



8 August 2025

Clare Haughey MSP
Convener
Health, Social Care and Sport Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

By email only to: HSCS.committee@parliament.scot

Dear Ms Haughey

Welfare and sustainability in Scottish Youth Football

I refer to your letter of 19 June 2025, which followed the evidence session of the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee (the “**Committee**”) held on 17 June 2025 in relation to welfare and sustainability in Scottish youth football.

Correspondence with the Competition and Markets Authority (the “**CMA**”)

You have requested sight of the Scottish FA’s correspondence with the CMA in connection with the complaints lodged by Realgrassroots and the Children and Young People’s Commissioner Scotland (the “**CYPCS**”).

I have been advised that, whilst we are in ongoing correspondence with the CMA, our correspondence with the CMA should not be shared with the Committee. I am, however, happy to provide a summary of matters, without any waiver of privilege or breach of confidentiality, to assist the Committee.

The Scottish FA became aware of the complaints made by Realgrassroots (represented by gunnercooke) and the CYPCS regarding particular rules around Scottish youth football through contact from the media in early December 2024. Following that contact, the Scottish FA reverted directly to the parties, and proactively wrote to the CMA to set out its position. The CMA responded in March 2025 to the Scottish FA, and separately to the SPFL. The letter from the CMA sets out its response to the points raised by the Scottish FA, reminds the Scottish FA of its obligations to ensure compliance with competition law (seeking legal advice as appropriate) and provides some commentary for the Scottish FA to consider.

The Scottish FA responded in full to the points raised in the CMA’s letter, providing a more detailed background to those points. Following the CMA’s letter, and considering the wider issues previously raised, the Scottish FA is consulting on possible changes in policy and practice in this area. The Scottish FA continues to update the CMA on its consultation, and any further decisions and actions that may be taken as a result. We in fact met with the CMA on the same day as the evidence session of the Committee on 17 June 2025, to provide such an update.

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The Scottish FA remains committed to meeting all of its obligations to ensure compliance with competition law in this area, and will continue to work with stakeholders to achieve this.

Young Players' Wellbeing Panel (the "YPWP")

You have requested the following information in respect of the YPWP:

- *How often does the Panel meet and who are its members?*

Pursuant to paragraph 13.1 of the Scottish FA's Registration Procedures, "*A Club Academy Scotland Player and/or their parent/carer or such a Player's Club who have been unable to resolve a registration issue can refer such matter to the Young Player's Wellbeing Panel in accordance with the terms of Annex 12 of the Registration Procedures.*" The frequency of YPWP Tribunal hearings therefore depends on how often a Club Academy Scotland player and/or their parent/carer is unable to resolve a registration issue with such player's club. My response to your request for information in the third bullet point below will demonstrate how frequently a YPWP Tribunal has had to be convened.

There are currently nine members of the YPWP, each of whom is independent from the Scottish FA. The members are professionals with relevant background qualifications and experience, including in law, football and teaching, and as a Children's Reporter. A YPWP Tribunal will generally consist of three members.

- *How long does it usually take from initial referral of a case for a decision to be reached by the Panel?*

Based on the cases which have gone to a YPWP Tribunal hearing, the average time to convene such a hearing is within around three weeks of a YPWP Notice of Referral being received. The decision of the YPWP Tribunal is delivered shortly after the conclusion of the hearing.

- *How many cases has the Panel dealt with since its formation and is there a breakdown available of the outcome of these cases?*

Since the inception of the YPWP in 2012, there have been [REDACTED] cases which have progressed to a YPWP Tribunal hearing, as follows:

(i) Dispute:

[REDACTED]

Outcome:

[REDACTED]

(ii) Dispute:

[REDACTED]

Outcome:

[REDACTED]

(iii) Dispute:

[REDACTED]

Outcome:

[REDACTED]

I look forward to attending the evidence session of the Committee in September to discuss this matter in further detail.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'IM', written in a cursive style.

Ian Maxwell
Chief Executive