

PE1319/PPP

Letter from Realgrassroots of 19 September 2016

Following the last session of the Committee which discussed the progress of our Petition, we would simply like to make known our agreement with the decision taken by the Committee.

We believe the Scottish Youth FA and Scottish Schools FA have over 100,000 young players registered between them and therefore it is right that both these organisations are invited to give oral evidence at a future Public Petitions Committee meeting. Over the course of the last 6 ½ years we have seen the Scottish FA, Scottish Professional Football League, a number of representatives from professional clubs attend the Scottish Parliament to give their views, however, we have not at any time afforded these two very important organisations into a session.

We believe that these two bodies will be able to give useful insight into the state of our youth game, not only before professional clubs became involved in 'developing' players but also during the introduction of the pro-youth & Club Academy Scotland. They will also be able to share with you the effects this Petition has had and perhaps give an indication or feeling where we still need travel for the betterment of our youth game.

Realgrassroots also support the attendance of the Professional Footballers Association Scotland. As 'union' representatives for players in Scotland, both young and old their experience and knowledge of how clubs handle and treat players across the spectrum is invaluable.

They will also be in a position to provide evidence of professional player contracts that still exist which fail to meet National Minimum Wage legislation and comment on the much maligned £1 per week contracts. The PFA can also provide clarity on the assertion by Minister Aileen Campbell who stated in a letter dated 20th June 2016 to the PCC '*My officials have discussed these concerns extensively with the Scottish FA, SPFL, and PFA Scotland*'.

Finally, we may pay tribute to James Dornan MSP for bringing his Members Debate to the floor of the Parliament on Thursday 8th September. Whilst the National Minimum Wage is not a feature of our Petition this scandalous practice needed to be exposed and we were impressed by Mr Dornan's speech and his appetite to eradicate this from Scottish football.

Yours faithfully,

William Smith