working of Bowen. Becker-Olsen et al (2006) shared the early views of Bowen but understood that corporate social responsibility can be a “link between social initiatives and financial performances”, meaning that business can operate with two goals being achieved at the same time, rather than separate activities being carried out for alternative/individual motives.

Steiner advanced the scale of corporate social responsibility in 1971, by believing that “the larger a company becomes, the greater the responsibilities”. This meant that businesses were now being targeted as to the impact they could have, based on their financial and physical presence. The larger the company, the more they now had to do in order to meet the objectives expected of them by their community. This pressure led to them seeking further information as to how they needed to carry out corporate social responsibility effectively and appropriately.

Work by the Committee for Economic Development (CED) in 1971 outlined a clear focus for corporate social responsibility, as they created their definition, coined the ‘three concentric circles of corporate social responsibility’:

“The inner circle includes the clear-cut basic responsibilities for the efficient execution of the economic function – products, jobs and economic growth.

The intermediate circle encompasses responsibility to exercise this economic function with a sensitive awareness of changing social values and priorities: for example, with respect to environmental conservation; hiring and relations with employees; and more rigorous expectations of customers for information, fair treatment, and protection from injury.

The outer circle outlines newly emerging and still amorphous responsibilities that business should assume to become more broadly involved in actively improving the social environment. (For example, poverty and urban blight).” (Committee for Economic Development, 1971).

This definition was the change in viewpoint that saw corporate social responsibility become a fore point for businesses, as they were forced to embed this into all aspects of their business, from the front line all

the way through to management. Corporate social responsibility was now a major player in all decision making, meaning the media coverage would soon intensify should businesses choose to ignore it.

Following on from the work of the CED in 1971, John Elkington decided to coin his own definition of corporate social responsibility, aiming to give a more in-depth approach to the reasoning behind it. He used the 'Triple Bottom Line' theory (see Figure 1) to allow for greater knowledge as to why businesses carry out corporate social responsibilities, but also how they can all work together towards an overall aim or objective for the community. This concept was later developed by Archie Carroll in 1999, who created the 'Pyramid of Responsibilities'. This outlook on corporate social responsibility looked again at the reasoning behind carrying out the activities, but this time created a greater understanding of the reasons, so that companies and the local community could understand why much easier.

Now that the reasoning behind corporate social responsibility was being understood, companies had to understand how to implement the strategies needed to carry out these objectives effectively. Clark (2000) believed that four steps were involved in the process:

- "Awareness or recognition of an issue.
- Analysis and planning.
- Response intern of policy development.
- Implementation" (Clark, 2000)

Clark helped businesses understand how, using this framework, business could set out to achieve and succeed different corporate social responsibility objectives, alongside their current day-to-day operations, with limited risk. This meant that businesses were able to grow with regards to corporate social responsibility, meaning they could hit a wider range of people in their local and surrounding areas.

These foundations for the understanding of corporate social responsibility meant that football clubs could now understand how to embed this into their workings and outreach programmes, which I will now explore.

## **2.6 Corporate Social Responsibility in Football**

Corporate social responsibility in football is an increasingly popular discussion in modern times, but in reality, has been around since the start. Mason (1980) explains how "churches, pubs and public schools" were the first places to create football clubs. These were the hubs of the community back then and were their way of giving back to the surrounding population. Often these places would take the "homeless youngsters and give them food, a social life and skills" (Bausenwein, 2006). These games of football would not only serve as "entertainment" (Schulze-Marmeling, 2000), but would also "take people away from the local pubs" (White, 2009). Although this was mainly a side-product of football, this is evidence that considerations were being made early on, and that football clubs had always had a significant social impact on the community in which they were based.

Integrating corporate social responsibility into a modern football club can be particularly challenging due to many factors. Whether it be the "stakeholders involved, the effect of the results on the pitch, or the transparency of the economic side of the game" (Babiak and Wolfe, 2009) or the "media power and social impact of the sport" (Smith and Westerbeek, 2007). During modern times, football clubs are being

tied in to schemes from the Football League and The Football Association (FA) in order to carry out their corporate social responsibility activities, therefore “engaging with their local community to create stronger links” (Walters and Chadwick, 2009). This way, the FA can maximise the outreach of clubs, standardising the process and creating sustainable corporate social responsibility engagements across the whole of the United Kingdom. Rosca (2010) identified the link between the football club and the immediate community of which they are based, commenting that “the fans of a football club mainly come from the community in which the club operates”. This means that the standardisation of activities by the FA will not only achieve their corporate social responsibility targets but will also create a stronger link between each club and their fanbase.

Developing on the above, football clubs will often implement “anticipatory and preventative programs” (Ackerman, 1973), aimed at the younger generations. This way, a club can ensure a full commitment from the individuals they engage with across their full lifetime, therefore a stronger link can be formed as the child grows up. Brown, Crabbe and Mellor (2006), outlined “ethical, business, political and legal” as potential motivations for football clubs to partake in corporate social responsibility activities. As well as this, Babiak and Wolfe (2006) identify that clubs can face both “internal and external” motives for corporate social responsibility. This shows that the pressure on football clubs to engage with corporate social responsibility activities can often be intensified by a number of factors, but this is due to the popularity of the sport, along with the economic and social impact the football clubs have over the community in which they engage.

## **2.7 Summary**

As you can see from the literature, the concepts of both collaboration and corporate social responsibility are very complex subjects. Despite this, the literature in a football-based concept is very limited, which is why the data collected from this project aims to contribute to the limited resources available regarding collaboration between football clubs and their local community for corporate social responsibility activities.

## **3.0 Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This section aims to convey how the study will be conducted in order to achieve the stated research objectives. It will therefore look at and outline the research philosophy, the research approach, the research strategy, the sample size and characteristics, the data analysis and any ethical considerations of the study. As well as the above, the methodology section will explore the results of a pilot test, and the structure of the questions being asked to the participants, as well as the reasons behind this.

### **3.2 Research Philosophy**

With regards to the research philosophy being undertaken in this study, a focus has been placed on interpretivism, which is the opposite of the positivist approach and focuses on issues as opposed to variables. During the interpretivist approach, the researcher must be fully immersed in the environment to ensure data is collected from people who have some degree of involvement and detachment with the questions being discussed. The purpose of the enquiry is to gain a sufficient understanding into the subject and predict future trends, as opposed to building theories which validly explain phenomena. (Jankowicz, 2005). This approach has been chosen as the knowledge of the staff at the foundation will have been built up of knowledge, mental capacity and beliefs (Duffy and Jonassen, 1993) which means that their views will all vary. Interpretivism can therefore add a deeper understanding and more in-depth assessments of the topic (Myers, 1997).

### **3.3 Research Approach**

The approach adopted by this study is a case study approach, focusing on one foundation and looking at their specific views and opinions on the selected research outlines and questions. A case study approach is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1984). An exploratory approach has been used in this study, which sets out to explore any phenomenon in the data which serves as a point of interest to the researcher (Yin, 1984).

This will include qualitative research, which is an approach that allows you to examine people's experiences in detail. One of the main distinctive features of qualitative research is that the approach allows you to identify issues from the perspective of your study participants and understand the meanings and interpretations that they give to behaviour, events or objects (Hennink et al, 2011). As the research is aiming to understand the foundation's perspective on their actions, a qualitative approach allows the researcher to explore deeper their understanding of the research topics being discussed, giving them a much clearer understanding of the foundations point of view. Qualitative research has been deemed the most appropriate means of uncovering meaning and motivations behind behaviour as it is able to grant strong insight through words, actions and ideas conveyed to the researcher (Mariampolski, 2001).

### **3.4 Research Strategy/Discussion Guide.**

Interviews will be used to obtain the data in this study, with a mixture of both open-ended and closed questions, resulting in a semi-structured approach, allowing the interviews to explore the details for the study within a chosen framework (Fisher, Buglear, Mutch & Tansley, 2010). In-depth interviews are viewed as the most useful method of uncovering underlying motivations, attitudes and beliefs (Supphellen, 2000) and will therefore ensure the study gains as much data as possible, relating to the research questions set out at the beginning of the study. Participants will have the freedom to talk about what they want, how they want, and in the detail that they feel they want to (Drucker, 1995). Interviews also help limit the presence of social desirability bias as there is an increased likelihood that respondents will divulge their actual attitude and intentions (Belk et al. 2005; Auger and Devinney 2007).

Prior to the interview, a discussion guide was created as a general overview as to the direction of the interviews. Although this has the potential to create an element of bias into the research (Yin, 2016), the purpose is to act as a reference point for the interviews, which can vary from if necessary (Turner, 2010). The discussion guide also outlines the sections that are needed to be covered in the interviews; introductions, current relationships, theory of collaboration, motivations, limitations and conclusions.

During the introduction segment of the interview, I will introduce myself, the purpose of the interview and how the interview is going to run. This is so the interviewee is put at ease and has no unexpected turns to put them off and decrease their likelihood to be honest and truthful at all times. At the beginning of each interview, each participant will be asked to give a brief description of their job role and what that role entails, to gain a general understanding of their day-to-day activities and involvement at the foundation. This will allow the researcher to establish the level of power and engagement they have at the foundation, and how their role affects the areas being discussed. At this point the interviewee will be asked for permission to record the data, having already signed the consent form, which will be discussed later in ethical considerations.

Following this, the interview will lead on to the current relationships section. This is used to settle the interviewee and gain an insight into their reasons for collaboration. It will start with simple questions revolving around what the foundation currently does regarding collaboration. The simple questions are aimed at comforting the interviewee before going into deeper questioning regarding their perspectives. This section is also directly related to the first research objective of the study, which is 'to develop an understanding of the relationships currently in place between the football clubs and their local community'.

The next section of the interview will include photo elicitation. Photo elicitation has been regarded as a useful tool in qualitative studies due to its many advantages; its inclusion will engage the participant which will allow for longer and more comprehensive interviews (Collier 1987). This tool will attempt to generate an opportunity to probe into underlying perceptions and values of collaboration (Epstein et al, 2006). Each participant will be shown 3 pictures of models used in the literature review, with the participants being asked to comment on the models and how they fit in with their area of work.

The first image is the Triple Bottom Line theory developed by Elkington in 1997 (Figure 1), which shows the People, Planet, Profit approach to sustainable business. Its inclusion is to see how well the participants understand the different aspects of a sustainable business, and how this contributes to CSR, particularly in their foundation.

The second image is the developed Pyramid of Responsibilities by Carrol in 1999 (Figure 2), which builds on the earlier model by Elkington and show the four responsibilities of an ethical business. This is also used to evaluate what they understand by an ethical and sustainable business, and how they feel the foundation compares as a result.

Once an understanding of ethical and sustainable practice has been established, we move onto the third image and the main point of contact for my research, the Collaboration Continuum by Austin in 2005 (Figure 3). The continuum shows how co-operation and co-ordination are key factors in the collaborative process, whilst understanding that varying levels of the above can lead to different degrees of collaboration, ranging from Philanthropic to Integrative. This research will use the workings of Wood and Gray, with the contributions of Bedwell et al., to define collaboration, whilst using the workings of Austin to drive the research and really find out what level of collaboration is really happening between the football clubs and their local community. This image will be used to disclose the levels of collaboration between the foundation and their community, with the participants being asked to explain each section of the image individually, commenting their perspectives on where the foundation fits.

Following this section, the participants will be questioned on their reasons for collaborations in the community. This will be done by a series of questions aiming at finding out what they believe to be collaboration, and why they feel this is essential for their line of work. This section will also look into the benefits gained from collaborating from the foundations point of view, whether that be benefits for the foundation itself or benefits to the community as a result of collaborating. Similarly, the following section will look at the opposite of the previous section, focusing on the limitations and issues faced when collaborating, in the eyes of the participant. These sections will directly relate with the second and third research objectives, gaining an overview of the generic business motivations and limitations when all the data is collected and combined.

Finally, the participant will be given a chance to express any further information that they feel may aid the project. This is essential as they could take the interview into a previously un-noticed direction that could be used to improve other interviews, in a process of continuous improvements. Following this the participant will be thanked for their time and the interview concluding by ensuring that they can be contacted if any issues with recoding and interpreting occur.

### **3.5 Sample Size and Characteristics.**

For me to be able to ensure my results were reliable, relevant and useful to my project, I had to ensure that all my interviewees met a certain criterion before being selected for this study. In order to ensure that these criteria were met, I had to adopt a method of purposive sampling. "Purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources" (Patton, 2005). This means I am able to select interviewees that are "especially knowledgeable about or experienced within a phenomenon" (Cresswell and Plano Clark, 2011).

Once I had decided upon a criterion, I contacted local football foundations to collect as larger sample size as possible. Due to many contributing factors, the number of responses were limited, resulting in me switching to a case study approach and selecting one club to focus on. Taking an appropriate sample

size from the selected foundation, I was able to cover a wide range of roles and responsibilities, giving me the most reliable results from my interviews. Below is a table of the interviewees, which as you can see all come from different backgrounds within the same organisation.

**Table 2: Interviewee Information.**

| Interviewee Number | Job Role                   |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| 1                  | Foundation Manager         |
| 2                  | Operations Manager         |
| 3                  | Community Officer          |
| 4                  | Foundation Coach           |
| 5                  | Apprentice                 |
| 6                  | Regional Talent Club Coach |

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

With regards to analysing data, inductive reasoning has been used which is based on learning from experience. “Inductive reasoning is often referred to as a “bottom-up” approach to knowing, in which the researcher can use observations to build an abstraction or to describe a picture of the phenomenon that is being studied” (Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtler, 2010).

Once the data has been collected and analysed, open coding is the next step to sort the findings into categories. SAGE (2008) describes open coding as a way to “conceptually organise findings”. In order to display these coded findings, a conceptual model has been created to best display the specific activities of the foundation in question. All findings will be displayed in text format, linking to a series of research questions, outlined and the beginning of this study.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations.**

For the duration of this process, it is essential that the ethical considerations are being understood, and that the appropriate guidelines are being followed. In this instance, the guidelines have been set by the British Educational Research Association. Documentation has been provided to ensure that these guidelines have been followed, which you can find in the appendices.

Appendix 1 is a voluntary consent form that each interviewee was given to sign before taking part in this process. As well as the participant agreeing to take part, it states that questions are voluntary, as well as confirming that all personal data will be exempt from the final document. They are also asked to confirm they are happy to be recorded, through a password protected device that will not be used by any other individuals.

As well as the consent form, the completion of an ethics form detailing the research was completed prior to the interviews and confirmed by the assigned supervisor. This form confirmed to the interviewee that all guidelines regarding anonymity and confidentiality had been adhered to, as well as explaining the purpose of the study.



### **3.8 Pilot Testing**

Piloting an interview with participants with similar interests to those of the proposed sample is an essential part of the interviewing process (Turner 2010). A pilot interview helps identify flaws, weaknesses and/or any other limitations of the research's design and can therefore enhance the overall effectiveness of the interviewing process (Kvale 2007). The pilot was conducted to one individual who worked at a football foundation and lasted around 20 minutes. The pilot identified the need for separate sections to be established for the motivations and limitations sections, as they were previously mixed together, creating confusion to the participant.

### **3.9 Summary**

To summarise, an interpretivist approach will be undertaken for this qualitative study, along with the purposive sampling technique to find the appropriate candidates to take part. Once these candidates have been selected and agreed to take part, a semi-structured interview will be organised, with all the findings being sorted via inductive reasoning and open coding. Finally, a conceptual model will collate all the findings, highlighting any key patterns/similarities with the research.

## 4.0 Results.

This chapter will investigate the data collected from the interviews with the six participants, using quotations from the transcripts. The data has been subjected to open coding and the results will be summarised. The data will be displayed under the banners of the first three research questions, with the fourth question being covered in the recommendations section in the conclusion. Further discussion on each of the topics can be found in the next chapter.

- To develop an understanding of the relationships currently in place between the football clubs and their local community of businesses and charities.
- To understand the motivations of both parties with regards to collaborative process.
- To discuss the limitations the two parties have faced which could impact the collaborative process.

The key findings of these three research questions will now be displayed:

### **4.1 To develop an understanding of the relationships currently in place between the football clubs and their local community:**

#### **4.1.1 The foundation in the community.**

During the early stages of the interview the participants are asked to explain what the foundation currently does in the local community. The interviewees all explained about a wide range of projects that are currently taking place in the areas are the base of the club.

“We’ve got a vast array of projects, from four key arms:

- Community – Our bread and butter, what was our old football in the community programmes. We are in schools, running after school clubs, running lunchtime clubs, holiday clubs, for example. It’s all about engaging young people in sport, mainly football.
- Inclusion – Revolving around social inclusion in our youth programmes, and the elder programmes being based around health and wellbeing.
- Regional Talent Club & Ladies – the talent pathway for females in this area.
- Futsal – includes the Futsal academy and Futsal in schools. Aligns with the FA’s new strategy, creating a twin pathway for Futsal alongside football.” (Interviewee 1)

“We have 2 main sections, our community side, our bread and butter, going into schools and doing workshops etc. Our inclusion side is more about just getting people playing, getting everyone we can in the community involved in one of our sessions.” (Interviewee 2)

“We have two sides, community and inclusion. We deliver mostly football sessions, but not always football.” (Interviewee 3)

“We’re out in schools, delivering sessions. We also do elite sessions for kids who want further development through more advanced sessions. We also do holiday camps, lunchtime sessions, after school clubs.” (Interviewee 4)

“We generally run sessions aiming at kids with issues, focusing on giving them a positive route.” (Interviewee 5)

#### **4.1.2 Controlling the projects.**

Each of the participants are asked to describe the process of controlling the collaborations. This is used in order to obtain information on who sets the targets and goals for the projects, and in turn who leads the collaborative process.

“Generally, they’re set by us. We have a strategy for what we’re looking to do and a plan going forward. Often we’re going out and looking for the partnerships and what gaps exist.” (Interviewee 1)

“The club has some targets that they want to see the foundation going out and delivering. Other times it’s what we want to do as a foundation and what we have noticed that the community needs.” (Interviewee 2)

“We tend to go and deliver a structured 12-week session, but within that there’s bits that we want the teachers to do. We go in there and find our feet, but we want to leave a legacy that the teachers can then take on board.” (Interviewee 3)

“Sometimes we go to the schools, sometimes they come to us. We have a set topic, but we can deviate within that.” (Interviewee 4)

“At the start of the year we’ll create a plan, stating what we want to do. This is open for tweaking throughout the year too.” (Interviewee 5)

#### **4.1.3 Monitoring and evaluating the projects.**

Each interviewee explained different ways that the projects are monitored and evaluated, and who controls this process. The common feedback indicated that this is mixed between different techniques but gaining feedback from the end user is a common theme displayed throughout all projects.

“Everything we do is monitored. With everything we do we look at what the intention is, what we want to get out of it. We then set some targets. We then have constant monitoring and evaluation throughout the entire project, not just waiting for when something is finished.” (Interviewee 1)

“We will keep reviewing constantly. We have our own internal reviews, watching of staff, making sure they’re actually doing what the session is there for and mainly making sure the sessions are meeting their intended targets.” (Interviewee 2)

“We have to evaluate and monitor what we do in terms of getting our funding, so everything we do has got to be documented. We have to evidence that we’re actually doing these things, otherwise we won’t get our funding. This can include all the photos, session plans and questionnaires, there’s loads of ways we do it.” (Interviewee 3)

“Our manager will come out to see what we’re doing in our sessions. Sometimes it might be informal, sometimes writing a formal review of how it went.” (Interviewee 4)

“It’s generally reviewed on numbers, how many people can we get down to a session. They’ll generally come and watch us, so they can gauge how we run. We also get a lot of feedback from the kids, which obviously really helps us.” (Interviewee 5)

“We have a review with our players every 2 months. As coaches we meet with the technical director every other week, to discuss what’s working and what’s not working.” (Interviewee 6)

#### **4.1.4 The current relationships in the community.**

The interviewees were asked to comment on their opinions regarding the current relationships with the community. In particular, they were asked to describe the condition of the relationships at present, relating to their field of work at the foundation.

“Overall, it’s really, really good. Some of the areas around our community we do more work in, especially the ones in the location we’re based in, because of the better partnerships we have created.” (Interviewee 1)

“It has ups and downs, it depends on many factors really. It depends what’s going on on the pitch, for example. Overall though, it’s a really good link between the community and the football club.” (Interviewee 2)

“It’s good, from a school’s point of view we’re involved with 20-30 schools on a weekly basis, so we’re definitely out there in the local community.” (Interviewee 3)

“It’s dependant on how the club is doing. If they’re thriving, we’re thriving. But we still have good relationships with the schools.” (Interviewee 4)

“I think our relationship with the community and how we work with them is really good at the moment. We have a lot of good contacts and are able to work closely with them.” (Interviewee 5)

“We’re very in touch with the community in a number of different ways. Each year we offer a trial-based day where they can come down and see what level they are at football. We give the girls in the community the opportunity to be seen by the best coaches.” (Interviewee 6)

#### **4.2 To understand the motivations of both parties with regards to collaborative process:**

##### **4.2.1 Understanding collaboration.**

During the interview, the participants were questioned on their understanding on collaboration. Through the use of diagrams of theories, the interviewees were commenting on what they perceived to be collaboration, or as they often described, “partnerships”.

“A collaboration would be actually working closely together (with a partner) to really affect a common issue.” (Interviewee 2)

“We like to call them partner schools, we like to get them down to the ground and involved in our competitions. We can then offer them other things and offer them this first.” (Interviewee 3)

“I’d say this is a collaboration. We’re trying to help them.” (Interviewee 4)

“Working closely with someone/somebody to provide a service.” (Interviewee 5)

“Working with an individual or a group, sharing ideas and working together to achieve one set project or aim.” (Interviewee 6)

#### **4.2.2 The necessity of collaboration.**

At different stages of the interview, the participants would comment on why they feel collaboration with the local community is important for their job. Although the interviewees were from all different aspects of the foundation, common answers were displayed.

“If you’re looking at the impact on the community, that’s the thing that we’re always striving for.”  
(Interviewee 1)

“For us as a foundation, it’s our ethos to make things sustainable for the community and make sure it’s there to stay.” (Interviewee 2)

“It’s important that we don’t just come out and never see them again, it’s important that it’s ongoing. It’s like a partnership.” (Interviewee 3)

“Our main aim in the community is to reach as many schools, and as many people, as possible. It’s important to create a partnership so we can be involved in what the kids are doing.” (Interviewee 4)

“The better the relationships you have, the more they’re going to want to work with you in the future.”  
(Interviewee 5)

“Collaborating with these girls is essential in helping these girls develop into professional players.”  
(Interviewee 6)

#### **4.2.3 Collaboration in their role.**

Following on from the previous section, the interviewees were asked how collaboration directly effects their role at the foundation. With varied job roles, this gave an overview of all the collaborations the foundations currently have with the local communities.

“It’s about making a difference. I don’t stay involved because of my love of football, I stay involved because of how we use that love of football to engage with people and to make a difference to them.”  
(Interviewee 1)

“People are hugely important, that is what we are all about, we give as many people opportunities, who may not have previously had that opportunity. Football is a very powerful tool, used right you can affect a lot of people in a small space of time.” (Interviewee 2)

“We definitely have a partnership with the schools. It definitely makes it easier when you’re in contact all the time.” (Interviewee 3)

“We’re the link between the club and the community. We’re the face of the club.” (Interviewee 4)

“It’s very important to collaborate with the local community. We want to give them an amazing opportunity that we didn’t have when we we’re growing up, and that drives us.” (Interviewee 5)

“Having a link with the schools in the community means we can find the best talent out there.”  
(Interviewee 6)

#### **4.2.4 Benefits to the football club.**

The benefits of collaborations to the football club came across as very common answers, focusing around getting people to come to the club and the stadium in particular. The interviewees understood that the benefits to the football club balanced with the benefits to community, which will be discussed in the next section.

“It brings positive news. Football is powerful, but also in a negative way too. If we are out there and talking to people about the club and what we’re actually doing, that massive.” (Interviewee 2)

“It’s making people aware that we’re more than just a football club. It’s then getting them to be part of the club.” (Interviewee 3)

“If we do a good job, they might want to come and watch the games. We want to be seen as a community club.” (Interviewee 4)

“It brings people in. It makes the club more united in a way. We get a lot of players down to the holiday courses. The kids then want to come and watch the games and the players they met on the course.” (Interviewee 5)

“Having girls going through the systems all the way to professional level is very rewarding to us, and credit to the club for giving them this opportunity.” (Interviewee 6)

#### **4.2.5 Benefits to the community.**

Following on from the last section, the interviewees were asked to comment on the benefits to the community. This was aims to look into their understanding of what the other side of the collaborations gains from them being involved.

“The main benefits being the schemes we bring to the community, the many different touch points. Absolutely.” (Interviewee 1)

“That’s what it’s really all about, making that difference. If it one person, great. If it’s a thousand people, even better.” (Interviewee 2)

“We run programs in curriculum, after school, holidays. We aim to leave a legacy after we leave and improve the delivery of P.E” (Interviewee 3)

“Our main aim in the community is to reach as many schools, and as many people, as possible (in our sessions).” (Interviewee 4)

“We are more than football coaches, we offer life skills, qualifications to kids we believe deserve it. We work with a lot of kids, with no kids who we wouldn’t work with.” (Interviewee 5)

“We give the girls in the community the opportunity to been seen by the best coaches.” (Interviewee 6)

#### **4.3 To discuss the limitations the two parties have faced which could impact the collaborative process:**

##### **4.3.1 Football-based limitations.**

A common limitation to collaboration expressed by the interviewees was the football results by the first team. Although it might be different views on what it affects, the common theme of football results was expressed by all interviewees.

“With football clubs, it’s great when everything goes well, it’s also not so great when things aren’t going as well. It impacts everything.” (Interviewee 1)

“Sometimes the clubs need us more to spread positive news for PR, when things on the pitch aren’t going too well. Depending what’s going on on the pitch, has big effects what the foundation can do.” (Interviewee 2)

“Big style. It has a knock-on effect. If the teams winning on a Saturday and is top of the league, the club has a bit of a buzz and people are talking more about it. If its bottom of the league and struggling, it does rub off on people and that can have an effect on things we’re doing.” (Interviewee 3)

##### **4.3.2 Funding-based limitations.**

Many of the limitations expressed in the interviews related to funding and financial aspects of the foundation. The interviewees all felt that this limitation directly affected the service they can offer, and therefore the collaboration as a whole.

“Because we are self-funding, the majority of our programmes are funded in different ways. Often, it’s juggling lots and lots of little funders, or lots of different financial partners.” (Interviewee 1)

“We’re limited with resources, as the club isn’t the biggest. They’re busy doing what they have to do for the club, so we can’t just borrow someone to help with media.” (Interviewee 2)

“It’s sometimes hard to get into the schools. They’re often limited with their money.” (Interviewee 3)

##### **4.3.3 External factors.**

Finally, the foundation faces limitations from external factors outside of their control. The interviewees expressed external factors such as the privatisation of schools and the competition from private companies rising over recent years.

“There’s other private companies that go around and offer P.E too, we do have other people that do the same things we’re doing around here.” (Interviewee 3)

“There’s other businesses trying to do this as well, it’s becoming more and more competitive out there.” (Interviewee 4)

“A major issue for us is the kids who don’t come out anymore because they’re sat at home on the Xbox or the PlayStation. That’s a major issue for us. When we see them, we have to make a big impact.” (Interviewee 5)

“As schools are becoming more privately owned, it’s harder to gain access to them. They can no longer advertise or promote any external materials (posters, etc).” (Interviewee 6)

#### **4.4 Summary**

Overall, the data suggests that all six interviewees understand the theory of collaboration within their roles, as well as being able to discuss the motivations and limitations they face. The participants were able to discuss the current operations of the foundation, and how this relates to the collaborative process. This data will now be discussed further in the following chapter, in relation to the literature outlined in the literature review.

### **5.0 Discussion**

In this chapter, the data from the interviews will be taken and discussed in relation to literature found in the literature review. Where possible the data will be compared and contrasted against the literature and the aim will be to identify new and emerging patterns from the data. Due to there being limited research into the collaboration in football, the literature will be used where relevant from other industries, and the knowledge gap will be explored throughout this chapter. These findings will be discussed and concluded with relation to the research objectives set out in the study. These objectives will act as the structure to this discussion and therefore act as the direction for this discussion chapter.

The aim of this research is to investigate the collaboration between football clubs and their local community for corporate social responsibility activities. In order to do this, the research objectives are:

- To develop an understanding of the relationships currently in place between the football clubs and their local community.
- To understand the motivations with regards to collaborative process.
- To discuss the limitations the foundation has faced which could impact the collaborative process.
- To provide recommendations on how the collaborative process can be managed or controlled in the future to create greater synergies between the football clubs and the local businesses and charities.

The fourth research objective will be covered in the recommendations section in the conclusion, but the first three research objectives will now form the basis of this discussion chapter. Each objective will be discussed using the data collected in comparison with the literature provided, and will display emerging patterns relating to that objective.

#### **5.1 An understanding of the relationships currently in place between the football clubs and their local community.**

The result of the data collection showed that an emerging theme of understanding the foundation role in the community, and how these translated into collaborative processes. All interviewees were able to give detailed explanations as to the projects currently taking place in the community, how they are controlled, how they are reviewed, monitored and evaluated and finally they were able to assess the current situation of the relationship levels in the community.

The research shows that the foundation operates in the community through four different key arms, as explained by interviewee one, with the main two arms being the community and inclusive sectors. This view of the two main sectors is shared by all interviewees from the main stem of the foundation. It



would appear that the main collaborations in the community are accessed through these main arms, as the Regional Talent Club and Futsal arms are aimed more at the pathway to elite and professional football, as opposed to giving back to the community. The community and inclusion arms of the foundation are the arms related directly to the collaborative processes taking place, as these are the arms that come into direct contact with the end consumer (the community) on a daily basis. Collaboration is used as a key tool in these arms to achieve their goals, whether that be working with local business, charities or schools. The collaboration with the schools are expressed as a key partnership in the inclusion arm of the business, as they both work together to achieve a common goal on improving the level of Physical Education lessons in the school. This would agree with the literature of Bedwell et al in 2011, who argued that both parties in the process have to share a common goal in order for the process to be effective.

As well as gaining an understanding as to what the foundation does in the community, it was just as important to understand how the collaboration was controlled. This is something that for the majority, the interviewees agreed on, with an understanding that the control of the collaboration very much depends on the nature of the project. The common understanding from the participants is that a common goal will be identified before a collaboration takes place, but this can either be by the club, or by the school or charity wanting to work with the club. The club might have an issue they wish to tackle, but realise it need a school (for example) to collaborate with to achieve its goal. Similarly, the school could approach the foundation with an issue that requires their help, which again will mean a collaboration will take place, but with the majority of the control often lying with the partner who had the original issue. This 'synergy' approach ties in with the working of Gajda (2004), who expressed that successful collaborations will occur when the two stakeholders cannot achieve their goals independently.

With regards to monitoring the projects, a consistent theme is evident through the data collected from each of the interviewees. The foundation engages heavily in monitoring the collaborative process, with a big emphasis clearly being placed on reviewing and obtaining feedback from the end consumer. This process allows the collaboration to remain sustainable, a desired outcome as expressed by all interviewees. Although all participants place a significant focus on feedback and reviewing, the way this is done differs from project to project, and especially arm to arm. The community arm seems to review visually, watching the sessions and providing feedback to the coaches as to how they feel the sessions have gone. The inclusion arm on the other hand relies on documenting the whole process to send off for funding in the future. The evidence is provided in physical form as opposed to the visual form used by the community arm. With regards to the literature, the use of constant reviews and feedback agrees with the work of Wood and Gray (1991), who believed in the interactive process leading to the collaboration developing in stages. The review process will lead to small adjustments to the deliver, which will act as the new 'stage' of the collaborative process.

The final understanding derived from the data collected is that the general view of the collaborations in place were positive ones, with all interviewees believing that the relationships currently in place with the local community are in a really good place. The acknowledgement that the relationships are in a strong and reliable place means effective collaborations are more likely to take place, and in particular sustainable collaborations as the bond is already there for the two parties to continue working together. A common expression used from the data is that the foundation is able to use this positive relationship to create a strong link between the club and the local community. This is essential for the football club

as it creates opportunities for higher footfall in the stadiums, which is one example of a benefit to the club of working in the local community. This benefit aligns with the work of Roşca (2010), as he identified that the fans of a football club mainly come from the community in which the club operates, so creating a good relationship would be beneficial from a club's point of view to gain support.

In summary, multiple cases have been explored that provide examples of collaborations in the local community. These collaborations appear to be well managed, well reviewed and developed from good relationships with the local community, according to the interviewees. An understanding that effective collaborations are in place has been taken from the data, which indicates that the club are aware of the collaborative process. In order to ensure this is the case, it is now important to explore the motivations and limitations to these collaborations, as well as looking into the knowledge held by the foundation as the process they are engaging in.

## **5.2 The motivations behind the collaborative processes.**

The collection of the data led to the emerging themes of very similar motivations behind the collaborative process, as well as all the interviewees having a similar view with regards to the meaning of collaboration. The data collected shows a shared understanding as to the necessity of collaboration, as well as a number of common benefits to both the club and the community as a result of the collaboration process. The collaborative process, according to the data obtained, plays a vital role in every aspect of the foundation, as each interviewee described direct effects of collaboration on their role on a day-to-day basis.

With regards to the understanding the term collaboration, each interviewee described a process of working with a partner to provide a service in order to achieve a common goal or aim. This view on collaboration links with much of the literature explored in the literature review. The view of collaboration being a process stems from the early workings of Gray in 1989, which is often looked at the start of the collaboration phenomena. Gray viewed collaboration as an interactive process between two parties, an ideal shared by the interviewees in this study. The acceptance that the two parties then partake in providing a service aligns with the work of Walters and Panton in 2014, as they believe that the foundations often act as the delivery vehicle for initiatives when involved in collaborative ventures. As mentioned earlier, the idea of having a common goal is a view expressed by Bedwell et al in 2011. Bedwell understood that both parties don't have to have a number of common goals, but it is important that they have one common goal in order for an effective collaboration to take place.

With regards to the necessity of collaborations between football foundations and the local community for the foundations' targets to be met, the data collected showed a resounding emphasis being placed on collaborations being key to the success of the projects. This is due to multiple reasons that were expressed by the interviewees, one of which being the ethos of the foundation to create sustainable projects for the community. In order for the projects, especially in the schools, to be sustainable, they need to collaborate with the schools themselves to ensure they are fully bought into and committed to the project, giving them the control needed to ensure objectives are met. Interviewee 5 also expresses the point that the better relationships you create, the more chance you have with working with them in the future. This proves that effective collaborations are needed to create sustainable projects in the community, as the aim of the foundation is to reach as many people as possible (Interviewee 4), and therefore the foundation needs the help of the schools to reach a large proportion of their target market. With the Regional Talent Club arm, the process is a little different, but the

necessity for collaboration is still as strong, as interviewee 6 states that collaborating with the girls is essential in helping them develop into professional players, which is the overall aim of the RTC. Football clubs have to create effective collaborations with their foundations, as they then rely on those this to create effective and achievable relationships with the community on their behalf, allowing their corporate social responsibility aims and objectives to succeed, which is the shared views of Bingham and Walters (2013).

On top of understanding how collaboration is essential for their role, the interviewees were asked to describe how the collaborations directly affect their roles at the foundation, with another common theme arising. The view of people being a central element in their different projects and aims, the use of collaborations allows the interviewees to maximise the chances of success on their individual ventures. The community arm is explained by interviewee 2, who acknowledges that football is a very powerful tool, used right you can affect a lot of people in a small space of time, meaning the projects in schools can be very efficient when aiming to reach as many people as possible. Collaborations with the community will also reap benefits to the RTC and Futsal programmes, as explained by interviewee 6, who explains that having the links to the local community means they can find the best talent out there, which in turn will return benefits to the relative programmes and the club as a whole.

The interviews conducted also allowed the interviewees to discuss the main motivations behind wanting to work with the local community with regards to the benefits it brings to the club. One common theme that was established from this section of the interview is that it gives the football club a tool to connect with the fans, linking with the literature of Bingham and Walters, who understand that the club and the foundation must create a bond, allowing the foundation to act on their behalf in the local community. This bond allows the foundation to show a different side of the football club in the local community, which interviewee 2 and 3 described as being massive, allowing the club to be seen as much more than a football club that just plays on a Saturday afternoon. If the results aren't going too well, football can be a powerful tool, so getting out there and spreading the positive projects around the local community and creating these effective collaborations can draw away from poor results on the pitch and keep fans upbeat. Another huge benefit to the club is the potential to bring in new fans, from the juniors all the way up to the seniors. With the club providing sessions for people of all ages, interviewees 4 and 5 state that these collaborations have the potential to bring new people into the club, as they attend matches due to experiences they have had due to the foundation.

As well as providing data backing a benefit to the club, the interviews highlighted a key theme relating to benefits to the local community too in that the club can create a number of touchpoints in the local community in order to reach as many people as possible, which means anyone can attend at least something put on by the foundation. Whether it be the community, inclusion, RTC or Futsal arms, the benefit these programmes bring through the collaborative process is evident in all the interviews conducted for the research project. The more touchpoints the foundation can create through foundations, the more trust the collaboration has, which will be repaid by confidence in the foundations and a stronger collaboration will be made. This is backed up by Jarratt & Ceric (2014) and Davies & Mason-Jones (2017), who elaborate on the points that the higher the trust and confidence in the collaboration, the more the end user is likely to engage.

In summary, the motivations for collaborations have been expressed across all the interviews conducted for this research project, with a distinct backing from literature backing up the thoughts of the

individuals. The motivations stem from a clear understanding of what a collaboration is and why they need to collaborate for all aspects of their roles, meaning the confidence in the collaborations can be strong, creating sustainable collaborations with the local community.

### **5.3 The limitations to the collaborative process.**

During the data collection, three main themes arose from the data with regards to limitations to the collaborative process. These themes were a mixture of internal and external limitations, meaning they couldn't always be controlled by the foundation or local community.

The first theme to arise when discussing limitations to the collaborative process with the participants was the issues caused from on the field actions. The interviewees discussed a direct correlation between the performances of the first team on the pitch and the likelihood of the community to engage in collaborations. Interviewees 1,2 and 3 all agree that the results can have a knock-on effect to the foundation, meaning they may be limited as to what they can achieve in the local community. The literature of Watson (2000) and Walters and Chadwick (2009) looks at how football clubs will aim to reduce the negative stigma of issues in their field through collaborations to promote CSR activities. This allows the clubs to appear as the leader in change for the community, as well as building their brand image as they do so. However, sometimes the club cannot draw attention away from the results, resulting in less business and community members wanting to be involved with a seemingly 'struggling' club.

The second theme surrounding limitations to collaboration is funding-based factors. As interviewees 1 and 3 explain, projects are not free to run, and often the collaborations require funding from local businesses, charities, initiatives and even the schools themselves in order to run. This will mean that the introduction of new collaborative projects will often being decided by whether the funding is available to achieve the targets set out by the two parties. 'The extent to which football clubs engage with their community scheme varies, with some schemes integral to the work of the football club while other schemes are separate and have to be completely self-funded' (McGuire and Fenoglio, 2004). This explains that although some schemes can be free to run, many schemes require self-funding, and the level and stature of the football club in question cannot always cover this cost.

Finally, the third theme surrounding the limitations the participants had regarding collaborative process is external factors such as competition, social factors and the privatisation of schools. Competition from private businesses can be a major limitation for football clubs, as explained by interviewees 3 and 4, as they can often take business away from the foundations if the collaborations are fully established or issues such as funding or on the pitch are a major factor the other parties involved. The ability of others to replicate the activities of foundations and therefore create a unique selling point with increased funding, newer equipment or more flexibility can be a major limitation for football clubs. Similarly, the rise of gaming in recent years can also lead to less attendances at the projects being run, leading to less confidence from partners or even a cutting of funding. As explained by interviewee 5, it is essential that the small window of opportunity that the foundations get with the 'gamers' is essential, as this could be the make or break of some of the projects and therefore collaborations they have. Finally, the privatisation of schools has decreased the likelihood of collaborations, as well as reducing the amount of advertising being available to the RTC and Futsal arms, an issue which is discussed by interviewee 6. As most of the CSR programs run by football clubs are anticipatory and preventive, often looking at

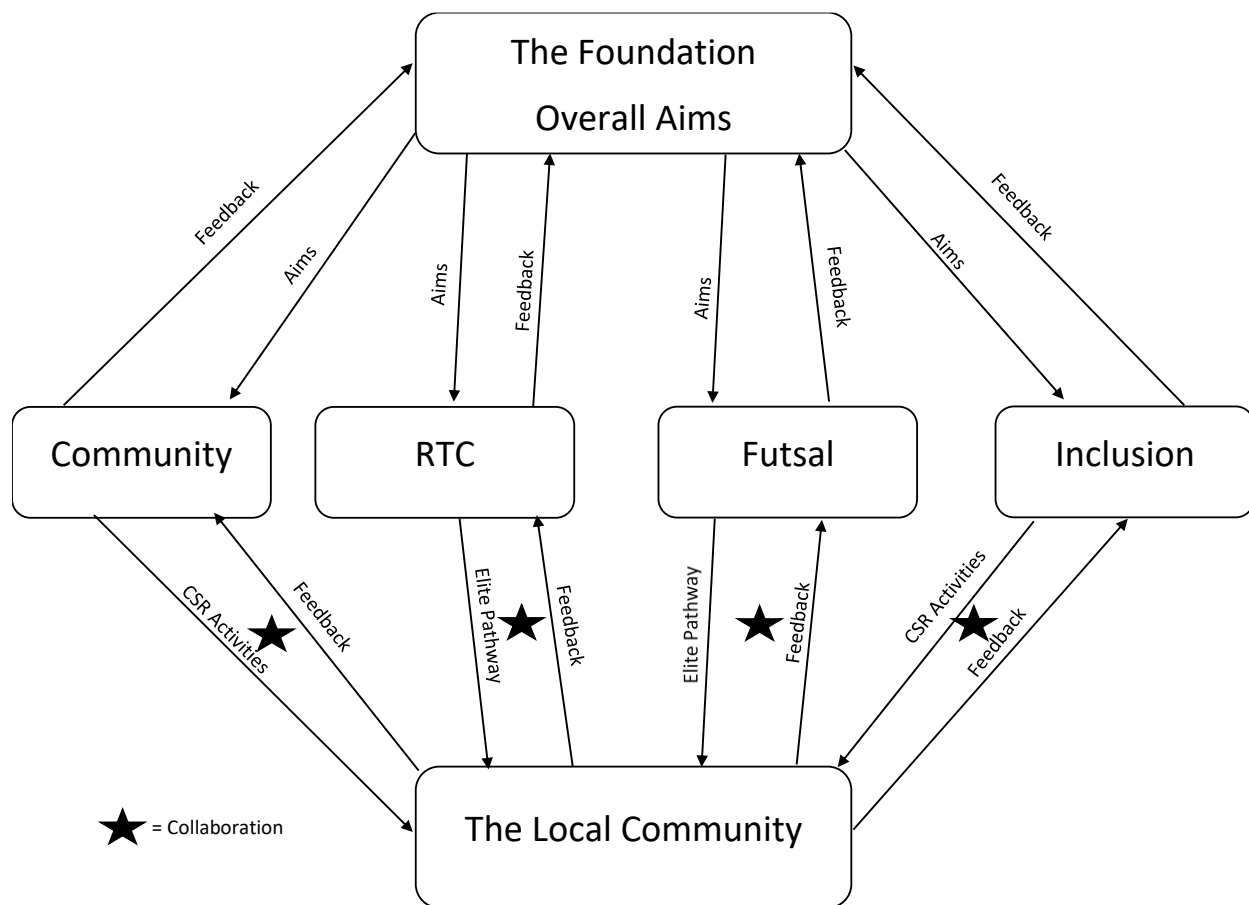
youngsters and their future (Ackerman, 1973), this could prove a major limitation to the foundations being able to achieve effective and sustainable collaborations.

#### 5.4 Summary

Three major areas arose from the data collected, with regards to the research objectives outlined for the study. These areas each contained consistent themes across the whole of the six interviewees, providing reliable accounts that linked with the literature explored as part of the preparation for this study. In order to further understand the data collected, the findings are displayed in the conceptual framework (Figure 4). This framework aims to establish the foundations key points of collaborations across the four arms of operations. It shows how the foundation use each arm to create collaborations with the local community, whilst using feedback and reviewing mechanisms to ensure these collaborations are sustainable.

This chapter discussed the result under the three research question areas with comparisons being drawn to the literature where possible. The conclusion of this discussion is the emerged patterns from the findings under the three research question combine with the framework shown in figure 4 will display a picture of how the chosen foundation currently collaborates with the local community for corporate social responsibility activities.

Figure 4 – Conceptual Model based on the data and patterns collected.



## **6.0 Conclusion**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter aims to highlight the conclusions, limitations and areas for further research regarding how the chosen foundation currently collaborates with the local community for corporate social responsibility activities. The chapter will begin with the research conclusions which will explain the findings which arrived as a result of completing the outlined research objectives. Following this, it will begin to look into the limitations faced as part of this research, as well as providing recommendations as to how this research can be used to aid further collaborations in the future (research objective number four). The final section of this chapter will aim to look at the theoretical contributions of this research, before suggesting areas for further research in the area being explored.

### **6.2 Research Conclusions**

This research aimed to explore the collaboration between football clubs and their local community for corporate social responsibility activities. The theoretical underpinning of this study came from the Collaboration Continuum (Austin, 2005). This continuum broke the collaborative process down into certain categories which each ranged from philanthropic through to integrative. This allowed the interviewee the ability to discuss where they feel they felt the foundation currently sat on the continuum, allowing them to express their feelings why they felt this was use case. Using this theory, the interviews revolved around answering three main research questions, before using a fourth to provide recommendations on how to aid the collaborative process in the future. The outcomes of these objectives will now be discussed and conclusions of each presented.

#### **6.2.1 The relationships currently in place between the football clubs and their local community.**

The evolution and increased coverage of collaboration in football clubs has led to it becoming an integral part of a football clubs structure with regards to clubs Corporate Social Responsibility activities, as it often provides the clubs with various tools and outlets in which to implement their policies in the local communities (Walters and Panton, 2014). This means that football foundations are now having to fully understand the current collaborations taking place at their club, as well as the management and continuous reviewing of the collaborations in order to make them sustainable in order to achieve their corporate social responsibility activities. Football clubs are now becoming tied into schemes from the Football League and the FA in order to engage with, and develop closer links between, local communities (Walters and Chadwick, 2009). These schemes set out with the intentions for form bonds between the clubs and their local communities, but it all relies on the football clubs 'buying in' to the idea, and really integrating themselves with the initiatives (McGuire and Fenoglio, 2004). The research conducted for this study show that the foundation in question understands the role of collaborations in delivering the corporate social responsibility targets for the club they work for, and a detailed knowledge of how to manage and review these processes means it understands how to create a sustainable collaboration with areas of the local community. All interviewees were able to explain how collaborations had become essential to their role in the foundation, allowing them to understand the importance of collaboration in regard to them meeting their desired targets for corporate social responsibility activities.

### **6.2.2 The motivations behind the collaborative processes.**

The motivation for collaboration comes from the intention to achieve a result that cannot be achieved by the stakeholders independently (Gajda, 2004). This encompasses the desire for the interviewees to establish these collaborations in order to achieve what they set out to achieve at the start of each project. Multiple examples have been collected from the data, showing how foundations require strong collaborations with schools in order to reach as many people in their target demographic as possible, for example. The data collected also displayed a common understanding of the term collaboration within the foundation being questioned, which aligned with the early literature of Gray (1989), Walters and Panton (2014) and Bedwell et al (2001). The common themes involved in the definitions expressed were that collaboration is described as a process of working with a partner to provide a service in order to achieve a common goal or aim. This basis of understanding allowed the interviewees to justify their need for collaborations in their role, as an understanding of what they are setting out to achieve from working together with the local community is essential before starting any projects. The data also highlighted benefits that arise from the creation of collaborations with the local community, both for the foundation, in particular the club, and the local community itself. These benefits included footfall and positive public relations for the club, as well as a wide range of touchpoints for the community to access the club, as opposed to just football on a matchday. The collaborative process is detailed as a key driver in the projects currently being offered by the foundation, as they enable the employees to reach as much of their target demographic as possible, which is a common theme expressed regarding an overall goal and motivation for the participants.

### **6.2.3 The limitations to the collaborative process.**

The data also highlighted three common themes that acted as potential limitations to the collaborative process. The first of these implications were those that arose from the football focused side of the foundations. Similarities arising from the data collected showed how the results of the first team on a weekend had knock-on effects to the collaborations being made by the foundation with the local community. These implications could be the negativity surrounding the club's results being a factor for the community not wanting to collaborate at all, or just a harder process due to a reluctance to work with a team seen as 'struggling'. Football clubs can often try to reduce the negative stigma of issues in their field through collaborations to promote corporate social responsibility activities (Watson, 2000 & Walters and Chadwick, 2009). This outlook of just using the foundations to cover up poor press and try to inject some positivity into the club can often be the main challenges the foundations face, as their intentions in the eyes of the community may not always be clear.

The second theme addressed in the data is the limitation of funding and resources that the foundation face. Some schemes have to be completely self-funded (McGuire and Fenoglio, 2004) which means the club often has to work with a wide array of funders and balance the funding to create projects based on the resources available. This, as expressed by interviewee one, can be a very challenging process. On top of the funding from the club, funding from local schools are also being limited, meaning that they can no longer afford the same programmes as before, providing the foundation with a need to adapt and become cheaper, or lose the collaboration altogether. The final implication with regards to funding is the stature of the football club and how this affects the programmes and collaborations they are allowed to be involved in. Interviewee 3 explained how certain programmes run by the premier league are no longer available to the foundation, due to them not falling into the appropriate catchment for the

programme, based on their position in the football league. This can massively affect the scope and reach of the foundations due to the potential to have to forfeit collaborations due to reasons out of their control.

These external factors are the final key theme that has been expressed in the data collected. Most of the corporate social responsibility programs run by football clubs are anticipatory and preventive, often looking at youngsters and their future (Ackerman, 1973), which means that external factors such as the privatisation of schools can be a major limitation for foundations regarding the collaborations they are able to make with the local community. Tighter restrictions on advertising and partnerships in these schools limits the ease of entry for the foundations, which can often mean not being able to reach as many people as they could previously. Another major limitation arising from external factors was the increased competition from external companies, looking to develop similar models to the foundation but with a unique selling point, in order to make monetary gains from the collaborations. Finally, social factors such as the rise of gaming has proved difficult for the foundation, as less and less of their target demographic are wanting to get involved in the activities being made available by the collaborations with the local community and would much rather sit at home on their PlayStation or Xbox. This has proved an issue for foundations, and ensures they need to make the most of every opportunity they have when coming into contact with the end consumer.

### **6.3 Limitations to research.**

This study exhibits some limitations with regards to the research methodology employed. Firstly, this research is based on a case study of one football foundation, and therefore the data collected cannot be used as a representation of all football foundations. However, due to the time frame available and the responsiveness of the football clubs contacted, efforts were made to ensure that a wide range of respondents were recruited from varying aspects of one foundation. Without the timeframe limitations, a wider study of multiple football foundations could have been recruited, but the data collected does reflect the views of this particular foundation in regard to the collaboration with local community for corporate social responsibility activities and can therefore be used to answer the research objectives set.

The second limitation is the timeframe available for interviewing. Due to the small timeframe available to conduct the interviews during a busy period for the club, a limited time was available to interview the six candidates of the football foundation being used. This meant that the researcher was only able to spend a maximum of thirty minutes with each interviewee, leading to limited data being obtained.

Finally, the data collected shows the views of the football foundation with regards to collaboration and does not take into account the views of the local community as the other stakeholder in the collaborative process. In order for reliable assumptions and findings to be made, research into the communities viewpoints must be obtained and then compared to the data collected in this study.

### **6.4 Recommendations on how the collaborative process can be managed or controlled in the future to create greater synergies between the football clubs and the local community.**

The fourth and final research objective was to provide recommendations as to how the collaborative process can be managed or controlled in the future to create greater synergies between the football clubs and the local community. Based on the findings above, recommendations will be given as to how



to maximise future collaborations undertaken between the foundations and the local community, focusing on three main areas; common understandings, feedback and analysis and sustainable operations.

#### **6.4.1 Common understandings.**

As expressed in the above chapter, the foundation interviewed showed a common understanding as to the definitions and processes involved with collaborations. This outlook moving forward is essential to the success of future collaborations with the local community, as the sooner you can get everyone working off of the same page, the sooner the trust and reliability factors of the collaboration can be explored. These factors can then lead to much more effective collaborations being created, and lead to a more beneficial return to the projects being run as a result of these collaborations. Common understandings as to the control of the collaboration is also essential moving forward. With a lot of the collaborations currently in place between the foundation and the local community, the control element varies depending on the type of activity in question. This could potentially lead to issues for the foundation as if they don't retain enough control of the projects, for example, their actions and outcomes could deviate from the overall goals and objectives. Creating a system where control is managed effectively and consistently by the foundation could lead to the success of a higher percentage of projects and plans, as the strategic planning section explained in Austin's Collaboration Continuum (2005) can become much more of an integrative part of the collaboration as a whole.

#### **6.4.2 Feedback and analysis.**

Feedback and analysis play a key role in maintaining the focus of the collaboration in regards to the desired goals and impacts of the projects. The foundation used for this research projects details different techniques used for feedback, reviewing and analysis of their project that come as a result of their collaboration. These techniques are essential for the survival of the projects and schemes ran by the foundation, but it is also just as important for the collaboration with the local community to receive the same level of feedback and reviewing. Much like the different projects, collaborations can often differ from their original aims and objectives, and therefore it is important that the process of collaboration is looked at and reviewed regularly to see if it is still operating to its maximum capacity. One way in which the participants have been introduced to this is by using the collaboration continuum model (Austin, 2005). By mapping their situation on this continuum, they will be able to see the current situation of the collaboration, taking into account all that factors that will contribute to an effective collaboration. This way, the foundation and the individual can see where the collaboration lies on the continuum, and identify possible areas for development and concern.

#### **6.4.3 Sustainable operations.**

The final recommendation come from the ability of the foundation to create sustainable operations. When introduced to two different models regarding sustainable business, the Triple Bottom Line Theory (Elkington, 1997) and the Pyramid of Responsibilities (Carroll, 1999), not all interviewees were able to comment on the relation of this to their business. Although the literature is not deemed as the 'law' with regards to sustainable business, the ability to draw similarities and differences from these models can help to instil a sustainable ethos around the foundation. In general, a foundation that acts ethically and sustainably will form a solid base for sustainable collaborations to be built as a result. The benefits

of a sustainable collaboration means that foundation can build a positive rapport in the community, which can lead to increased collaborations and partnerships being created as a result.

### **6.5 Research contribution.**

Conducting research into areas such as the one discussed in the research project adds to the theoretical and academic knowledge currently available to football clubs, their foundations and the local community. This is because, in the area of collaboration between football clubs and their local communities, limited research has been conducted in the past. Therefore, this research offers a contribution to this field of research, looking directly at football foundations as a stakeholder for collaborations with the local community. It provides an insight into the understanding of collaboration in the context of football foundations, as well as exploring the motivations and limitations faced by the foundations when attempting to create these collaborations with the local community. This research can be used as a starting block for football clubs to base a project of future collaborations by exploring how collaborations can be used to aid the projects and schemes already taking place.

### **6.6 Future Research.**

As previously mentioned, future research into the community side of the collaboration would need to be explored before conclusions could be made on the overall running of these collaborations. Through this research, we have obtained the views of the foundation, but in order for the evidence to be accurate, the viewpoints, motivations and limitations of the community would need to be explored.

Similarly, future research will need to be taken into different football foundations to create an overall generalisation of the research objective for football foundations, not just the one example as used in this case study. Future research could uncover different trends, motivations and limitations, as well as looking at different impacts on the collaborative process. Research could also be done into how the position of club in the national leagues affects the collaborations, exploring how the increased funding for teams in the premier league affects the collaborative processes the club engages with alongside the local community.

### **6.7 Summary.**

This chapter provided a conclusion regarding the implications faced when collecting and discussing this data. It also explored how these findings add to the current literature and expresses the options for future research. The limitations of this research have also been acknowledged and recommendations have been made as to how football foundations can affect future collaborations with the local community. This ensures that all research objectives have been covered in alignment with the overall research aim.

## 7.0 Appendix

### 7.1 Consent Form



#### CONSENT FORM

##### Exploring the collaboration between football clubs and their local community for corporate social responsibility activities.

It is important that you read, understand and sign the consent form. Your contribution to this research is entirely voluntary and you are not obliged in any way to participate, if you require any further details please contact your researcher.

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| I have been fully informed of the nature and aims of this study as outlined in the information sheet version 1, dated 14/09/2018   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I consent to taking part in this the study.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the research.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I give permission for my words to be quoted (by use of pseudonym).   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I understand that the information collected will be in kept secure conditions for a period of 5 years at the University of Huddersfield  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I understand that no person other than the researcher/s and facilitator/s will have access to the information provided.  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I understand that my identity will be protected by the use of pseudonym in the report and that no written information that could lead to my being identified will be included in any report. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you are satisfied that you understand the information and are happy to take part in this project, please put a tick in the box aligned to each sentence and print and sign below.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Signature of Participant:<br><br>_____<br><br>Print:<br><br>_____<br><br>Date:<br><br>_____ | Signature of Researcher:<br><br>_____<br><br>Print:<br><br>_____<br><br>Date:<br><br>_____ |
|---|--|

(one copy to be retained by Participant / one copy to be retained by Researcher)

## 7.2 Ethics Form

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HUDDERSFIELD**  
**Business School Research Ethics Committee**

**POSTGRADATE RESEARCH STUDENT ETHICAL REVIEW FORM**

Please complete and return via email to [alex.thompson@hud.ac.uk](mailto:alex.thompson@hud.ac.uk) along with the required documents (shown below).

### SECTION A: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT

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Before completing this section please refer to the Business School Research Ethics web pages which can be found under Resources on the Unilearn site (Ethics Policies and Procedures). Applicants should consult the appropriate ethical guidelines.

Please ensure that the statements in Section C are completed by the applicant (and supervisor for PGR students) prior to submission.

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Researcher(s) details                 | Liam Huskins   |
| Project title                         | Exploring the collaboration between football clubs and their local community for corporate social responsibility activities. |
| Award (where applicable)              |  |
| Supervisor details (where applicable) | Morven McEachern   |
| Project start date                    | Sept 2017  |

### SECTION B: PROJECT OUTLINE (TO BE COMPLETED IN FULL BY THE APPLICANT)

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|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| <b>Issue</b> | <b>Please provide sufficient detail for your supervisor to assess strategies used to address ethical issues in the research proposal. Forms with insufficient detail will need to be resubmitted.</b> |
|--------------|---|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Aims and objectives of the study.</b>                  | <p><b>Aim:</b><br/>To investigate the collaboration between football clubs and their local community of businesses and charities for corporate social responsibility activities.</p> <p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To develop an understanding of the relationships currently in place between the football clubs and their local community of businesses and charities.</li> <li>- To understand the motivations of both parties with regards to collaborative process.</li> <li>- To discuss the limitations the two parties have faced which could impact the collaborative process.</li> <li>- To provide recommendations on how the collaborative process can be managed or controlled in the future to create greater synergies between the football clubs and the local businesses and charities.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Brief overview of research methodology</b>             | In order to carry out this research and answer the above questions, I will be taking a qualitative approach and carrying out interviews to gain an insight into the collaborations that are in place and the extent of these collaborations with relation to the literature.   |
| <b>Does your study require any permissions for study?</b> | N/A  |
| <b>Participants</b>                                       | I will interview both employees of a football foundation that operate on the ground level and therefore interact with the local community on a day-to-day basis, and employees of local businesses or charities that they work with on corporate social responsibility activities. I have decided on these participants as they will be able to give me the best insight to answer my research questions.  |
| <b>Access to participants</b>                             | Participants will be contacted through emails to the clubs I wish to work with, and then businesses will be recommended from the employee at the foundation/club.  |
| <b>How will your data be recorded and stored?</b>         | The interviews will be recorded on a voice recorder and then stored on my university hard drive, which is password protected. I will also ensure that no names will be attached to the recordings.   |
| <b>Informed consent.</b>                                  | Before conducting the interview, the participant will be asked to sign and agree to a consent form, explaining the regulations and obligations involved with taking part.  |
| <b>Right to withdraw</b>                                  | Also included in the consent form, the participant will be given a right to withdraw at any time, through contacting myself and requesting the desire for all contributions to be removed.   |

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Confidentiality</b> | <p>The participants will all sign a consent form before taking part in the interview, meaning that they agree to take part and understand that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- They have been fully informed of the nature and aims.</li> <li>- They have the right to withdraw at any time.</li> <li>- They give permission to be quoted.</li> <li>- They understand the information will be stored for a period of 5 years.</li> <li>- They understand no other researcher will gain access to this information.</li> <li>- They understand their identity will be protected.</li> </ul> <p>The information will be stored on a hard drive that is only accessible by myself.</p> |
| <b>Anonymity</b>       | <p>Upon signing the consent form, they will be assured that their identity will be protected by use of a pseudonym in the report and no written information that could lead to them being identified will be released.</p>  |
| <b>Harm</b>            | <p>During the interviews, I will be discussing general business activities and therefore will not be collecting and sensitive information which could lead to any harm.</p>   |

**Retrospective applications.** If your application for Ethics approval is retrospective, please explain why this has arisen.

## SECTION C – SUMMARY OF ETHICAL ISSUES (TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT)

Please give a summary of the ethical issues and any action that will be taken to address the issue(s).

No anticipated ethical issues aside from consent, withdrawal, confidentiality and data protection (as described above) are expected.

## SECTION D – ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS CHECKLIST (TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT)

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Please supply copies of all relevant supporting documentation electronically. If this is not available electronically, please provide explanation and supply hard copy.

I have included the following documents

|                    |   |  |
|--------------------|---|--|
| Information sheet  | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Consent form       | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Letters            | Yes <input type="checkbox"/>            | Not applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Questionnaire      | Yes <input type="checkbox"/>            | Not applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Interview schedule | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/>            |

## SECTION E – STATEMENT BY APPLICANT

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I confirm that the information I have given in this form on ethical issues is correct. (Electronic confirmation is sufficient).

and (for PGR students only)

### Affirmation by Supervisor (where applicable)

I can confirm that, to the best of my understanding, the information presented by the applicant is correct and appropriate to allow an informed judgement on whether further ethical approval is required

Supervisor name/signature: Prof. Morven McEachern



Date: 18/12/18

Name of applicant (electronic is acceptable)

Liam Huskins

Date

18/12/18

All documentation must be submitted electronically to the Business School Research Ethics Committee Administrator, Alex Thompson, at [alex.thompson@hud.ac.uk](mailto:alex.thompson@hud.ac.uk).

All proposals will be reviewed by two members of BSREC. If it is considered necessary to discuss the proposal with the full Committee, the applicant (and their supervisor if the applicant is a student) will be invited to attend the next Ethics Committee meeting.

If you have any queries relating to the completion of this form or any other queries relating to the Business School's Research Ethics Committee in consideration of this proposal, please do not hesitate to contact the Chair, Dr Eleanor Davies ([e.davies@hud.ac.uk](mailto:e.davies@hud.ac.uk)) ☎ [47] 2121 or the Administrator Alex Thomson ([alex.thompson@hud.ac.uk](mailto:alex.thompson@hud.ac.uk)) ☎ [47] 2529



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