

PE1319/P

**PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF PE1319: QUESTIONS
ARISING FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

**Scottish Football Association responses to questions within letter of 7th
October from Fergus Cochrane, Clerk to the Committee.**

**1. When will the football review group be established, what is its remit and
what is the timetable for it to report?**

Answer: We are unaware of the content of all of the evidence previously provided to the Committee so we have no knowledge of where the term "Football Review Group" arose.

There is no "Football Review Group". The Scottish FA requested Henry McLeish to consider and report on certain areas of the game of association football in Scotland. This became known as "The Scottish Football Review" or "The Review of Scottish Football" in the media. Mr. McLeish submitted the first part of his Report to the Association's Professional Football Committee and the Board in the spring of this year. This first part focuses on the Grassroots development of the game as it exists in Scotland and listed various recommendations. As a consequence of the number of recommendations (53) the Association's Board has decided to prioritise same. The first area to be addressed by the Board is the production of a Performance Strategy and player pathway which, subject to Board approval, will inform the appointment of a Performance Director.

The Association engaged a consultant from a company called "Renaissance" and he had the Association's Board form a steering group, comprising our First Vice President, Campbell Ogilvie; National Coach, Craig Levein; Head of Football Development, Jim Fleeting; Head of Communications, Darryl Broadfoot and the Consultant, to consider the development of the Performance Strategy. It is not called a "Football Review Group" nor has it wide ranging powers to undertake work outwith the development of a Draft Performance Strategy. Following completion and implementation of this phase, the Board will, consider other aspects of Mr. McLeish's recommendations.

**2. What were the criteria used to decide on the membership of the group and
for not taking evidence in public?**

Answer: As there is no "Football Review Group" this question is redundant.

**3. Will you consider widening the membership of the group to include a
representative of children's interests e.g. Scotland's Commissioner for
Children and Young People? Would you include interested parties such as the
petitioner?**

Answer: This question is also to a large extent redundant. Subject to the Performance Strategy being approved and the consequent appointment of a Performance Director, it is envisaged that this individual will direct, implement and measure the outcomes of how young football players are to be developed. This work will inform the detail of the Performance Strategy and the Association anticipates that it will change the way young players are developed and trained. The Association also anticipates that this will have an impact on how these players play football at a young age and we will, of course, take advices from key interested parties. In respect of your query regarding the Children's Commissioner, please be advised that he has never contacted directly the Association to advise that he has views which should be

considered. If the Petitioner's, or any third party, wish to provide their views then communication should be effected directly to the Association.

4. How public and accessible will the work of the group be and how will active public participation throughout actually take part?

Answer: it is important for the Committee to appreciate that almost every man, woman and child in Scotland will have a view on Scottish football, such is the nature and influence of the sport in Scotland, just as virtually everyone has a view on Government. The Scottish FA consults, and will continue to consult with, its stakeholders and advisors to ensure that what it does is neither illegal nor improper in the administration of the sport.

5. Will the issue of improving facilities be considered by the group and, if so, precisely what?

Answer: The Scottish Football Association is not responsible for facilities development by Government, local authorities or private entities. We are available to advise as to the nature and quality of facilities that should be developed, providing information on best practice and quality.

The first part of the Report by Henry McLeish considered facilities and made clear that a significant amount of investment requires to be made in the improvement of football facilities available for the Grassroots of the game. Government, local authorities and private entities require to work together to deliver these facilities for all sports, not just football. The Association actively encourages consultation to be undertaken with relevant input from football advisors on location and quality of facilities at a strategic level. The development of the full size, indoor pitches at Toryglen in Glasgow, Ravenscraig in Lanarkshire and Aberdeen Sport Village are excellent examples of the type of facilities that can be developed to provide year long football for the communities, the recreational game and the professionals to train and develop their skills side by side.

Through the Scottish Sports Association, the Association has encouraged the unlocking of the school estate and other local authority facilities to provide access to the many football teams around the country, in order that they may use these facilities in the evenings and at weekends.

6. Will you provide the Committee with an example of the registration forms which the football clubs are using?

Answer: In the context of the Committee's consideration of the Petitioner's submission the Association will provide a sample of the registration forms used by the Initiative clubs for the development and training of players. This should assist the Committee's understanding of our previous submission's comments contained within the June submission, answer 1 [see attached].

7. What is your response to the point made by the STUC (PE1319/L) about the need for clarification and of a review of the current position?

Answer: The Association and the SPL and SFL regularly review and discuss the registration system with a view to annual updating of methods, as required. The STUC suggestion of a release mechanism being available for the player already exists. Players attached to senior clubs aged 10 and 11 can make an application to the SFA for their registration to be cancelled -

Registration Procedure 2.5.1 states – "Should a player aged 10 or 11 registered upon this type of form have his registration cancelled at the request of the player's parent(s)/guardian(s) then such a player will not be eligible to sign another Non-

Recreational Youth Player Registration Form for any club participating in the SFA Youth Initiative during the course of the remainder of the season of cancellation.”

Players aged from 12 to 17, are classed as Youth players and the relevant Registration Regulation states –

2.12 Cancellation of Non-Recreational Form Registration – Youth

Registration upon a Non-Recreational Form – Youth may be cancelled:

- i. on a written request to the Secretary duly signed by an accredited official of the club; or
- ii. by the authority of the Association; or
- iii. as otherwise provided within these Procedures.

For the purposes of the Committee’s clarification, term 2.12.ii would be invoked if there were exceptional circumstances that were brought to the attention of the Association by the player (and his parents/guardians) and which upon examination warranted such action. This decision making process would involve evidence being provided to the Association’s General Purposes Committee, which has the power to declare the registration null and void. Thus, the Association would respectfully submit that the STUC’s suggestion is unnecessary.

Additional comment

The Public Petitions Committee is clearly aware of the (First) Report by Henry McLeish in his Review of Scottish Football, published in March, 2010. The focus of the Report relates to the “Grassroots” of the game in Scotland. The Association is presently taking forward key elements of Mr. McLeish’s recommendations from the Report in the development of a Performance Strategy. This has promoted a wider review of various elements of the grassroots game. Certain of the points that have been raised by the Petitioners are being discussed internally as part of the wider review.

It is also relevant to advise that the Association has been seeking a meeting at senior Ministerial level with representative(s) of the Scottish Government since June, 2010, to discuss the “McLeish Report”. A meeting was confirmed in August and our President and Chief Executive will attend the meeting with the First Minister, Alex Salmond MSP, scheduled for early November.

Player Registration

THE SCOTTISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION



This form is to be used by clubs in membership of the SPL, SFL, EOSFA, SOSFA, HFL and SJFA.

PART A Player Details													
A1 Surname													
A2 Forenames													
A3 Common Name / Previously known as													
A4 Player Status	Professional <input type="checkbox"/>	Amateur <input type="checkbox"/>	A5 Player ID			A6 DOB							
A7 Place of Birth													
A8 Country of Birth													
A9 Nationality													
A10 Address													
A12 Position	GK <input type="checkbox"/>	DF <input type="checkbox"/>	MF <input type="checkbox"/>	FWD <input type="checkbox"/>	Squad No			Height	Fr	Ins	Weight	Sr	Lbs
A13 Email Address													
<small>A player signing this form is subject to the Rules and Regulations laid down in the Registration Procedures and Articles of Association of the Scottish Football Association (Association) and any recognised football body in so much as they may be applicable. The Association's decision in any dispute shall be final and binding subject to any relevant appeals or arbitration procedures available in terms of the Articles and subject to the relevant appeals procedures within the recognised football body rules, where applicable, having been exhausted.</small>													
A15 Player's Signature							A16 Signing Date:	20					
PART B Registration Details - Refer to completion notes on reverse page.													
B1 Registration Type (Complete one box only)	Contract <input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Contract <input type="checkbox"/>	Amateur <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth 10-17 <input type="checkbox"/>									
B2 Club ID			B3 Contract Expiry Date (Always complete if Contract box is selected)	20									
B4 Club													
B5 Last Club Played for													
B6 Last Club Registered for													
B7 Country (If club named in either B4 or B5 is outside Scotland)													
B8 Authorised Club Signatory													
B9 Signature							B10 Signing Date:	20					
PART C Witness													
C1 Full Name													
C2 Address													
C3 PostCode													
C4 Signature							C5 Signing Date:	20					
PART D To be completed by Parent / Guardian if player is under 16 years of age													
D1 Full Name													
D2 Address													
D3 PostCode													
I hereby confirm that I am the Parent / Guardian of the player named in part A.													
D4 Signature							D5 Signing Date:	20					

The primary purpose of this form is to register your details as a player on the Association's database, and with other recognised football bodies, to make you eligible to play football in Scotland. However, the information may be made available to user groups within the Association, who may wish to contact you about other services. Please cross the box if you do not wish to be contacted.

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Guidance Notes

Non-contract	Valid for maximum one season only (Note 1 Below).
Youth (10-17)	Registration may be valid for more than one season for age grouping 15 and above (Note 2 Below). Registration at age groupings 14 and below are valid for one season only.
Amateur	Valid for maximum one season only.
Note 1 Registration Type (Non-Contract)	Clubs in membership of Scottish Premier League and Scottish Football League are not permitted to use this type of registration.
Note 2 Registration Type (Youth)	Parents/Guardians should have received and read a copy of the relevant rules and procedures of the youth initiative programme (where applicable) prior to signing this form. Age 15-16 and 16-17 may be taken forward for the ensuing season at the club's written request.
Work Permit	The acquisition of a work permit is required by a club when signing a player who is a national of a country outwith the EU or EEA.

■ White copy (original) to Scottish FA ■ Green copy to SPL/SFL (if applicable) ■ Blue copy to Club ■ White copy to Player