



The FA Chairman's England Commission

Report 2
October 2014



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Foreword



Twelve months ago I first outlined what I felt was a serious and growing problem for the future of English football – the continuing reduction in the number of English players playing football at the highest level.

As a result I set up the FA Chairman’s England Commission and our first report was published in May 2014. In that report I promised we would report again in the autumn with proposals for what needs to be done to tackle two further issues – grassroots facilities and coaching.

This report delivers the Commission’s findings and recommendations for change in these two areas. As in our first report some of our proposals are ambitious and will bring about significant change in English football if they are implemented.

The Commission’s work in its current form will shortly be concluded. The Commission was formed in order to answer the three key questions – How did the situation occur? What might be done to improve the situation? How might proposed changes be achieved? In delivering proposals to respond to its findings and diagnostic it has completed that duty, though of course there is still much work for us to do take these forward. It has also firmly planted the issues in the consciousness of most observers of English football. I thank the members of the Commission again for giving their time freely, alongside the full demands of their other responsibilities, and for the wisdom and challenge they have individually brought to the Commission’s research and ideas.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Greg Dyke'.

Greg Dyke

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Greg Dyke (Chair)

Roger Burden

Greg Clarke

Rio Ferdinand

Dario Gradi

Glenn Hoddle

Roy Hodgson

Ritchie Humphreys

Danny Mills

Howard Wilkinson

Executive Summary

This is the second report of The FA Chairman's England Commission.

The Commission was set up in September 2013 to ask what, if anything, could be done about the falling number of English players playing in the top division of English football: only 32% of Premier League starts in 2012-3 were by players qualified to play for England, compared to 69% twenty years ago. That fall is important because it reduces the pool of top English players available for a strong and successful England team. It also means that young English players are increasingly unlikely to be able to reach the very top of the game.

In the year since the Commission was established, the situation has not markedly improved. This season's comparable figures to date for Premier League starts by English players remain at 32% but the figure for the 'Top 6' Premier League clubs has fallen further, from 28% to 25% for the season to date. English player presence in Premier League squads has fallen further – a 7% drop on last season in a like-for-like club comparison. However, there are a few glimmers of hope but the situation facing English football remains serious.

The Commission reported in May on four primary obstructions to the development of elite English players:

- There are inadequate and insufficient competitive playing opportunities for 18-21 year old elite players at top clubs in England.
- Regulation of the English player market is not effective in preserving the desired balance of British, EU and non-EU players in clubs.
- England lags behind in the quantity and quality of affordable grassroots facilities. This is particularly true in the area of all-weather pitches.
- Coaching and coach development, in clubs and at grassroots, have not yet reached a satisfactory level and impact.

The report in May reviewed and proposed solutions to the first two of these obstructions in depth. This report focuses on the last two obstructions – grassroots facilities along with coaching and coach education.

Grassroots facilities

The problem with grassroots facilities

Our first report highlighted that grassroots facilities in English football are inferior to those found in Germany, Holland and other European competitors. This is especially true in terms of the number of artificial grass pitches (AGPs), so crucial for the technical development of young players. For example, there are about 639 of the highest quality full-size (3G) AGPs in England compared with 3,735 in Germany.

This is a worsening problem due to grassroots football's over-reliance on publicly owned facilities. Due to fiscal pressures, budgets to support and subsidise the price and maintenance of pitches are progressively being tightened. As a result, the game is suffering from rising pitch hire charges, reductions in maintenance investment and even closure and disposal of sites. These pressures make it harder for clubs to develop and grow their youth development programmes.

Although the Premier League, The FA, and the Government (through Sport England) have invested over £800m since 2000 to improve facility infrastructure across grassroots football, without radical action the quality and availability of existing pitches will deteriorate further.

Objectives and proposed solution

The Commission's objectives are to:

- Reduce football's reliance on local authority subsidies.
- Build significantly more AGPs.
- Build a sustainable model to make this change happen.

To deliver its ambitions the Commission believes a new investment, ownership and management model for grassroots facilities is needed.

The radical new approach we are proposing entails building a number of football hubs centred on new, high quality AGPs, that in the first instance will be built in England's major cities.

The hubs across each city will be owned and managed by a new local football organisation or Trust, whose membership could include the local authority, the County FA and local professional football clubs, amongst others. They will also eventually take on, from the local authority, the management of the remaining number of grass pitches.

The number of football hubs in each city will depend on size and demand – most cities will have between five and 20, determined by an initial mapping of demand. This initiative will start later this year with a pilot in Sheffield. The process to map the demand for football and identify potential sites in the city is underway and there is a formal partnership already in place between the Council and The FA.

Implementing this new approach will be split into two phases. Phase One involves the building of a number of new AGP football hubs in the next four to five years. It is anticipated that Phase Two will then involve investment in the remaining dedicated

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grass sites and ancillary facilities across each city. In addition to the Sheffield pilot, work is also already underway with both Liverpool and Birmingham City Councils to complete their facilities mapping exercise as part of the preparation for beginning Phase One in those cities as well.

Projected outcomes

The current ambition is to work with up to 30 of England's largest cities or unitary local authorities, accounting for 30% of the football playing population in England. Targeting these cities first – possibly by tender or negotiation – prioritises areas suffering the greatest public subsidy constraint whilst benefitting from the greatest catchment areas and the ability to work rapidly with single authorities.

By 2020 there will be:

- Football hubs in 30 cities, increasing the number of top quality AGPs in urban areas by 130% to over 500.
- A 50% increase in the total number of full-size, publicly accessible 3G AGPs in England overall, to over 1000.
- More than 150 new football owned and managed football hubs to support the delivery of FA, County FA and professional club youth development and coach education programmes.
- Over 50% of all mini-soccer and youth football matches (about 3,750 per week) being played on the best quality AGPs.

It is important to note that current Football Foundation investment programmes will continue to support the game across the whole country.

Funding requirements and next steps

The scale of funding required to deliver this radical new approach is well beyond the means of The FA. The latest working assumptions for funding are that completing Phase One across all thirty cities will cost £230 million in capital spent over five years – nearly £50 million a year. Football's contribution to funding for Phase One of the Sheffield pilot has been committed by The FA and its Football Foundation partners, and discussions are underway about a longer-term national partnership approach. This will require contributions from local authorities on a city by city basis, alongside possible sponsorship, commercial partnerships, debt financing, social investment and community membership investment schemes.

Coaching

In its first report the Commission identified coaching and coach development in England as a key issue, emphasised in many interviews, group sessions and public submissions.

The FA has started to address these concerns, including opening St. George's Park and making new elite development staff appointments. Alongside this, the Elite Player Performance Plan (EPPP) has done much to define the right coach competencies and enhance coach development and performance in Premier League and Football League clubs.

The problems with coaching and coach education

The Commission has explored these concerns in more depth, with detailed work led by an FA leadership team, supported by external consultants and researchers. Work since May has identified three key challenges that The FA must address.

1) There are too few qualified coaches, particularly at the higher levels of qualification

No more than 11,000 of the 50,000 active coaches in England hold qualifications at or beyond Youth Award 3 or UEFA B Licence. With around 1,200 A Licence holders and only around 200 UEFA Pro Licence holders in England, we seriously lag behind our main European competitors.

A particular further problem is the lack of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) coaches, which is woefully unrepresentative of the large number of BAME players playing football in England at both senior and grassroots levels.

2) Coach education and coach development are not properly joined up

Within The FA, people responsible for coaching and coach education are spread across organisational departments. There is no single person with senior, technical oversight across all The FA's coaching work, nor formal ownership of a process to ensure coach development improves to meet the changing needs of the whole game.

3) There is a lack of ongoing support and mentoring for coaches

There is no formal Continuous Professional Development (CPD) or mentoring for qualified coaches, nor an ongoing assessment process outside of the EPPP to ensure that they are delivering to the right quality standards. Initiatives like The FA Licensed Coaches' Club do provide some ongoing support and information, but the 'coaching community' for sharing experiences and lessons is limited.

Proposed solution

The Commission has considered and supports a proposed two-step solution:

1) A new coach education organisation

It is proposed that all The FA's education work, from coach education through to referee development and safeguarding needs to be brought together under a single leader, a new Head of Education, in a single department. He or she should report to a Technical Director who will be responsible for coaching overall and will sit on The FA's executive team. The organisation would define and own a clear strategy for coach and player development.

2) Set clear targets

The Commission believes it is important that The FA sets ambitious coaching targets to be achieved over the next three years. This requires more work but should initially be focused on increasing the numbers of skilled coach educators, which in turn will result in an increased number of highly qualified coaches.

In summary the Commission believes that over the next three years the targets should be to:

- Recruit a further 25 full time FA coach educators.
- More than triple the number of Youth Award Level 3 coaches from 800 to 3,000.
- More than triple the number of Advanced Youth Award holders from 200 to 750.
- Increase the number of Pro Licence holders from around 200 to 300.
- Set and deliver a target to significantly increase – above the levels of Football's Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination Plan – the number of qualified coaches from BAME backgrounds and others who are under-represented, including female coaches.

The FA should further set targets to improve the quality of existing coaches; adding formal assessment of their capabilities and providing them with excellent ongoing training and support.

Formal consultation with FA employees regarding the proposed re-structure and the recruitment of a new Head of Education will start shortly, as well as defining the targets to be set.

Update on proposals in the first report

The first report made proposals for addressing the problem of playing opportunities for players 18-21 and inadequacies in the regulation of the player market. Since then, the Commission has continued to consult with stakeholders and deepened research and analysis around the issues and proposals.

A draft proposal to change the Non-EU work visa process has been developed. The FA is now consulting with stakeholders, as required by the Home Office for proposed changes, with the aim of implementing a more effective process for the 2015-16 season.

Work is continuing on the proposed expansion of the Home Grown Player rule, where the current rule is not effective and has not encouraged the successful promotion of local talent. The Commission and The FA are discussing objectives, analysis and concerns with the Premier League and Football League. There is a shared desire to promote youth development and discussion will continue on different options to improve the Home Grown Player rule.

The Commission recognised that the proposed introduction of Premier League B teams into English leagues and the development of Strategic Loan Partnerships could not be imposed by The FA. Discussions are ongoing.

Without action or alternative proposals for achieving adequate competitive play in the critical 18-21 period, a serious problem facing English football will remain unresolved.

Conclusions and next steps

One valuable outcome achieved by the last report has been to start an important debate in football. There is now broad consensus on the main issues facing the development of elite English and other local players: playing opportunities for 18-21 year old elite players at top clubs in England, regulation of the English player market, the lack of enough quality grassroots facilities, especially AGPs, and the need for better coaching and coach development.

Where The FA is able to implement proposed changes itself, the Commission urges them to act with urgency, confidence and energy. Where changes require the individual and collective will of clubs, leagues and others, we ask them, with supporter engagement too, to reflect on their broadest and longest-term interests, especially their returns from investment in youth development, as well as the interests of the whole game of English football.

Further work or implementation of proposals will now be taken on primarily by The FA's own leadership, including joint working with other stakeholders.

Whose problem?

The growth in the number of players available for a strong England team, the delivery of opportunities for young players at the top level of football and actions to ensure the long-term sustainability of the academy model within vibrant leagues, fed by a thriving grassroots game and excellent coaches: all these are interests and responsibilities that should be considered, embraced and pursued by us all.

This is still about the future of English football, not just football played in England.



1 The Commission – recap

1.1 Why was the Commission formed?

In twenty years the number of English players playing in the top division of English football has fallen by more than a half and the trend remains downwards. The same applies to the Championship where the number of English players has fallen from 61% to 51% in 10 years. This matters because of the effect the decline has on the availability of top English players for a strong and successful England team. But it also matters because it means that young English players are increasingly unlikely to be able to reach the very top of the game.

The Commission was set up in September 2013 to ask what, if anything, could be done about this. We posed three initial questions:

- How did the situation occur?
- What might be done to improve the position?
- How might proposed changes be achieved?

1.2 Is the situation getting better or worse?

The problem remains and key statistics for clubs at the start of this season bear this out:

- In the first six games, 36% of starts in the Premier League were by English players compared with 32% last year. On the face of it this is encouraging. However disregarding the effect of the teams promoted and relegated the figure remains stable at 32%.
- The number of English starts among the 'Top 6'¹ Premier League clubs of recent years is down from 28% last season to 25%. This is worrying as the majority of English national team players tend to be selected from these clubs.
- There has also been a 7% drop since last season in the number of English players on the squad lists of the 17 clubs in the Premier League for both seasons. Four clubs (Chelsea, Tottenham, Southampton and West Ham) each now have three fewer English players in their squad than in 2013-14.

However it is not all depressing news. There were some events and changes during the last year which are certainly in the right direction. If they could be maintained and amplified, they could each represent a contribution to improvements:

- The emergence of some new young players who made the England World Cup squad was exciting, even if overall the team results disappointed. Some might point to this as evidence of a problem solved, though most commentators acknowledge the continued need for much greater squad depth beyond what these few new players add, especially relative to our international competitors.
- The victory of the England Under 17 team in the UEFA European Championship again demonstrates the exciting talent that exists in young English players. Of course the key question remains of how these players will gain competitive playing experience from 18-21 years old in order to transition to regular first team players.
- The Summer 2014 transfer window did include more English player transfers than last year. The English share of transfers into Premier League clubs was up from 16% last year to 31% this year. Much of that was made up of transfers within the Premier League which has no numerical effect on the overall pool size.
- Notably, the 'Top 6' Premier League clubs bought six new English players in the summer window whereas last year they bought none at all. This is encouraging.
- Six English players under 23 have been loaned to Premier League clubs and so should get competitive Premier League games this year. On an individual basis, this gives each player competitive playing experience, which will help his development. In contrast, no English Under 23 players were loaned to Premier League clubs last year.
- Two top English players (Ashley Cole and Micah Richards) have continued their careers by transferring abroad and Josh McEachran is also on loan abroad. One problem identified by many is the lack of English players gaining valuable development experience abroad. We welcome the example set to younger developing players by these moves.

1 Arsenal, Chelsea, Liverpool, Man City, Man Utd, Tottenham

Section 1

The Commission – recap

- The Premier League has introduced changes to its Under 21 games programme, recognising the need to add greater competitive match experience for players not yet in the first team squads. These include more games played in main stadia.
- Finally, one other positive outcome of the Commission's work and the debate accompanying it has been the increased awareness of the issues surrounding the development of young players in England. Whatever views there may be, the debate we have started is for the good of football and will be a catalyst for both reflection and action.

Naturally, the evolution over one year of any of the figures above cannot be used to prove either improvement or deterioration in the general trend and situation facing English football. Nonetheless, it is clear that, even with some positive events in the year since the Commission was launched, the situation facing English football remains serious. The headline figures for the 2014-15 season to date do not herald any landmark transformation or improvement.

1.3 What did the Commission find?

Working with a research team and internal resources, we heard the views of over 650 people across all levels of the game both domestically and internationally, including over 400 substantive submissions from the public, one-on-one interviews, club visits and round tables. After discussing the emerging themes and debating its conclusions, four key areas were identified as the primary obstructions to the development of elite English players:

- There are inadequate and insufficient competitive playing opportunities for 18-21 year old elite players at top clubs in England.
- Regulation of the English player market is not effective in preserving the desired balance of British, EU and non-EU players in clubs.
- England lags behind in the quantity and quality of affordable grassroots facilities. This is particularly true in the area of all-weather pitches.
- Coaching and coach development, in clubs and at grassroots, have not yet reached a satisfactory level and impact.

In our first report, we reviewed the first two of these obstructions in depth and proposed possible solutions for consideration, further development and debate. We summarise the current status of these proposals in section 5.

However the bulk of this report is dedicated to proposals on the last two obstructions – grassroots facilities and coaching including coach education.



2 Grassroots facilities

Our first report highlighted that grassroots facilities in English football are inferior to those found in Germany, Holland and other European competitors. This matters because everyone who aspires to play the game at the highest level begins by learning their skills on their local facilities often at schools or with local clubs.

The lack of access to quality pitches for matches and training directly impacts the ability of these grassroots clubs to function and grow, and therefore provide the broadest opportunities for these young players to develop.

Many clubs, even the larger ones, are ‘nomadic’ – they have little security of tenure on sites, which again hampers their ability (and desire) to drive growth, particularly in their youth development programmes. The poor quality and limited maintenance of many of these facilities has a detrimental effect on both the quality of training and play. It severely hampers the development of technical skills in young players who could go on to join academies and prosper in professional football.

In short poor facilities are both a disincentive to play and an obstacle to technical development. As a result they have a direct impact on the number of young children coming out of grassroots football with the required skills to succeed in elite academies.

However the challenge to invest in, and improve, grassroots football facilities reaches beyond just the needs of future England player development into the very core of our game at all levels. The evidence shows that better facilities lead to more people playing the game and a better playing experience for those who do.

2.1 Understanding the facilities challenge

2.1.1 Impact of Public Sector ownership and management on supply

There are a number of interconnecting factors which have come together to make the provision of grassroots facilities an urgent priority. It is the number one concern for participants, and has been for a number of years. Players and coaches repeatedly tell us that the quality of pitches (and their associated facilities) is a barrier to both recruiting and retaining players. The primary reason why the quality of facilities has not kept pace with this 'demand' is that, compared to other sports, grassroots football is disproportionately reliant on publicly owned facilities.

There are approximately 33,500 grass football pitches in England, of which some 83% are publicly owned and managed. 52% are within the education sector and 31% are directly managed and run by local authorities. For many decades, grassroots football has benefited from this ongoing public support. The success of the game at the local level has in part been driven by this community-based subsidy which has ensured that football has remained an accessible and relatively inexpensive sport, available to millions.

However, this investment into the game has reduced significantly in recent years as local authority budgets have been placed under greater pressure with sports and leisure services being harder hit than most. Unlike in some other European countries spending in this area is discretionary in England. As a result public subsidy into football pitches is now being reduced or removed altogether, especially in large urban areas. This is resulting in:

- Increased hire charges for pitches
- Reductions in maintenance investment
- Closure and disposal of sites

Our first report highlighted the example of one local authority which was considering increasing its adult pitch fees by 125% and its junior pitch fees by 320%. Since then further examples continue to emerge. The FA's National Game Facilities and Investment team estimates that the average cost to properly maintain a community-based grass pitch for matches and training is between £4,000 – £8,000 per year depending on the nature and regularity of use. Current discussions with a number of local authorities would suggest the average actual spend per pitch is approximately £2,000 per year and in many cases this amount is under further budgetary pressure.

There are a growing number of local authorities, especially those in areas of high population density, who have indicated that within one or two years, there may be no subsidy available at all which essentially would mean that all costs would be passed onto participants.

As a consequence, many local authorities are now "looking to football" for leadership on how to develop new models of delivering grassroots facilities in a financially sustainable way.

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2.1.2 Demand for more artificial grass pitches

Whilst the 'supply' of quality facilities is under threat, there has also been a change in 'demand' as the quality and attraction of new artificial grass pitches (AGPs) has increased. Unlike the early versions of these pitches, 3rd generation (3G) artificial pitches have proved extremely popular with participants and, crucially, are extremely durable in their usage. Traditional grass surfaces can only be used for a maximum of 4 – 5 hours a week and in the winter months matches on grass surfaces are vulnerable to cancellation due to frozen surfaces or waterlogging. Forty nine per cent of players surveyed for The FA's 2013-5 Facilities Strategy had more than five games per year cancelled with 81% of players missing matches due to frozen pitches and 64% from waterlogged pitches; many missed matches for both reasons.

In contrast properly maintained floodlit 3G AGPs are capable of delivering between 70 and 80 hours use per week in all weather conditions. The FA's own research also shows that there is a rising demand for more informal, irregular and small-sided playing formats which can be delivered with much greater flexibility on these pitches, alongside more traditional formats of the game.

As well as meeting, and even increasing, the formal league fixture playing opportunities and servicing the informal, more social, small-sided demand, an AGP can accommodate between 45 and 60 week-night training sessions per week – a significant improvement on the limited evening training opportunities for clubs during the winter months on natural surfaces.

AGPs are also seen as superior for technical development and training especially amongst younger age groups. In 2013, a survey of coaches by the Football Foundation into the benefits of artificial pitches found overwhelming agreement that 'player skill levels improved due to artificial grass pitches', and that 62% of players would prefer to train on these surfaces, compared to 7% who preferred grass.

Artificial surfaces have clearly improved massively from their earlier incarnation in the professional game in the 1980s. Today's AGPs are approved for use in competitions by FIFA (the 2015 Women's World Cup will be played on AGPs) and for all FA competitions.

As our first report identified, England lags behind our competitors in investment in AGPs. Comparisons with Germany and the Netherlands, who share similar climates to that of England, are stark. There are about 639 full size, publicly accessible 3G AGPs in England compared with 3,735 in Germany. Even including smaller and privately owned artificial pitches, England has one synthetic pitch for every 42,000 of the population, compared with one for every 21,500 in Germany. The Netherlands is estimated to have one pitch for every 13,000. In both Germany and the Netherlands there are significantly higher levels of grassroots participation in football under the age of 18.

It is also worth noting that in both countries these facilities have been paid for by a combination of national and local government and the lottery. This is also true of Denmark where 99% of all grassroots football – senior and junior – is played on artificial pitches funded entirely by the Danish Lottery.

In England, The FA and the Premier League co-fund the development of pitches and football infrastructure along with Government (delivered via Sport England) through the Football Foundation.

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2.1.3 Addressing the needs of player development

Commission members are unanimous in their view that the quality of grassroots facilities is one of the key issues undermining the development of young English players. We believe there is a need for a step change in the provision of quality AGP facilities to ensure young boys and girls can learn their skills on the best possible surfaces at the earliest stages of their development as players.

2.1.4 Opportunity to deliver wider social and community benefits from new AGP facilities

Beyond the significant player development benefits that would be delivered from a radical improvement in grassroots facilities it is also important to note the wider social and community benefits which would ensue. There are a host of health benefits from increased physical activity which can help fight against a number of preventable diseases. Sport can also help bring communities together, improving cohesion, providing opportunities for personal development and diversionary activities for young people. Through the work of the Football Foundation football has over ten years of experience of investing in community sports programmes and monitoring and evaluating outcomes. These social outcomes from investing in new AGPs include:

- Participation increases: There is an 8.8% increase in participants at facilities improved by the facilities scheme; this figure rises to 14.4% at those supported by an activity and sustainability advisor.
- Activating inactive members of society: 8% of users of new AGPs were previously inactive.
- Providing qualification and education: 143 qualifications per year are delivered on sites designed to offer educational programmes.
- Offering community engagement: 24 people volunteer and/or work on the average site every week.

2.2 Summary of the current position

In summary:

- Players and coaches are demanding better facilities that can accommodate the way they want to play.
- Local authority owners can no longer afford to subsidise football facilities as they have in the past.
- There are substantial positive social and community benefits that could be realised through new investment into facility provision.
- Better surfaces are needed as they enhance skill development and create better players for the elite system.

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To meet this challenge the current efforts to support grassroots facilities are not enough. This is despite The FA, the Premier League, and the Government (through Sport England) investing over £800m since 2000 to improve facilities infrastructure across grassroots football through the Football Foundation. Others are investing in grassroots facilities too, including the private sector. However, it is a stark fact that the current level of overall investment is not enough either to protect the current supply of grass pitches or to deliver the growth in AGPs that is needed to catch up with other countries.

2.3 Objectives

Since the Commission first identified the lack of quality grassroots facilities as a priority the following objectives have been identified by the Commission, The FA and its partners the Premier League and Sport England.

2.3.1 Reduce football's reliance on local authority subsidies

The grassroots game's reliance on poorly maintained and increasingly expensive local authority pitches is now proving to be detrimental to grassroots football. The game has a responsibility to minimise its exposure to this risk in the future.

2.3.2 Build significantly more AGPs

More AGPs will deliver a higher quality football experience for those using them and better opportunities for player and coach development. A substantial capital investment is required to significantly increase the number of these facilities available especially in the most populated areas.

2.3.3 Build a sustainable model to make this change happen

Switch from a supply led 'public pitch approach' to one where those involved in football, locally and nationally, lead in identifying football's local needs and deliver them in a sustainable way.

2.4 The solution

The Commission believes a new investment, ownership and management model for grassroots facilities is needed. It has considered a proposal which has been developed by The FA in co-ordination with the Premier League and with the support of Sport England and fully endorses it.

The proposal is a radical new approach that in the first instance will concentrate on England's major cities. The FA, working with the relevant local authority, will assess the demand in those cities for football facilities and work out how to meet that demand by building a number of football hubs centred on new high quality AGPs.

The hubs will be owned and managed by a new local football organisation or trust whose membership could include the local authority, the County FA and the local professional football clubs amongst others.

The number of football hubs in each city will depend on size and demand – most cities will have between five and twenty.

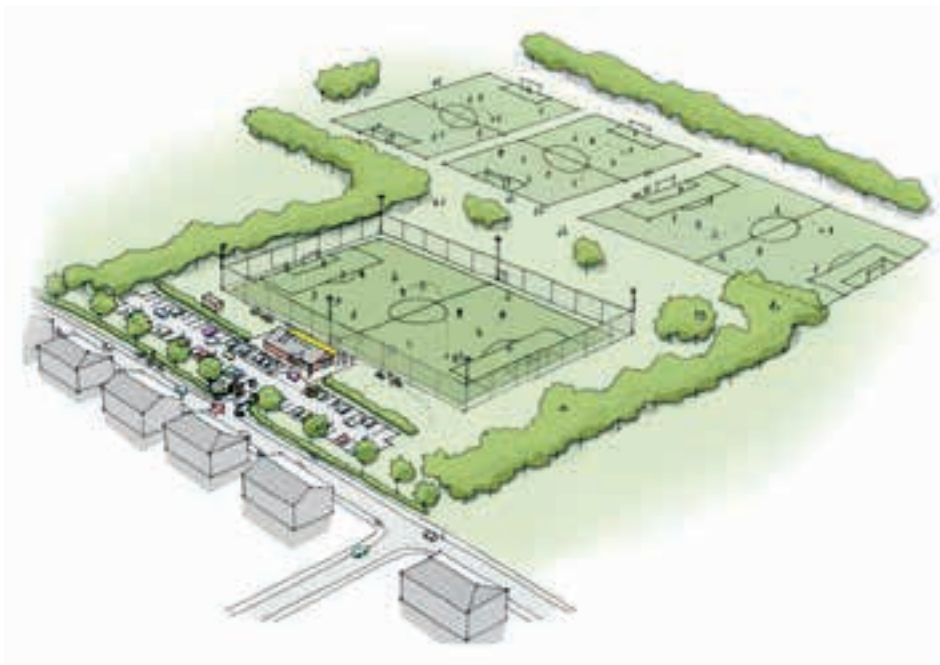
Section 2 Grassroots facilities

2.4.1 The City football hub model

By mapping current and future participation requirements in a city against existing and potential new facilities, a pitch blueprint will be produced. This blueprint will identify the 'appropriate' number of core football hubs at which the city's football demands can be met by the provision of high quality AGPs. Each football hub will differ depending on local circumstances but typically each would be floodlit and provide changing, classroom and catering facilities. A football hub will be used to host both formal league fixtures on weekends and recreational/informal football opportunities during the week, but with particular emphasis on:

- Ensuring where possible all mini-soccer and kids football up to the age of 13 is played on AGPs.
- Allowing all County FA and local pro-club youth development and FA coach education programmes to be facilitated on AGPs.
- Providing high quality natural turf pitches where appropriate.
- Providing midweek affordable training opportunities for local clubs.
- Optimising school and community usage during off-peak hours.

EXHIBIT 1: POSSIBLE FOOTBALL HUB LAYOUT



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All city football hubs in a particular city would be managed by a new football organisation or Trust. This body would also take on, from the local authority, the management of the remaining number of 'dedicated grass pitches.' The new revenues generated by the AGPs on the hubs will help to cross-subsidise an improvement in the remaining grass pitches as well as funding a sinking fund for ongoing maintenance and future capital investment. It will be for each local authority to best determine the subsequent usage of any pitches deemed surplus due to the greater durability and utilisation of AGPs.

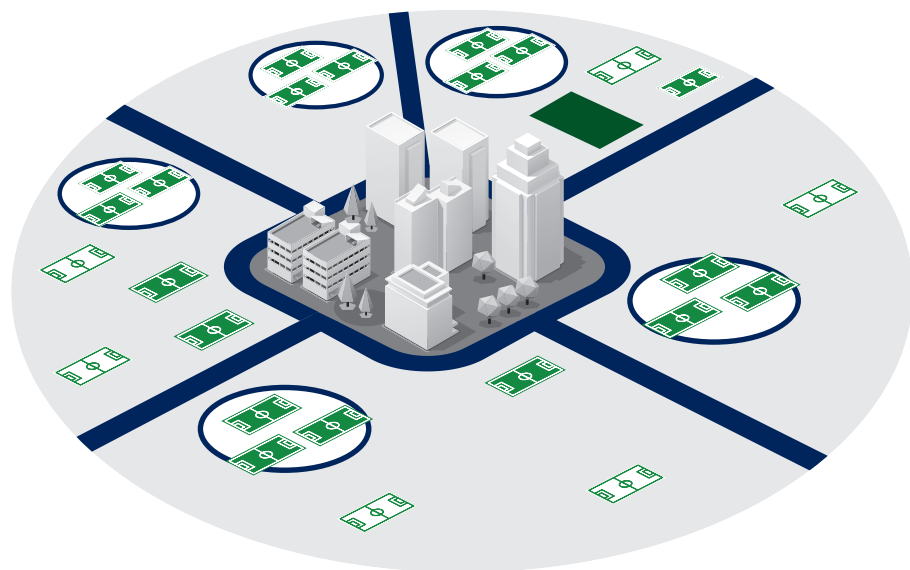
In locations where football facilities are already partly or wholly managed by existing Trust structures, separate solutions for management would be negotiated. Once the football blueprint is produced for each City an agreement will be made based on three significant commitments from each local authority:

- i) That they are prepared to transfer the asset ownership of the football hub sites to the Trust or football organisation on a long lease.
- ii) That they and other local partners will provide a significant capital contribution to the development of the new football hubs.
- iii) That they continue to financially support the game locally albeit at a significantly reduced level.

The Trust or football organisation would be expected to manage their local stakeholder relationships and also use their position to raise additional local funding. In particular it would need to have a close working relationship with local professional football clubs and other local bodies such as health and well being boards, universities, colleges, local schools and voluntary community projects.

EXHIBIT 2: CITY HUB MANAGEMENT MODEL

-  Trust's Football Hubs
-  Trust's Commercial Centre
-  Trust's Dedicated Grass Sites
-  Independent Sites



*LA grass sites which are leased to clubs on long leases will sit outside the Trust and remain club managed; however their capital funding applications will be managed by, and funds will be channelled through, the Trust – which takes a holistic city-wide view of provision of grassroots facilities.

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2.4.2 Piloting the Project

As part of this process a pilot will start later this year in Sheffield. The process to map the demand for football and identify potential sites in the city is underway and there is a formal partnership already in place between the Council and The FA.

Phase One of the pilot involves the building of a number of new AGP football hubs within the city in the next two years. It is anticipated that Phase Two will involve investment in the remaining dedicated grass sites and ancillary facilities. As the Sheffield pilot commences, work is also already underway with both Liverpool and Birmingham City Councils to complete their initial facilities mapping exercise. In particular these three pilots will be used to assess the impact of a large scale transition to playing on AGPs. The possibility of a Phase Two to deliver a further AGP hub roll-out and a more radical move away from grass sites will be kept under review.

On completion of the pilot in Sheffield there will be:

- A number of new football hubs with new or improved AGPs on local authority and/or education sites. All will include high quality artificial and grass pitches together with changing, education and parking facilities.
- Improved grass pitches on football hubs and dedicated grass sites across the city.
- Greater opportunities for youth football (up to U13) to be played on new AGPs.
- Access to AGPs for youth and adult matches and training.
- Use of AGPs for 11 v 11 adult floodlit leagues.
- All coach education to be delivered on AGPs.
- Opportunities for local pro-club youth development and community outreach on new AGPs.
- A dedicated Sheffield Trust established with overall responsibility for the provision, management, maintenance and long term care of community football facilities in the city.

2.4.3 Player development outcomes nationally

The interest of the Commission is to ensure that this new approach places future English player development at its core. As such we believe that if successfully implemented such a radical change to grassroots facility provision on a city by city basis would result in:

- Between 40-60% of all youth football (up to U13) played on high quality AGPs (the remaining being played on existing high quality 'private' sites).
- Significant improvement in the quality of the remaining grass site pitches for youth football.
- An opportunity to move all mini and youth football to one regular time at a limited number of central locations to aid talent identification.

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- All FA and County FA player development and coach education programmes being centred at new quality facilities.
- Maximising the opportunities for pro-club centres of excellence and youth coaching to utilise quality facilities.

Quantifying the impact of any of these outcomes in the short term will be difficult. However a newly created supervisory Trust or football organisation with a single 'line of sight' across the game in its city will be best placed to monitor participation and track the quantity and quality of player experience, especially at youth level.

2.5 Implementation

Implementation of this new approach on a national level will depend on the success of the pilot schemes, adaption of the various lessons learnt through the process and the securing of new capital to drive implementation. The current ambition however is to work with up to 30 of England's largest cities¹ or unitary local authorities to agree an approach for Phase One in each city – football hub AGP identification, investment and delivery – in the next 18 months with a targeted completion of all thirty by 2020. A second phase of further investment in each of these cities will then follow – based on a local led requirement for either more AGPs or improvements to remaining dedicated grass sites.

These cities roughly account for some 30% of the football playing population in England and are being prioritised for three reasons:

- i) By and large, they represent the areas where public subsidy constraint is hitting local authorities hardest.
- ii) They offer the largest playing population catchment per facility.
- iii) As city or unitary authorities they offer a single point of engagement.

Once the pilot programmes are proven and underway it is likely that The FA and its partners will invite potential cities to discuss possible partnerships and a framework/ tendering process may well be needed at this point. As part of this process, The FA will use internal data alongside any supporting evidence available from partners, including local authorities' own data where available.

It is important to note however that away from these identified city priorities, existing funding into facilities across other parts of England will continue through Football Foundation funding. This will include the continuation of prioritised investment into renewal of AGPs alongside improvements to natural turf pitches and associated facilities.

¹ Including London and the 'core cities' of Bristol, Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Nottingham and Newcastle

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2.6 Funding

The scale of funding required to deliver this radical new approach is well beyond the means of The FA. Based on lessons from the early work on the pilots and existing information about facility provision, the latest working assumptions for funding are that completing Phase One across all thirty cities will cost £230 million in capital spent over five years – i.e. over £45 million a year.

EXHIBIT 3: NATIONAL ROLL-OUT TARGET AREAS BY POPULATION AND PLAYER POPULATION

	Demographics	
	Population (m)	Football players
Sheffield	0.6	15,700
Core Cities ^a	3.8	122,800
Greater London ^b	8.2	166,700
Next 20 Local Authorities ^c	6.0	219,100
Total	18.5	524,300
England total	53.0	1,756,000
Proportion	35%	30%

EXHIBIT 4: ESTIMATED NUMBER OF 3GS AND ESTIMATED CAPITAL INVESTMENT REQUIRED BY TARGET AREA

	No. of 3G required		Capital investment requirement (£m)		
	Total	New 3G	Phase 1: Establish football hubs, build 3G pitches	Phase 2: Develop Grass Sites or further 3G AGPs	Total
Sheffield			£9m	£6m	£15m
Core Cities ^a	220	141	£44m	£59m	£103m
Greater London ^b			£55m	£81m	£136m
Next 20 LAS ^c	188	142	£122m	£97m	£219m
Total	408	283	£230m	£243m	£473m

a Liverpool, Leeds, Birmingham, Manchester, Bristol, Newcastle, Nottingham

b Across 32 London Boroughs

c Next 20 largest Local Authorities by player population

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Football's contribution to funding for Phase One of the pilot in Sheffield has been committed and underwritten by The FA. The FA, the Premier League, Sport England and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport are also in ongoing discussions about a longer term national partnership approach but each city will require contributions from its local authority.

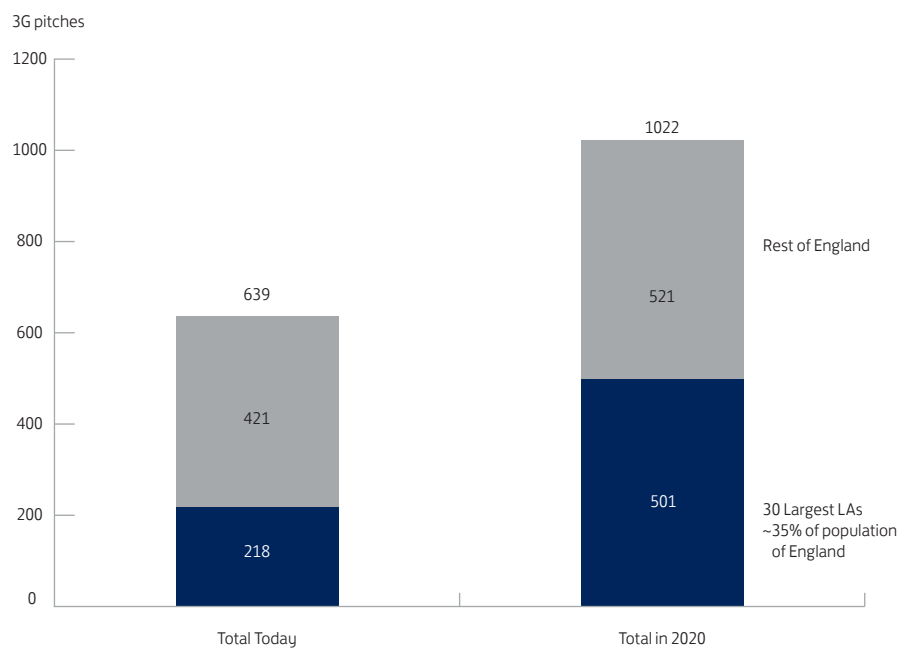
There are also a number of other funding opportunities to be explored including the possibility of attracting sponsorship, commercial partnerships, debt financing, social investment and community membership investment schemes.

2.7 Delivery and targets

The number of new AGPs in this country is currently being increased by 25 a year. It is our view this is nowhere near enough. Under this scheme the increase will move up to nearly 100 a year for the next five years. By 2020 there would be:

- A 130% increase in the number of top quality AGPs in England's 30 biggest cities (an increase from 218 to 501²).
- A 50% increase in the total number of AGPs in England over four years bringing the total to over 1,000 pitches compared with 639 currently.
- More than 150 new football owned and managed football hubs to support the delivery of FA, County FA and professional club youth development and coach education programmes.
- Over 50% of all mini-soccer and youth football matches (3,750 in all) being played on the best quality AGPs.

EXHIBIT 5: NUMBER OF FULL SIZED, PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE 3G FOOTBALL AGPS



² 408 3G AGP pitches in the new model and 98 3G AGP pitches not part of the model.

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EXHIBIT 6: NUMBER OF FULL SIZE, PUBLIC USE 3G PITCHES ACROSS 30 LARGEST LOCAL AUTHORITIES

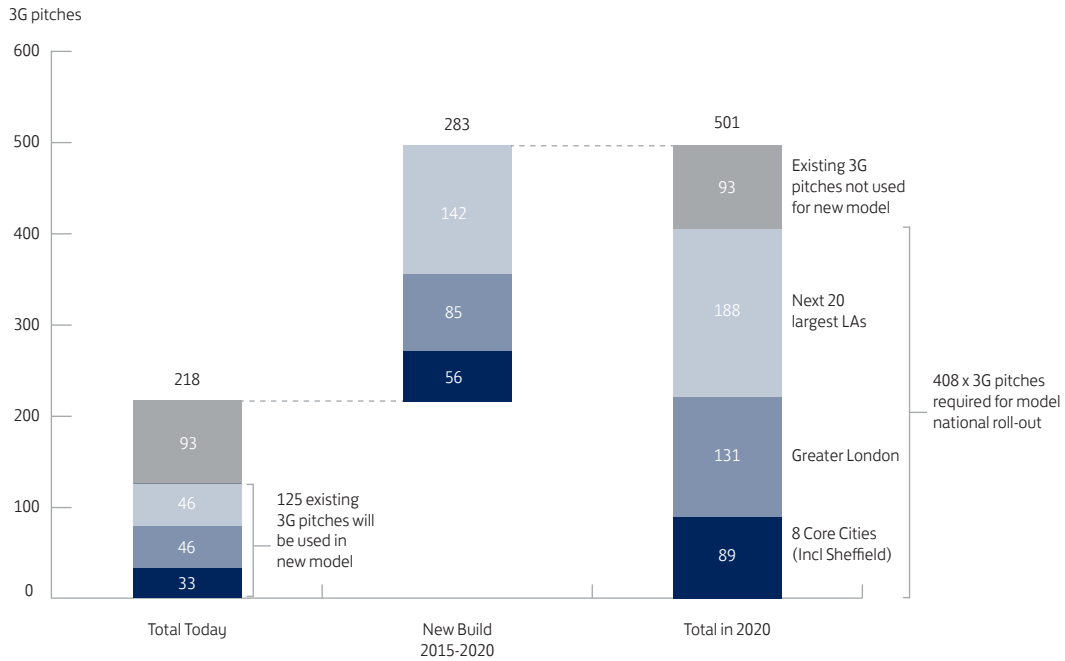
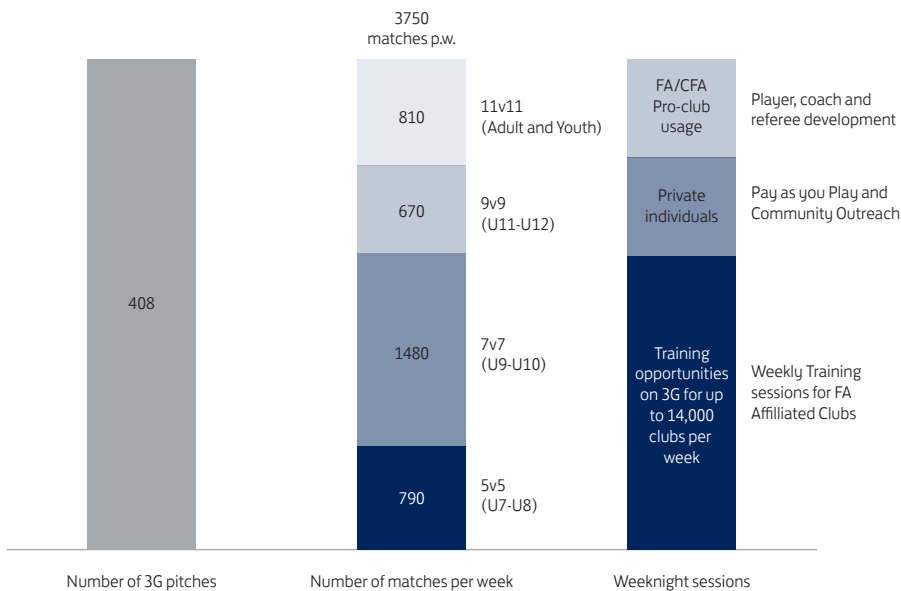


EXHIBIT 7: PROJECTED AGP PITCH USAGE IN NEW MODEL





Section 2 **Grassroots facilities**

2.8 Next steps

The first phase of the Sheffield pilot project will commence in October 2014, whilst the preparation work is already underway for Liverpool and Birmingham to follow on soon after. Subject to final agreement of an implementation and funding plan for the national roll-out, The FA and its partners hope to commence partnership work with local authorities across England in 2015 on a 4-5 year implementation of Phase One of the project.



3 Coaching

In its first report the Commission identified that coaching and coach development in England was not as good as we would have hoped. Successive FA coaching strategies in 2008 and 2013 stated that there was a need for more coaches at grassroots and in academies, that coaching as a career was neither well structured nor well rewarded, that coaching and coach education quality was variable and that the overall structure of coaching was fragmented and unclear.

As we said in our first report ‘a large number of comments and submissions to the Commission highlighted the magnitude of the changes that were felt to be needed in the area of coaching.’

We reported that The FA had started to address concerns about coaching, with the opening of St. George’s Park and new staff appointments in the area of elite development. These additions have added football, technical and academy experience to The FA’s coaching team. Alongside this, the Elite Player Performance Plan (EPPP) has done much to define the right coach competencies and enhance coach development and performance in Premier League and Football League clubs.

Since May, the Commission has explored these concerns about coaching in more depth, with detailed work led by an FA leadership team, supported by external consultants and researchers. They met or held workshops with staff across The FA, met Chief Executives and Academy Managers of Premier League and Championship clubs, staff from the League Managers Association, the Professional Footballers’ Association, the Premier League and representatives from the Belgian and German FAs. A wide range of data about the number of coaches and their qualifications was gathered, analysed and the English performance was compared to other leading UEFA FAs.

3.1 The FA's responsibilities regarding coaching

The FA's aim should be to ensure that England has the right number of coaches with the right technical skills to deliver a step change in the quality of English football at every level.

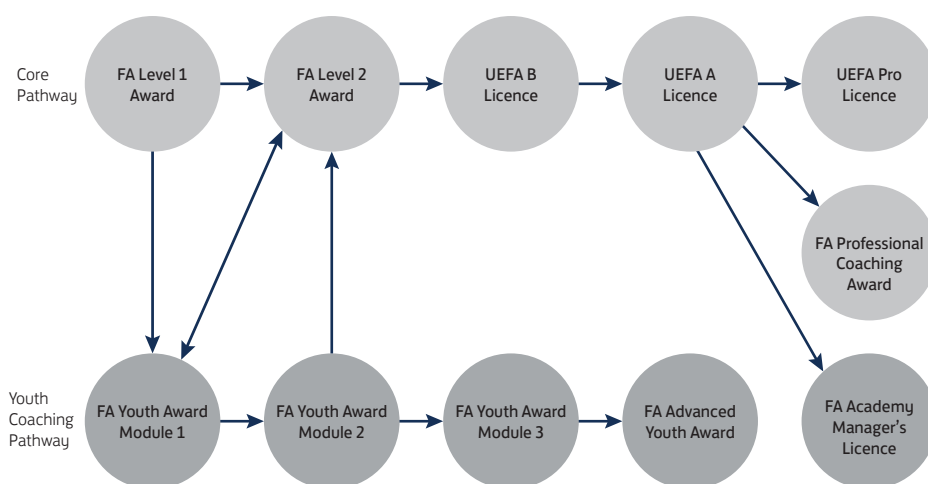
As the licensed provider of coach education in England The FA has the responsibility to:

- Determine the curriculum and teaching approach that best suits the needs of the game.
- Set coach/player ratios for each stage of a player's development.
- Identify what attributes coaches require to ensure effective player development.
- Provide the right framework for evaluating success.

3.1.1 Background – The FA's Current Coaching Award Structure

Currently, coach careers are measured and tracked by means of progression from qualification to qualification. These are called coach pathways. Each pathway takes coaches through a structured progression of qualifications. The FA's responsibility, as England's leading coach educator, is to help the best coaches on their journey through these pathways and to ensure they get ongoing support between qualifications as well as during the qualification process. Exhibit 8 shows the two key pathways that were considered by the Commission.

EXHIBIT 8 – THE FA'S KEY COACHING QUALIFICATIONS:



Source: Adapted from FA diagram – FA Learning Coaching Provision and Pathways.

Note: The FA Academy Manager's Licence is to be replaced by a joint PL/FA/FL award.

Coaching qualifications start with The FA Level 1 Award, build through the Level 2 Award and finish with the UEFA Pro Licence. Having got their FA Level 1, coaches can pursue the youth coaching pathway, starting with the Youth Award Module 1 up to the Advanced Youth Award. There are also other pathways, for example a goalkeeping pathway, an emergency aid pathway and a psychology pathway.

Section 3 Coaching

In addition to The FA, a number of other organisations currently train coaches, using coach educators and materials approved by The FA. These include, at grassroots level, the County FAs and some 200 1st4Sport centres. Further, the PFA provides coaching courses for its members, covering Level 1 to UEFA B and the Level 1 to Level 3 Youth Awards.

3.2 The challenges

So if these are the responsibilities how successfully is The FA delivering them? The Commission, supported by The FA's new technical leadership, is of the opinion that there needs to be significant changes in the structure and approach to coaching overall.

Work since May has identified three key challenges that The FA must address to ensure coach development and coaching improves.

The challenges in brief:

Challenge 1 – There are too few qualified coaches particularly at the higher levels of qualification.

Challenge 2 – Coach education and coach development need to be properly joined up.

Challenge 3 – There is a lack of ongoing support and mentoring for coaches.

3.2.1 Challenge 1 – There are too few qualified coaches particularly at the higher levels of qualification

There are currently 50,000 coaches active in England. Of these no more than 11,000 hold Youth Award 3, UEFA B Licence or above. These are the qualifications that focus on advanced player development skills. At the very top of the game, there are around 1,200 A Licence holders and only around 200 UEFA Pro Licence holders.

EXHIBIT 9 – NUMBERS OF B, A AND PRO LICENCE HOLDERS FOR 5 UEFA COMPETITOR NATIONS:

Country	B Licence numbers	A Licence numbers	Pro Licence numbers
Italy	37,742	1,556	725
Spain	9,391	13,070	2,353
France	12,200	3,030	278
Germany	21,731	5,633	1,304
England	9,548	1,190	205

Source: UEFA Coaching Convention Statistics 2013. The data may need to be viewed with caution as different countries may have differing priorities for licences and there may be issues of countries 'grandfathering' former licences into the UEFA categories.

Section 3 Coaching

As Exhibit 9 shows England, compared to key European nations, has fewer well qualified coaches at A Licence and Pro Licence levels. At the B Licence level, only Spain has fewer coaches than England but it has many, many more at other levels. The Commission believes the England figures are inadequate and that the overall numbers of coaches holding B Licence level and above need to be increased substantially.

In particular the Commission would argue that The FA needs to provide the right encouragement to coaches below the top levels so that they are motivated to pursue higher level qualifications. This includes addressing the issue, frequently raised, of the salary and status of some coaching roles, especially in youth development or relative to other countries.

Currently the number of coach qualifications delivered each year does not appear to be based on either an FA target or need but on the availability of coach educators. The prices charged for courses are also a factor which can discourage people from pursuing a career in coaching, especially as the step up in price from a Level 2 Award to the UEFA B Licence is large.

Further, there is a particular problem with the lack of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) coaches. There are fewer than 15 BAME coaches across the professional game.

3.2.2 Challenge 2 – Coach education and coach development are not properly joined up

Currently, the people responsible for coaching and coach education within The FA are spread across the organisation in a series of departments. It is the view of the Commission that the current structure is not particularly effective at delivering the aims and the responsibilities of the organisation.

Further, there is no single person with senior, technical oversight across all The FA's coaching work. In addition there is no central leadership for coach educators – the people who coach coaches – most of whom work part-time.

Given this structure there is no formal ownership of a process to ensure coach development improves to meet the changing needs of the whole game. There is a particular gap between the grassroots and professional game. At present, there is also little integration of a formalised 'England way' of playing football into coaching courses. More work is also needed on defining what good coaches look like.

3.2.3 Challenge 3 – There is a lack of ongoing support and mentoring for coaches

Once they are qualified, the ongoing support, assessment and development of coaches is limited – some get it, some don't. There is no formal process of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) or mentoring, nor is there an ongoing process of assessment to ensure that coaches are delivering to the right quality standards outside of the EPPP. Initiatives like The FA Licenced Coaches' Club do exist to provide some ongoing support and information for coaches, but there is no wider opportunity for all coaches to interact with each other, to share experiences and lessons and therefore create an active 'coaching community'.

3.3 Solutions

The Commission does recognise the work that the Premier League, the Football League and most professional clubs are doing to improve coaching, through programmes like the EPPP. However, the implications of the challenges outlined above are clear. To deliver more and better coaches right across the game we need a coaching infrastructure that is joined up from the grassroots to elite levels which will help willing and able coaches from all groups and backgrounds to advance to the full extent of their ambition and abilities.

The Commission has considered and supports a two-step solution to the issues impacting coaching.

The solution in brief:

Step 1 – A proposed new coach education organisation as part of a wider education organisation within The FA – bringing together all those involved in coach development and coaching under the leadership of a single person accountable to a Technical Director. The organisation would define and own a clear strategy for coach and player development.

Step 2 – Clear targets – to increase the number of coach educators and coaches, giving more players access to better coaching, improving their technical skills and increasing their participation and enjoyment of the game.

3.3.1 Step 1 – A proposed new coach education organisation as part of a wider FA education organisation

It is proposed that all The FA's education work, from coach education through to referee development and safeguarding, needs to be brought together under a single leader, a Head of Education, in a single department. He or she should report to a Technical Director who will be responsible for coaching overall and will sit on The FA's executive team. The organisation would define and own a clear strategy for coach and player development.

This proposed new Head of Education's role regarding coaching should be to:

- Be accountable for the content and delivery of all The FA's coach education courses.
- Ensure all coaching courses and course materials meet the evolving needs of the game.
- Ensure all coaches are taught in a consistent, clear way, properly tailored to their level.
- Deliver the right number of appropriately qualified coaches at all levels of the game to meet an agreed set of FA targets. This includes developing actions to make coaching and coach education a better rewarded, better recognised career.

Section 3 Coaching

- Set and deliver a target to significantly increase – above the levels in football's Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination Plan – the number of coaches from BAME backgrounds so that their numbers properly reflect the profile of the game at all levels.
- Set and deliver similar targets for other groups currently under represented in the coaching community.
- Develop an effective programme of professional development support for coaches at each stage of their career.
- Collect and update accurate numbers regarding qualified and active coaches so The FA and football can better track measures of success.
- Assess and monitor coaches on a regular basis.
- Ensure that young and developing coaches get the experience (hours and with teams) they need to hone their skills.
- Ensure the needs of the wider footballing community are fully taken into account in the coaching strategy.

3.3.2 Step 2 – Clear targets

The Commission believes it is important that The FA sets coaching targets to be achieved over the next three years. More work is required on the details but the Commission believes the targets should initially be focused on increasing the numbers of skilled coach educators, which in turn will result in an increased number of highly qualified coaches.

In summary the Commission believes that over the next three years the targets should be to:

- Recruit 25 further full-time coach educators to increase The FA's capacity to deliver coach education.
- More than triple the number of Youth Award Level 3 coaches from 800 to 3,000.
- More than triple the number of Advanced Youth Award holders from 200 to 750.
- Increase the number of Pro Licence holders from around 200 to 300.
- Set and deliver new targets to ensure a significant increase in the number of qualified coaches from BAME backgrounds.

The FA should further set targets to improve the quality of existing coaches: bringing in formal assessment of their skills and capabilities and providing them with excellent ongoing training and support.

3.4 Benefits of the solution

3.4.1 For English football

The proposed solution will complement the other strands of the Commission's work. An improved supply of England-eligible players will be coached in a consistent style of play. In the longer term, better coaching will contribute to success in future tournaments, including the stated aim of winning the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

Improved results for England teams will encourage more people to play football more regularly, building the grassroots game. These additional players will benefit from playing on improved facilities (see chapter 2). They will be coached by better qualified staff who are passionate about helping people play better football in a safe and fun environment. Increased participation will allow more promising players to be identified and supported in their routes up through the game.

Relationships between The FA and the wider game will grow stronger as the new organisation will foster better links at all levels, including the Premier League.

3.4.2 For coaches

Aspiring coaches will have a clear coaching pathway they can follow, with a logical series of qualifications each building on the previous level. For the first time, they will be able to follow clear coaching pathways as far as their skills and aspirations can take them.

As they progress coaches will be properly supported, through formal mentoring and also informally through an active 'coaching community'. Coaches will be assessed regularly, not only giving The FA up-to-date information on all English coaches, but also showing individuals areas where they can improve their skills for the benefit of the whole game.

A career in coaching will be one where coaches will receive ongoing training in the latest thinking in not only football, but also that from other sports' coaching and development systems. Coaching, particularly in the grassroots, will no longer be seen as 'balls, bibs and cones' or an exercise in crowd control, but as a worthwhile, challenging and exciting activity.

3.4.3 For players

Players at all levels will be coached by better coaches who are trained in the current way of playing the English game. At all levels, coaches will focus not just on developing players' skills but also on other aspects of the game – the psychological, physical and social.

3.4.4 For grassroots football

More players in more clubs will have access to qualified coaches. Highly qualified coach educators will teach grassroots coaches. Grassroots coaches will be members of an active learning community. Coaches will be encouraged to identify and support promising young players whilst ensuring that all players have a rewarding experience and continue to play the game. Coaches will have a clear view of their options for development, and they will have skilled people around them to mentor and support them as they pursue their options. Players will be coached by more experienced coaches whose skills and abilities will be assessed regularly.

3.4.5 For professional football

The relationship between The FA and professional clubs, the Premier League, Football League, Conference and levels below will be stronger. All will be significant stakeholders in the continued development of coaching and coach education in English football.

3.5 Next steps

Formal consultation with FA employees regarding the proposed restructure and the recruitment of a new Head of Education will start shortly, as well as defining the targets to be set. It is important that momentum is generated and sustained to deliver significant progress over the next three years.





4 Coaching and facilities working together

The new facilities model will see young player development concentrated on football hubs spread across cities. This will provide the perfect opportunity for interaction between players, coaches, volunteers and parents. It will allow The FA and local professional clubs to ensure that all those playing at the football hubs have access to quality, trained coaches. In turn these coaches will receive the support required from FA coach educators to develop and deliver consistent and high quality coaching throughout the system.

Section 4 Coaching and facilities working together

4.1 Coaching activities delivered at football hubs

All hubs will be managed locally but sessions run at the hubs will fit in with local and national coaching strategies. AGPs will be made available to schools, leagues and local clubs, as well as FA and County FA player, coach development and referee training programmes. FA coaches and the coaching strategy will be integrated in all these offers.

This will make the new hubs central to both player education and coach development. A typical AGP can be split into four sections so at any given time there can be a mix of football on offer. An example of how a hub's AGPs could be used for different coaching programmes during the week is outlined below:

EXHIBIT 10: COACHING CONTENT ON AGP (ILLUSTRATIVE)

Day time use

Day / Time	9am – 10am	10am – 11am	11am – 12pm	12pm – 1pm	1pm – 2pm	2pm – 3pm	3pm – 4pm	4pm – 5pm
Monday	Available for use by schools, local community outreach programmes and pro-clubs							
Tuesday	Available for use by schools, local community outreach programmes and pro-clubs							FA Skills Girls 5-8
Wednesday	Maintenance			Available for use by schools, local community outreach programmes and pro-clubs				
Thursday	Available for use by schools, local community outreach programmes and pro-clubs							FA Skills Boys 9-11
Friday	Available for use by schools, local community outreach programmes and pro-clubs							Key partner club training
Saturday	Coach and referee education practical sessions							
Sunday	5v5, 7v7, 9v9 matches				Youth 11v11			

■ Qualified coaches working on AGP

Evening use

Day / Time	5pm – 6pm	6pm – 7pm	7pm – 8pm	8pm – 9pm	9pm – 10pm
Monday	Non partner bookings		Commercial 5-a-side		
Tuesday	Skills Extra Boys U12	Skills Extra Boys U14	Skills Extra Boys U16	Key partner club training	Free play
Wednesday	Free play	Pro-club part	County Football Association Flexi 11v11 League		
Thursday	Skills Extra Girls U13	Skills Extra Girls U15	Referee Academy	Coach Education	Coach Education
Friday	Key partner club training	Vauxhall Mashup		Commercial 5-a-side	
Saturday	Non partner bookings				
Sunday	Free play	Non partner bookings			

■ Qualified coaches working on AGP

Section 4 Coaching and facilities working together

4.2 Small sided pitches and youth development

As part of its recent Youth Development Review, The FA established that youth football should be played on small sided pitches. Now U7s play 5 v 5 and, as the children grow up, they graduate through 7v7 and 9v9 and only start to play 11v11 at U13 level. The smaller pitches get children more involved, ensure more touches of the ball to develop technique, allow them to have more dribbling opportunities, more 1v1s and, of course, more shots and more goals.

Coaches at youth level are trained to use small sided matches to give children the most enjoyment from the game and develop skills from an early age. The new football hubs will be designed specifically to deliver coaching through small sided youth football.

Case study 1

Small sided and youth development – A highly promising 7 year old



Carl is a 7 year old boy who plays football at his local grassroots club. Much of Carl's football education consists of playing on a poorly maintained grass pitch, playing an improvised five-a-side. Carl's club plays in a local league, but keep having games postponed due to pitch unsuitability. Carl's progress has hence stalled. Carl is showing promise technically, but his small size means that he sometimes struggles to maintain his pace against his larger and physically stronger friends.

On hearing about the new facilities at the local football hub, Carl's coach at the club booked the facility's AGP five-a-side pitch once a week for a half term, using a portion of the funding from contributions to the club from local businesses. At the suggestion of the local Coach Educator who provides informal mentoring to Carl's coach, he switched the focus of the sessions into two parts, the first focusing each week on a series of technical football skills – dribbling, passing, heading, etc., followed by short 5v5 games where newly acquired skills are practiced.

Carl's game has improved massively. His ball control is excellent and in the short format game his ability with the ball allows him to out-manoeuvre his larger opponents. He even gets to play tournaments at the football hub. The local Coach Educator has spotted his talent, and after meeting with Carl's parents and teacher, Carl has been assessed by his local Championship club's youth talent identification department and will shortly be joining the squad's Saturday morning children's skills development programme.

Section 4

Coaching and facilities working together

4.3 School skills coaches on football hubs

The FA believes that improving children's physical literacy in the key 5-11 year old age group is vital to give children the confidence to develop their football skills and progress through the elite pathway.

Across the country The FA has 158 qualified, full-time Skills coaches with a dedicated team in each County Football Association. The coaches deliver programmes in lessons, free of charge to the schools, as well as after school and holiday sessions. The key principles of the programme are to not only provide children with a quality coaching experience, but also to embed the coaching techniques and session plans with the existing teachers.

The Premier League also offer significant local schools programmes in partnership with 67 Premier League and Football League clubs. Consistency of message is assured as coaches in the club programmes also have FA qualifications.

The football hubs will be designed so that local schools will have access during the day to the first-class facilities on which The FA Skills coaches and professional club programmes can continue their work with schools. AGPs currently used for such programmes can support over 20 primary schools each during the school day, as well as additional sessions after hours. The FA will use the football hubs for its Skills Extra programmes, which provide additional opportunities for school children after the school day.

4.4 Coach support on football hubs

The Commission's coaching recommendations would more than triple the number of Youth Award Level 3 coaches from 800 to 3,000 and more than triple the number of Advanced Youth Award holders from 200 to 750 in the next few years. These awards will be delivered on the hubs and many of these new coaches will work with teams playing there. Moreover, we believe it is important that the qualified coaches continue to receive the best possible support from The FA and therefore recommend increased recruiting, developing and deploying Coach Educators across the game. Coach educators in each region will be affiliated to a specific regional hub, giving ongoing interaction with coaches in their area so that coaches receive support and are delivering the coaching that players need.

Section 4 Coaching and facilities working together

Case study 2

Coach support – A graduate teacher with aspirations to coach in a leading club



Rebecca studied Sports and Exercise Science at a leading English university. She recently completed a PGCE and is now teaching PE at a large secondary school in southwest London. An excellent sports person, Rebecca captained the women's second team in her second year of university. Whilst playing football, she discovered a passion for coaching and has completed her Level 1 and 2 and Youth Award Level 1 and 2 qualifications with her County FA. Keen to challenge the perceptions that English football is dominated by middle-aged, middle-class white men, her long term goal is to become a full-time football coach for a leading club.

She has recently started studying for her UEFA B Licence and Youth Award Level 3. Much of her training for her coaching qualifications takes place at her local football hub in its classroom, where she is taught by an experienced coach educator who holds a Pro Licence. From time to time, she travels to St. George's Park to be taught by the English national coaches. Rebecca is mentored and supported by a coach educator who is assigned to her local club site.

On two evenings a week and at most weekends, Rebecca puts her newly acquired skills into practice as she coaches local weekend league squads at the football hub. As a newly qualified teacher who still lives at home, her school pays a proportion of her course fees from its staff training budget. Rebecca has also, through her local Premier League club, benefitted from a grant from its Foundation. She also spends time with the coaching team at the club during the school holidays where she is able to watch and learn from the team's leading coaches.

Section 4

Coaching and facilities working together

4.5 Coach and volunteer training on football hubs

The football hub model is designed to create a footballing facility which can become the heart of a community. They will include ancillary facilities dependent on local need and specifically designed for the local area. Many football hubs will provide classroom and learning facilities which can be used for training and coach education. This is a proven model with new facilities; for example the Premier League Community Facility Fund delivered by the Football Foundation provides an average of 143 qualifications per site per year. 15% of these qualifications are non-football qualifications, showing the community value of this model.

Case study 3

Coach and volunteer training – Enthusiastic parents



Nikki and Darren are huge football fans and parents to two children, Anna and Peter, aged 10 and 12 respectively. They are keen to get their children playing football outside of school. Through a local fans' group, they have gathered together a group of like-minded parents and want to start a small Saturday league. They have been put in touch with their local football hub.

Both are now enrolled on a Level 1 coaching course that is taught in their football hub's classroom by one of the FA's L1 county-based tutors where they are learning the essentials of running safe and engaging coaching sessions for youngsters. They are also receiving safeguarding training. Through attending the Level 1 course, they have met other parents who have successfully set up a local league and are learning from them the practicalities of how to set up a similar operation.

Section 4 Coaching and facilities working together

4.6 Elite players coached on football hubs

The football hub model is designed to provide opportunities for as many young children as possible to start playing football and then offering them multiple opportunities to join the elite player pathway, depending on their skill and development. For the Commission, our goal is to see these children progressing through the player pathway and maybe one day playing for England. It is therefore vital that hubs are integrated with local elite player pathways and are utilised by local professional and semi-professional clubs.

It is recommended that the Trust or organisation which will be assembled to look after the football hubs in each region should include local professional clubs. Working in partnership with Premier League, Football League and semi-professional clubs, football hubs could be used both for a local club's outreach or community engagement programmes and elements of their youth development work. Coaches from the clubs will be encouraged to form close relationships with football hubs and the development clubs using those sites, in order to ensure promising young children enter the elite pathway. This may include hosting development centres on the sites.

Case study 4

Elite players – An outstanding 13 year old



Aged 13, Niko always showed potential as a footballer. However, compared to his best peers, he was initially a slow developer. More recently, his progress has accelerated and he is now developing into a highly promising left back. His emerging talent was initially noted by his coach who discussed it with a coach educator giving an FA Advanced Youth Award course at the local football hub where Niko's school league plays most of its matches.

Niko's school uses the football hub's AGP pitches as all too often its own pitches are waterlogged in the winter months. Subsequently, one of the local Premier League club's regional scouts watched him play and invited him to a trial. Niko is now in the club's academy Under 14 squad. As well as training with the academy on evenings and weekends, Niko spends his weekday afternoons at the academy where he combines academic study and football.



5 Update on proposals in first report

5.1 Proposals

The first report made proposals for addressing the problem of playing opportunities for players 18-21 and to correct inadequacies in regulation of the player market. For details of these proposals, please refer to the first report.

5.2 What is yet to come?

Since the first report was published in May, the Commission has continued to consult with interested groups and stakeholders as well as deepening research and analysis around the issues and proposals.

In summary, the status of work on the proposals and discussions with the Premier League, Football League and Conference, supporter groups, clubs and others, is as follows:

Proposed changes to the Non-EU work visa process

The Commission's first report in May included a summary of flaws in the existing system that supports the granting of visas to non-EU players (the Governing Body Endorsement or GBE process).

Analysis and individual discussions since May have resulted in a draft proposal for a revised GBE process which the Commission and The FA believe will deliver results closer to the objectives of the system and create more opportunities for local players. The draft proposed changes to the criteria and process are:

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Update on proposals in first report

- Restricting applications to Premier League clubs.
- Lowering the FIFA rank criteria from the top 70 countries to the top 50.
- Easing the requirement for international games played from 75% to 30% for countries with FIFA ranking 1-30.
- Applying a Transfer Fee Exemption, probably £10m-£15m, for players who fail to meet the FIFA ranking or playing criteria.
- Restricting the Appeals Process to consider only appeals based on incorrect process to mirror the approach in other sports, including cricket.
- Potentially restricting players securing visas in this way from being loaned out to other clubs.

Modelling the effect of the proposed rules on the 122 players granted non-EU visas in 2009-13, 57 players (47%) would not have been granted visas under the new rules. Of these, only seven ended up playing above the average league minutes in their first year, suggesting this would be a much more effective system. Though relatively small, the reduction in non-EU players could have a valuable compound impact on opportunities for local players.

The FA is now consulting with the leagues, the PFA, the LMA and other Home Associations, as required by Home Office rules for any proposed change, with the aim of implementing a more effective process for the 2015-16 season. The FA expects to return to the Home Office with the results of the consultation and the final proposed revisions by February 2015.

Proposed expansion of the Home Grown Player rule

The early analysis and interviews of the Commission concluded that the current Home Grown Player rules are having little impact on the first-team outcomes of youth development in clubs. The first report proposed an increase in the number of HGPs required on each club's squad list, or team sheet in the case of the Football League, and the potential addition of a requirement for a number of 'club-trained' players, as exists for UEFA competitions.

It recognised the need to understand the effect of the Home Grown Player rules on club behaviour and to assess the impact of any change. The effectiveness of potential changes needs to be measured against the declared aims of encouraging youth development, promoting competitive balance, incentivising long-term investment, increasing opportunities for local players and maintaining local identities and community links. Rules must also be consistent with European labour and competition laws.

Since the first report was published, further analysis has added support to the view that the current rule is not effective and has not encouraged successful promotion of local talent:

- The average number of Home Grown Players in squads of the clubs consistently in the Premier League since the introduction of the Home Grown

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Player rule has fallen from 11.4 in September 2010 to 9.4 in September 2014. For the 'Top 6' clubs, the average has fallen from 9.2 in 2010 to 7.7 in 2014.

- Further, the share of minutes played by Home Grown Players and Under 21s (who are not counted in HGP numbers) has stayed near constant, from an average of 52% between 2008-9 and 2009-10 (before the introduction of the HGP rule) to 48% between 2012-13 and 2013-14.
- In terms of squad size, clubs unable to submit eight Home Grown Players in their squad appear content to work with smaller squads, rather than promote more Home Grown Players as intended.

The Commission and The FA are discussing objectives, analyses and concerns with the Premier League and Football League. There is a shared desire to promote youth development and a recognition that clubs need to balance week-by-week competitive and managerial challenges against the aim of achieving returns on their considerable investments in academies.

The research and discussions will continue – working with the leagues, UEFA, representative bodies, legal and research experts – to consider the analysis, historical evidence and attractiveness of different options to improve the Home Grown Player rule.

Proposed introduction of Premier League B teams into English football

The report recognised that this element of the proposals could not be imposed by The FA. We urged the leagues to consider the proposals, which they have done. It was and remains for them to decide.

It is clear that the overall reaction from many clubs was not favourable although the proposal has been supported by many managers and coaches in the Premier League who recognise the problem of getting competitive games for academy players beyond the age of 18. The main resistance to the proposal related to protection of the traditional pyramid, which the leagues and clubs weighed against potential advantages that the proposals might bring. Discussions are ongoing regarding the introduction of B teams into competitions outside the pyramid.

Proposed development of Strategic Loan Partnerships

The proposed creation of Strategic Loan Partnerships between clubs in different divisions has been debated by both the Premier League and the Football League. Current reticence stems from varied points of view and preferences held by club managers, executives and academy staff. Each view has, in its own way, prevented enthusiastic consideration of the proposals:

- Loans encourage clubs to stockpile young players.
- Loans are not appropriate for youth development.
- Loans are best arranged based on relationships or tactical opportunities.
- Change is futile until the future of emergency loans is sorted by FIFA.

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Whilst this inertia persists, fewer youth players on loan gain the benefits from playing regularly than is desirable or perceived: only 42 players, one in five of the 201 Premier League players under 21 going on loan in 2013-14, started 20 or more games. 79 players started five games or less.

We believe that without exploration of how to improve this, young elite players will continue to achieve less competitive play in the critical 18-21 period than they should. We would encourage clubs and leagues to join an open debate about the objectives and outcomes of loans for young players.

We firmly believe that, without action, these key problems facing English football will remain unresolved. Not only will we be failing to help our young players to develop their careers to their full extent, but it will, directly or indirectly, affect the health of football clubs and leagues at large.





6 Summary and next steps

6.1 Summary of conclusions

Although the lively debate surrounding the proposals tabled in the first report of the Commission attracted the most attention, there is now broad consensus on the main issues facing the development of elite English and other local players:

- There are inadequate and insufficient competitive playing opportunities for 18-21 year old elite players at top clubs in England.
- Regulation of the English player market is not effective in preserving the desired balance of British, EU and non-EU players in clubs.
- England lags behind in the quantity and quality of affordable grassroots facilities. This is particularly true in the area of all-weather pitches.
- Coaching and coach development, in clubs and at grassroots, have not yet reached a satisfactory level and impact.

Proposals have now been put forward to address these issues and in some cases implementation of these proposals has started.

6.2 What happens now?

The proposed solutions require further work and implementation, which will now be taken on by The FA's own leadership. This will include joint working with other stakeholders from leagues, clubs and elsewhere.

As before, especially where the proposed solutions have not yet won support or cannot be imposed, alternative proposals should be considered and discussed by all interested parties. This is especially pressing where the problems, such as playing opportunities for 18-21 year olds, remain an enduring issue and a critical concern.

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Summary and next steps

In brief, the work resulting from the proposals will continue, according to need and appetite:

Governing Body Endorsement non-EU visa process

Consultation between The FA and stakeholders is expected to be completed by February 2015 and The FA will take finalised proposals to the Home Office with a view to new processes and rules being in place for the 2015-16 season.

Home Grown Player rule

Research will continue alongside consultation with leagues, clubs and others on the best option for this rule that is permissible under EU law, acceptable to clubs and effective against the stated aims of promoting youth development (and competitive balance).

B teams/Strategic Loan Partnerships

Whilst these options remain for the leagues to decide, The FA will continue to seek to work with clubs, leagues and others to pursue and support implementable and effective options that deliver increased competitive playing opportunities for elite 18-21 year olds.

Grassroots facilities and all-weather pitches

The first phase of the Sheffield pilot project will commence in October 2014, whilst the preparation work for Liverpool and Birmingham – to follow on immediately – is already underway. Subject to final agreement of an implementation and funding plan for the national roll-out, The FA and its partners hope to commence partnership work with local authorities across England in 2015 on a 4-5 year implementation of Phase One of the project.

Coaching and coach development

Formal consultation with FA employees regarding the proposed re-structure and the recruitment of a new Head of Education will start shortly, as well as defining the targets to be set.

