

Further information was requested by the Committee regarding the following points and here is the Football Association of Wales' response:

The current support provided by both central and local government in Wales for the Welsh Premier League and suggestions for support in the future.

While no funding whatsoever has been invested directly into the WPL by WAG in the past 10 years, Welsh Football is receiving £1,332,418 in 2011/12 through the Welsh Football Trust out of Sport Wales' annual budget of over £25 million.

A further investment of £750,000 has also been confirmed by Sport Wales for the National Development Centre in Newport.

During the same period the Welsh Rugby Union is receiving funding to the tune of £555,345.21 from Sport Wales and a further £500,000 for purchasing the big screens at the Millennium Stadium.

As previously mentioned there are 1,500 football clubs in Wales compared to 340 rugby clubs and the WRU's annual turnover last year was over £54 million compared to the FAW's £10 million.

We have requested figures from the WLGA regarding funding for football at all levels but haven't received the relevant information as yet but it is no secret that that the level of local government investment has fallen sharply in recent years. Five years ago the Welsh Football Trust received partnership funding for the Football Development Posts from 21 of the 22 local authorities – this would equate to about £350,000 of financial support. None of the LA's are now funding posts but due to additional FAW funding 18 posts are still active which again proves the FAW's commitment to developing football at all levels.

The main costs to LA's will be facility provision because the majority of WPL clubs play on council owned pitches. Due to the fact that many councils now have a decommissioning strategy to close down costly and under used facilities it would be beneficial to clubs and communities and a prudent financial investment to position 3G/4G pitches as they produce a revenue stream and can absorb activity from 6 to 8 grass pitches.

This 3G/4G strategy with the 12 WPL clubs becoming community hubs for all sections of society would benefit and strengthen community links, health, civil obedience and make the clubs far more sustainable.

Due to the fact that 3G/4G pitches generate income – no further investment would be required once the 9 year life span of each pitch came to an end. The total, one off investment, to introduce 3G/4G pitches to all WPL clubs, either as first team pitches or training facilities for club and community would cost a maximum of £5 million. The perfect model for this has been proven at Crusaders in Northern Ireland.

The government paid 75% of the 4G costs – gave the club the responsibility of managing and maintaining the pitch – but demanded that local schools were allowed free allocated access to the facility on a weekly basis. Every party involved has reaped benefit from the new arrangement.

The work being undertaken with respect to tackling racism and in reaching out to more diverse footballing communities such as women, BME and LGBT people.

In our recently launched Strategy Plan the FAW positively declares our aspiration to be a “standard bearer for health, participation and inclusivity... for players at all levels, abilities and genders.”

Two of our specific actions are to:

1) Prioritise development of Disabled & BME inclusion initiatives

- Set up two impairment – specific national disability squads
- Set up three regional disability performance centres.

2) Prioritise development of women’s and junior football

- Set up Women’s Football Taskforce to raise profile, review player pathway and competition structures.
- Include junior and female development in Domestic Licence
- Set up six regional performance centres for girls.

Inclusion

In March 2012 the FAW signed up with Stonewall’s Diversity Champions Project to promote fair treatment for all. Andrew White, director of Stonewall Cymru said that the FAW’s commitment to the project was “ a great step forward and signals the kind of leadership we hope to see more of in Welsh sport.”

The FAW seeks to promote an environment in which all individuals, regardless of background, are offered a level platform on which to fulfil potential.

BME Football

At present we have 90,000 registered football players in Wales of which 3% are from BME backgrounds. Through the WFT’s newly launched Strategic Plan for the Development of BME Football in Wales 2012-14 the aim is to increase the number of registered players to 4%.

At present there are 7 community clubs across Wales with 50% + BME players and 1 multicultural 5 a Side League in South Wales. An annual BME tournament is held across the South / West Wales and Gwent Regions.

The aim is to increase the number of BMA coaches at all levels of the coaching pathway by 2014 to; 80 level 1/24 level 2/16 level 3/2 level 4 and 8 goalkeeping level 1.

As well as this drive to increase participation levels the FAW is also fully supportive of the ***‘Show Racism the Red Card’*** scheme.

The majority of this work is funded by Big Lottery Funding and has resulted in 100% of schools visited requesting further sessions. For the past four years the FAW has directly funded the Show Racism the Red Card Fortnight at a total cost of £52,000. Last year this involved 32 Welsh Clubs and

the National Team at which 77,500 people were present. WPL clubs formed the backbone of this campaign as will be the case again this October.

Women's Football

The FAW now invests 25% of international budgets into Women's Football and will launch the National Women's Premier League for the first time in the Autumn. A female representative will also be elected to the FAW Council in the present financial year.

The FAW also fully endorses the Welsh Football Trust's Strategic Plan for the Development of Women's and Girls Football in Wales 2010-2014. Prior to the scheme there were 3,500 registered players in Wales – the achievable aim of a further increase of 40% is the next target by 2014.

Sport Wales Chair Laura McAllister believes that "The WFT and FAW has demonstrated a real commitment to create further opportunities for women's and girl's football" through this strategy.

"Gorau Chwarae Cyd Chwarae"