

Realgrassroots

PE1319/U

Monday 3rd October 2011

Anne Peat,
Clerk to the Public Petition Committee,
TG.01,
The Scottish Parliament,
Edinburgh.
EH99 1SP

PUBLIC PETITION PE1319

Thank you for your recent correspondence in relation to our Public Petition.

In opening, may we pay tribute to the previous members of the Public Petitions Committee for the vigour and appetite they displayed in progressing our petition? We hope that the newly formed Committee will be similarly keen to pursue the issues we have raised as supported by the Commissioner for Children and Young People, The Scottish Youth FA, the STUC and the Child Law centre.

We have read the response from the Scottish Government who state there have been significant changes to the 'youth player development pathway which includes the youth initiative and its registration processes.' We would be keen to gain some detail as to what the significant changes are.

We have previously raised the issue of SFA member clubs using unrecognised documents, referred to as Commitment Forms and would be eager to find out what action has been taken to stop the unauthorised use of these forms by Scotland's professional clubs.

The Scottish Premier and Scottish Football League operate a system of compensation payments for the transfer of young players between member clubs. This practice appears to be unlawful under FIFA's Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players 2010 which states at Regulation 20:

Training compensation shall be paid to a player's training club(s): (1) when a player signs his first contract as a professional and (2) each time a professional is transferred until the end of the season of his 23rd birthday. The obligation to pay training compensation arises whether the transfer takes place during or at the end of the player's contract. The provisions concerning training compensation are set out in Annexe 4 of these regulations.

The direction here would appear to state that NO payment can be made whilst the player is not a professional, i.e. a youth player. The petitioners would be interested to find out the view of the member clubs on this matter. UEFA and the SFA do wish to provide comment whilst the matter is being deliberated by the Public Petition Committee. A stance we do not agree with.

The main reason for introducing the youth initiative system was to develop and produce the best young players in Scotland. Given the money and resources made available to them over the last 15 years, we would be keen to ask the professional clubs in Scotland if they feel they have succeeded in producing world-class players.

The time has come to ask our clubs – can you provide evidence that the youth initiative system is working?

We look forward to the forth-coming session and hope that the Committee will continue our petition as we work towards improving the terms and conditions for all our young players.

Kind regards,

Scott Robertson & William Smith
(On behalf of Realgrassroots)