



English Schools' Football Association

Membership Matters

A message from the Chairman

REMINDERS

ESFA Child Welfare briefing– Tuesday 8th February

Schools' Football Week 2022 7th-13th February

England U18 Schoolboys' v Scotland U18 Schoolboys Friday 1st April (Spennymoor Town FC)

England U18 Schoolboys vs Republic of Ireland U18 Schoolboys Friday 8th April (Eastleigh FC)

Welcome to another edition of Membership Matters. As you will read, Council met with a full agenda earlier in January. It was particularly helpful to have two of our honorary auditors join us for discussion of the player registration scheme and Champions' Cups which will help inform the upcoming consultation events for regions, counties and districts.

This meeting was also a significant one in terms of Council membership. It was our first without Eamonn Kearney who informed us of his resignation, effective immediately, at the end of 2021 and I would like to publicly thank him for his time and contribution whilst on council. The advance notice of Owen Aiston's resignation was discussed, although Owen will remain with us until the end of the current season so it seems more appropriate to celebrate his vast contribution a little later in the year. I was also delighted to recommend the appointment of John Duncan to council as our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion co-opted member following the recent round of interviews. This is a crucial role for the ESFA and we look forward to what John will contribute and drive during his time with us.

After a two year wait, it appears we are going to be able to enjoy some schools' international football this year! I write this immediately after a strong performance from our U18 Boys who enjoyed an excellent game against The RAF in Middlesex. It was an excellent preparatory game against a strong side that saw England end the game on the right side of a 4v1 score line. It was an honour to present the boys with their shirts prior to the game and to start to get to know them and their families.

Next up for the boys' and girls' squads is a half term training camp at St George's Park courtesy of InspireSport before further friendly fixtures for each squad in preparation for their competitive fixtures through March and April. It will be fantastic to watch the players grow and develop as they wear the three lions and to once again be able to challenge ourselves against friends from Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

I will sign off my opening page with mention of Schools' Football Week (7th-13th February) which promises to be the biggest and best yet. The staff team have done an amazing job of preparing and promoting this celebratory event and I know that thousands of children across the country are quite rightly very excited for what the week will bring.

ESFA Chairman-Mark Hignett



Report of Council– January 2022

Mark Hignett, Chair for 2021/22, opened the meeting by welcoming all Members to the two day meeting of Council.

Members heard from the Rep Committee that the international trials process had concluded, under budget. The opportunity for the girls to play an additional fixture against Scotland, to celebrate 50 years of the ban on women's football in Scotland being lifted, had been recommended to and approved by the Trustees. The fixture would be played on 15th May. Members were updated on the details of the international fixture programme and the preparatory training, due to take place in February at St George's Park, courtesy of inspiresport. Thanks were extended to them and to the Commercial Director for this, and to the Commercial Director for his success in securing the BBC broadcast deal for the Centenary Shield, on behalf of SAFIB.

Competitions Committee reported on the progress of National Competitions, and confirmed the date of the Deaf Schools' Finals (8th February, Derby Soccer-Dome). Preparations were well under way for the PlayStation F.C. Schools' Cup finals, which would include for the first time some e-sports activity. Schools' Football Week was again proving popular, with over 135,000 pupils registered to take part. Members heard that The FA were conducting a review of education partners' national competitions, particularly in the boys 16-18 age group, following reports of complexity in the offer for that cohort.

The Football Development Committee held a short meeting, focusing on the re-release of development funding to CSFAs, which would follow over the next two weeks, and heard of the progress the Football Project Manager had made in developing a draft volunteering strategy.

The Chair of the Football Governance Committee reported back on progress with sanctioning and on the current levels of disciplinary cases. A survey on the administration of discipline was planned, and the previous survey of Members on the ease by which match officials could be secured was to be re-opened, given the low levels of response. A working group of Members was also to be established to focus specifically on the creating a better interpretation of how to implement SCORY in different forms of schools' football. Members were pleased to note that there was now a short video available to guide colleagues on applying for DBS clearance, and a second Welfare Officer briefing was planned for 8th February.

Trustees reported on payments made to Associations for resumption of football and sanctioning, and Champions' Cup payments. Some of the FA grant had been targeted at intra-school football, in order to stimulate participation. Trustees had completed their mandatory safeguarding training and office staff were returning to HQ on a hybrid working basis with immediate effect. A consultation calendar would be published in Membership Matters, to alert Membership now to the forthcoming consultation topics and events planned. This would include further discussion about the Champions' Cups.

The Chair welcomed Honorary Auditors Neil Pont and Allan Reed to the meeting on Sunday, to discuss the future of the Champions' Cups. Council Members held an open and honest discussion about the successes of the Champions' Cups and the issues arising, with a focus on solutions. In accordance with previous commitments made, Members reiterated their intention to go back to Membership with potential adjustments to some aspects of the current competition format, once further feasibility work on the subject was completed by an internal working group.



Report of Council– Continued

Other Council business included the adoption of the authentication process approved at the AGM for Council nominations, which would be opened for vacant posts in early February.

The Chair thanked contributors to the meeting and placed on record Council's thanks to Eamonn Kearney for his service to Council, following his departure from Council in December. Council were sorry to note Owen Aiston's decision to resign from Council at the end of the season and would pay tribute to his significant contribution to schools' football nationally at the appropriate time.

Council Leavers

The ESFA Council wishes to place on record its thanks to Eamonn Kearney, outgoing Council Member in the South East, for his work on our behalf. Eamonn left Council in December but remains involved in schools' football at a local level whilst continuing to balance a busy work and family life. Eamonn was a Council Member during the pandemic so had little opportunity to meet with Council colleagues in person or to enjoy National Competitions finals: nonetheless, Members hope that Eamonn enjoyed his tenure on Council.

The ESFA Council also wishes to place on record its thanks to Owen Aiston, Council Member for the North, who has resigned from Council and will leave at the end of the season. We will pay tribute to Owen's contribution as he reaches the end of his tenure, but in the meantime he continues to work with his usual levels of commitment and diligence as the Chair of the Representative Committee, one of the busiest and most challenging roles on Council.

Nominations to serve on Council

With these and other vacancies in mind, the ESFA is opening its nomination process for new Council representatives. The vacant posts are as follows:

North: two vacancies, one long standing and one arising from the resignation of Owen Aiston, effective at the end of the season.

Midlands: one vacancy, as Mark Warren reaches the end of the one year tenure offered to nominees under the extended eligibility criteria.

South East: one vacancy, following the departure of Eamonn Kearney.

South West: two vacancies, one long standing and one arising from the end of the one year tenure offered to Ray Brown under extended eligibility criteria.



Nominations to serve on Council -Continued

At its January meeting, Council agreed that the authentication process referenced in the procedure for nominations should mirror that requested by Membership for calling an EGM. The procedure has been updated to reflect this as outlined below:

“The authentication for nominations will be in the form of a written statement from the Member Association, either signed by, or from the e-mail address of the named Secretary, Chair, and Treasurer of the Member Association. Where one person holds two of the three posts, then a third person must be added to this group for authentication”.

We will write to Members under separate cover with timelines (taking account of the authentication requirements) and nomination paperwork, including the updated procedure. In the meantime, a reminder that nominations must come from an affiliated Member of the ESFA, and be seconded by a different Association in the region where the nominee is to serve. The eligibility criteria for Council nomination is:

- A member of an Association; and
- A trained teacher holding Qualified Teacher Status

Consultation Calendar

The ESFA Council wishes to consult with Membership on a number of important topics over the coming months and with this in mind, a consultation calendar has been prepared, to give you advance notice of the specific dates planned for these events. You can find the consultation calendar [here](#). We will write to you before each event with further details and a request to respond if you wish to attend, but you can pre-register for these events now by emailing the CEO.

Match Officials Feedback Survey

Thank you to those of you who responded to our match officials survey in November. However, as response rates were low, the Governance Committee of Council wishes to re-open the survey, which will remain live until Tuesday 22nd February.

Previous respondents do not need to resubmit their information unless further issues have been encountered – we have retained your previous feedback

Please access the survey [here](#).



Football Governance Manager

Members will know that Chris Parkin, has now left the ESFA and we wish him well for the future.

We are now seeking a replacement for Chris, and you can see the advert and job description on the ESFA website, [here](#).

Association Discipline Survey

The Governance Committee of Council wishes to gain a better understanding of the discipline arrangements across the country, and invites Association Secretaries to arrange a response to the survey [here](#). The survey will remain open until Tuesday 22nd February.

Standard Code of Rules for Youth Football (SCORY) – ESFA Working Group

We have received feedback from some of Membership that the Standard Code of Rules template provided earlier this season is still challenging to implement. As a result, it is proposed to create a small working group to help propose more useful versions of the Code for the various formats of the schools' game.

We are now therefore seeking volunteers to serve on that Working Group, which will need to meet (online) on Thursday 24th February at 4.30pm, so that the outcomes from the group can be shared back with Council in March, with a view to revised templates being published in time for Members' AGMs. The SCORY Working Group will be chaired by Alan Johnston, ESFA Governance Committee Chair.

If you are happy to help us with that work, please email the CEO andrea.chilton@schoolsfa.com no later than 4th February. Thank you in advance.

County and District Funding Digest

This funding digest serves as a reminder of funding to which ESFA formal affiliated Counties and Districts are entitled, and the means by which funding can be secured. It also highlights the funding opportunities available to Counties and Districts should they wish to take them up. Where external funding sources have been identified, they are included in these digests, which also contain a case study for creating sponsorship packages for a rep football teams.

The funding digests can be found on our website [here](#).



A Reminder about the ESFA National Volunteer – Safeguarding scheme:

The ESFA is undertaking a series of safeguarding support visits, whereby colleagues speak with players, parents and officials involved in rep teams to ensure that safeguarding requirements are understood by those who need to know. The purpose of these visits is to support Associations by checking whether they need to take any further action to protect themselves and the children they support, and to identify good practice from which others could learn. The desk top reviews, conducted by the National Welfare Officers, serve the same purpose by checking the Association's public records.

This work is proving invaluable for those involved, and for the ESFA's safeguarding practice nationwide. For this reason, we would like to complete a wider range of visits and to do so, are offering the opportunity for 20 Association Child Welfare Officers to become accredited "ESFA National Volunteer: Safeguarding". This concept aligns with our emerging volunteering strategy, on which we will consult in spring.

The requirements and responsibilities of a National Safeguarding Volunteer are:

- To have, and maintain, an in-date FA DBS clearance
- To hold, and maintain, in-date FA safeguarding training
- To be a child welfare officer in an affiliated ESFA association which itself has no suspended teams

National safeguarding volunteers will benefit from:

- "National volunteer – safeguarding" accreditation
- Training and support to conduct visits
- Branded fleece/top recognising the role as an accredited national volunteer for safeguarding
- An ID badge for the same purpose, dated to reflect the season of accreditation
- Support of a peer group
- Reimbursement of necessarily incurred travel expenses

If you have an immediate interest in becoming an accredited National Volunteer for safeguarding, please register your interest by emailing the CEO at the ESFA – andrea.chilton@Schoolsfa.com – and we look forward to seeing you at the briefing below where further details will be provided.

ESFA National Volunteers – Safeguarding and Welfare Officer Briefing

Members will have seen email correspondence inviting expressions of interest to become an "ESFA National Volunteer – Safeguarding", so this is a reminder that you can find out more at our planned Child Welfare briefing for Association Secretaries and CWOs, on 8th February at 6pm. Please register your attendance with Martin.Duffield@schoolsfa.com.



Schools' Football Week 2022

Schools' Football Week (SFW), in association with Haier, will be creating football-based opportunities for more children than ever before from the 7th – 13th February 2022.

The initiative, which was launched in late 2021, has already seen over 800 schools register to take part in school-time activities for their pupils, meaning that so far, over 140,000 children will be enjoying some additional activity alongside their curriculum.

While the overall message to encourage children to get outside, have fun and enjoy being able to play sport with their school friends is still key to the campaign, the ESFA is also utilising SFW to focus on and celebrate the continued growth of girls' football. The campaign registration so far has already shown that over 56,000 girls will benefit from some football-based activity as part of the week in 2022.

In addition to championing girls' football this season, Schools' Football Week is also focussing on:

- Celebrating the ESFA's first ever broadcast draws for National Schools' Cup quarter and semi-final matches on Monday 7 February
- Celebrating and promoting the Deaf Schools' Finals, which take place on Tuesday 8 February

The campaign isn't designed to focus on competitive football, but the wide-ranging benefits that being part of a team can have on school age children in England. For example, SFW aims to bring together opportunities for schools to bring football off the pitch and into classrooms, providing learning resources from other ESFA partners that can be useful tools to engage pupils in the wider world of football.

Keep an eye out for lots of exciting Schools' Football Week content on ESFA social media channels during the week itself and make sure you share the amazing activity happening in schools up and down the country during the week itself!





ESFA Play Safe Campaign

This month the ESFA launched its new Play Safe Campaign aimed at keeping players and parents safe whilst playing Schools' Football. We have put together some useful resources that we encourage you to share with your players and parents to help them understand the importance of safeguarding in schools' football and identify some actions that can be taken to help keep them safe. These resources can be accessed [here](#).



ESFA Player Engagement Campaign

Last year the ESFA launched its player engagement campaign to increase the amount of input our players have in the decisions we make. We have received lots of brilliant responses to this campaign from both schools and associations which we will be sharing in the coming weeks on our social media channels.

This campaign will be continuing throughout 2022 and we would love to hear from as many of our players as possible. For more information on the campaign and how you can get your players involved [click here](#)



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