

Women's Football Taskforce
Tuesday 11 June 10:30 - 12:00
100 Parliament Street

Women's Football Taskforce - Attendees

Government

- Stephanie Peacock MP, Minister for Sport, Media, Civil Society and Youth

Women's Football Taskforce - members

- Nikki Doucet, CEO, WSL Football (WSLF)
- Holly Murdoch, COO, WSL Football (WSLF)
- Sue Day, Director of Women's Football, The FA
- Nick Frith, Women's Leagues Operations Senior Manager, The FA
- Andrew Mitchell, Senior Public Affairs and Policy Manager, The FA
- Debora Dilworth, Head of Women's Football, Football Supporters Association (FSA)
- Ben Wright, Director of External Affairs, Professional Footballers' Association (PFA)
- Marie Christine Bouchier, Director of Women's Football, Professional Footballers' Association (PFA)
- Cassie Goodison, Strategic Lead for Special Projects, Sport England
- Lynsey Tweddle, Strategic Lead for Governance, Sport England

Independent Representatives

- Karen Carney OBE, Former professional footballer and Chair of the Independent Review of Women's Football
- Kelly Simmons OBE, Sport consultant and Board advisor

Actions:

1. **DCMS Officials to continue to monitor progress against actions from the Player Welfare Taskforce Meeting in February.**
2. **The Minister for Sport to meet with Debbie Hewitt MBE, Chair of the FA, to discuss FA governance structures and representation of Women's Football on the main FA board.**
3. **The FA to undertake a review of Women's National League governance over the next year, followed by a period of education and support for clubs and the introduction of Owners' and Directors' Tests.**
 - a. **The FA will keep the Taskforce updated on the project and timeframes, and consider how best to take forward the offers of support and advice from Taskforce members.**
4. **The FSA will work with the WSLF to support a review of the role of Supporter Liaison Officers in clubs, in order to improve best practice around the role.**
5. **Officials will canvas Taskforce members for future deep dive topics: broadcasting was suggested.**

Meeting Minutes

AGENDA ITEM 1: Introductory remarks from Minister for Sport

- The Minister for Sport welcomed members to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance and commitment to women's football.
- The Minister noted the continued importance of the Taskforce and highlighted the spotlight on women's sport this summer.
- The Minister acknowledged ongoing challenges in women's football following the recent issues at Blackburn Rovers WFC, Hull City Ladies and Barnsley FC Women.

AGENDA ITEM 2: Review of Player Welfare Actions

- Attendees provided updates, reiterating their commitment to specific actions from the February meeting.
- **Action 1: DCMS Officials to continue to monitor progress against actions from the Player Welfare Taskforce Meeting in February.**

AGENDA ITEM 3: Representation of the women's game within FA governance structures

- The FA updated on current work to enhance representation in their governance structure, particularly through the integration of the WSLF into the Professional Game Board.
- The FA emphasised their commitment to representation of the women's game throughout governance structures but do not yet have a timescale for representation of the women's game on the main FA board, noting the need for a long-term solution.
- There was a discussion on the importance of representation on the FA main board for women's football and the practicalities of updating governance arrangements to achieve this.
- The Minister for Sport actively supports FA main board representation for the women's game and commented on the time between Karen's Review and action being taken and asked for clarity on timescales.
- **Action 2: The Minister for Sport to meet with Debbie Hewitt MBE, Chair of the FA, to discuss FA governance structures and representation of Women's Football on the main FA board**

AGENDA ITEM 4: Women's National League Governance Challenges

- There was a discussion on Women's National League (WNL) governance challenges, particularly financial stability and governance standards, citing recent club issues.
- The importance of proactive planning, rather than reactive support was noted. Taskforce members provided suggestions and examples from previous work on governance. Offers of support given around the table to support the review of the WNL that the FA have committed to. This will be followed by an education period for clubs and - based on the outcome of the review process - the proposed introduction of Owners' and Directors' Tests.
- There was a recognition that while these changes may not eliminate all challenges, they will provide a crucial foundation for club development and future sustainability.

- **Action 3: The FA to undertake a review of Women's National League governance over the next year, followed by a period of education and support for clubs and the introduction of Owners' and Directors' Tests.**
 - The FA will keep the Taskforce updated on the project and timeframes, and consider how best to take forward the offers of support and advice from Taskforce members.

AGENDA ITEM 5: Fan Voice within Club Governance

- The FSA provided an update on Supporter Liaison Officers (SLOs), many of whom currently cover both the men's and women's team fans in affiliated clubs.
- There was a discussion around the need for clubs to implement specific supporter engagement policies for fans of the women's game, and Supporter Liaison Officers to proactively address the distinct needs of women's football fans.
- **Action 4: The FSA will work with the WSLF to support a review of the role of Supporter Liaison Officers in clubs, in order to improve best practice around the role.**

AGENDA ITEM 6: Project Pyramid Overview

- The WSLF provided an update on Project Pyramid - their strategy to grow the top two tiers of the women's game.
- Attendees discussed the importance of increasing revenue, standards, developing the talent pathway, competition, and player welfare.

AGENDA ITEM 7: Closing Remarks

- The Minister for Sport closed the discussion by thanking attendees for their continued commitment to supporting and developing women's football.
- There was a commitment to scheduling the next meeting in the autumn.
- **Action 5: Officials will canvas Taskforce members for future deep dive topics: broadcasting was suggested.**