

FA x FSA Women's Game Structured Dialogue Report
18th October 2022
2pm - 4pm

In person and Online

Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Meeting Format
3. England
4. Independent Review into the Women's Game
5. Women's Game strategy
6. FAWNL Strategy and Plans for execution
7. WSL/WC
8. FA Player
9. Referees
10. AOB

Attendees

Sue Campbell (SC)	Director of Women's Football	FA
Kelly Simmons (KS)	Director of Women's Professional Game	FA
Holly Murdoch (HM)	Head of Operations, Pro Game	FA
Nick Frith (NF)	Women's Leagues Operations Manager	FA
Hannah Gascoigne (HG)	Secretariat, Women's Game Review	FA
Sophie Levin (SL)	Public Affairs	FA
Kevin Miles (KM)	Chief Executive	FSA
David Rose (DR)	Deputy Chief Executive	FSA
Deborah Dilworth (DD)	Women's Game Network Manager	FSA
Eva Georgiou (EG)	Clapton Community FC	WNL
Nicolas Andrew-Gaivain (NAG)	Wolves 1877 Trust/Wolves Women Podcast	WNL
Bob Whetton (BW)	Nottingham Forest Supporters Trust	WNL
Lauren Kreamer (LC)	Charlton Athletic Supporters Trust	WCL
Shahan Miah (SM)	Bristol City Supporters Club and Trust	WCL
Sian Wallis (SW)	Proud Lilywhites	WSL
Rach Major (RM)	The Gang/Arsenal Women Supporters Club	INT/WSL
Jude Morris-King (JMK)	Manchester City Women's Official Supporters	WSL

Hana Basir (HB) Club
Observer

Apologies: Jo Bailey (Pride of Irons), Stuart Barker (Since 71)

Chair: FSA

1) Introductions

DD introduced the meeting.

All attendees were invited to introduce themselves.

KS welcomed everyone and stated that the FA were delighted that the meetings had been agreed.

2) Meeting Format

DD explained the format of the meeting and the ambitions for its development going forwards.

3) England

DD stated that before the formal agenda commenced that the FSA wanted to formally congratulate the Lionesses for a historic and incredible win at Euro's 2022. DD stated that this must have taken an awful lot of work from a number of FA staff and congratulations must go to everyone.

DD stated that there were a number of topics to talk about in regards to England including - Away Travel Support, Supporters Club, Singing/FSA Sections, Loyalty Schemes, stadiums choices for home games, legacy of lionesses and women's world cup 2023.

DD suggested that we cover off a couple of items but look to set up a separate consultation group for supporters around the England team.

DD introduced RM to lead on two areas: Lack of supporters club and away travel difficulties.

RM talked through the difficulties of travelling away to watch England women and how difficult it was to get information in a timely manner, if at all.

RM also stated that since the women's supporters club had been combined with the men's, there really was no supporters club at all anymore and thus no supporter benefits.

SC asked if the suggestion was that a separate supporters club was set up.

DD suggested that all these topics should be pushed into the separate consultation to allow space to discuss properly.

ACTIONS

1. FSA and FA to set up consultation meetings with supporters around England women.

4) Independent Review

HH/SL talked through the review and its process.

Karen Carney to lead the review with secretariat from FA/DCMS

Call for evidence is out and the deadline is the 1st November for evidence. Themes being covered in the review are as follows:

- o Clubs structure & Governance
- o Audience/attendance growth
- o Commercial

There are six sub-themes under this core areas.

A review of evidence will happen post submission and then there will be a series of expert panels to discuss matters further.

Review set to be published spring 2023 with Gov response to follow up.

BW asked why the deadlines seemed so tight. SL stated that the review was perhaps behind schedule and so there was a desire to ensure that it is done in a timely manner.

DD asked if more timelines could be shared around the next steps of the process.

HG confirmed they would be in due course.

It was agreed a number of topics seemed to hold agreement between the two organisations.

5) Women's Game Strategy

DD asked the FA to talk through their current strategies around women and girls.

SC talked the group through the FA's Women's and Girls strategy 2020-2024, Inspiring Positive Change, set out in eight clear objectives .

1. Giving every girl the earliest opportunity to have a fun, enjoyable introduction to the game in school and club.
2. Providing a well-signposted, inclusive and accessible club player pathway that supports the talented girls and young women who aspire to play in The FA Women's National League, The FA Women's Championship and the Barclays FA Women's Super League.
3. Being at the global forefront of women's professional sport and developing the best women sports leagues and competitions in the world
4. Providing a 'Blueprint for Success' for our England players from under-14s through to the senior team so we consistently achieve international success in major senior tournaments.
5. Ensuring we have high standards of coaching practice throughout the women's game underpinned by a thirst for ongoing learning, critical thinking and knowledge sharing.
6. Providing football for all those who want to play for fun and recreation by developing local leaders from every community to motivate and organise opportunities to play for fitness and friendship.
7. Developing a diverse, well supported and highly skilled workforce including coaches, referees, sports development officers and administrators at every level of the game.
8. Growing our fanbase and extending engagement in our domestic and international competitions to build profile, drive brand value and ensure long-term financial sustainability

A detailed update on progress can be found
<https://www.thefa.com/news/2022/nov/08/inspiring-positive-change-women-girls-football-strategy-update-20220811>

Other resources can be found here:

<https://www.thefa.com/news/2021/nov/09/womens-professional-game-strategy-2021-2024-20210911> - Women's Pro Game Strategy

<https://www.thefa.com/news/2022/nov/08/inspiring-positive-change-women-girls-football-strategy-update-20220811> - Womens and Girls Strategy

EG stated that funding has been cut in her local borough for girls and that this was an issue given the increases in funding across the board.

SC stated she would follow up on this and find out why.

ACTIONS

1. SL to find out details of the borough and the issue from EG
2. SC to follow up and notify FSA of reasoning.

6) FAWNLS Strategy

NF updated the group on the national league strategy which was launched covering a period of 22-25 to develop clubs on & off pitch

- o Player & club survey launched
- o Commercial workshop
- o Coach development workshop
- o Social media support
- o Competition review
- o PL Stadium fund (£20k for improvements)

NAG stated there were issues with a number of areas including transparency and competition structure.

NF/HM stated there is a review of competitions being undertaken. There was an agreement by both parties that one promotion from two leagues was wrong and so this is why the review is so important.

NF stated that transparency was being looked at including social media engagement and that league rules/licence conditions publishing to be reviewed

The FA team stated they would look at FAWNLS going on to FA Player as the FAWNLS promotion final has good viewing figures on BBC iPlayer.

7) WSL/WSC

DD asked about the new CEO role for the WSL/Championship and how the FSA women's game network can best interact with the person who takes the role.

SC talked through the new organisational structure and stated the following would be put in place following the ownership review:

- Formation of a Wholly Owned Subsidiary New Co of the FA ahead of the 23/24 season
- Recruitment for a CEO is underway

ACTIONS

1. FSA and FA to discuss how to formalise structured dialogue in the new organisation
2. FSA and FA to look at separate structured dialogue meeting for FAWNL

Group discussed other issues pertaining to the WSL and Championship.

JMK led the WSL section and covered the following areas: away allocation, fixture clashes, kick off times and league expansion.

HM stated that they were in discussion with the clubs about away support and streamlining the processes in place, furthermore they were having detailed discussions about fixture clashes and that league expansions would be in the review of the competition structures.

LK led on the issues around the Conti-Cup. HM stated that this competition was part of the competition/pyramid review

ACTIONS

1. KS/HM to pick up points supporters have raised about fixture clashes and kick off times with broadcasters.

8) FA Player

Covered in FAWNL section

9) Referees

DD ask for an update on VAR lite implementation in the women's game and what training and development was planned for referee's.

KS stated there was a good team of referee's and structure around the development especially with the PGMOL appointing Bibiana Steinhaus Webb as the women's select group director.

KS there is not enough money for full time referee's as it stands nor for technology

KS stated a shift in negative attitudes towards referees is worrying.

DD stated that the two organisations should work together to stop this in its tracks.

ACTIONS

1. DD to follow up with FA colleagues to discuss a campaign around referee's and support for them.

10) AOB

DD asked the FA who was leading on Greenweek (which is scheduled for Feb 2023). HM stated it was Hannah Buckley.

EG asked about the current safeguarding/welfare processes in place and asked what lessons we could learn from recent examples in Spain and the USA. HM stated that a review of the Yates report was happening and the FA will be implementing the recommendations from this.

Date of next meeting - TBC (circa March 2023)