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DCMS Committee
House of Commons
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Dear Mr Knight,

I understand that members of the Committee have received recent representations regarding the Independent Review of the PFA, which was commissioned in 2018 and concluded in 2020.

I am writing on behalf of the PFA to provide a more detailed timeline of activity around the Review. I hope this will be helpful in providing clarity regarding actions undertaken by the union to communicate the findings of the Review, and members' access to these.

The PFA's announcement of its decision to commission the Review was made in November 2018. Sport Resolutions, an expert independent, not-for-profit dispute resolution service for sport in the UK, were asked to lead this process.

The Terms of Reference for the Review were then agreed and published on the Sport Resolutions website (sportresolutions.com), where they can still be accessed.

Those Terms of Reference described the scope of the Review as covering "all aspects of the approach to governance, management and decision making of the PFA". They also set out guidance on how the Review, when completed, would be reported and communicated:

"The key findings and recommendations of the Final Report will be published by the PFA as soon as practicable after its completion (whilst ensuring that any necessary confidentiality is maintained)."

These Terms, including the guidance around publication and confidentiality, were communicated to PFA staff who voluntarily chose to contribute to the Review.

The Review process formally concluded over two years ago, in July 2020.

Following consideration of the findings, and in line with the Terms and Conditions set out at the commencement of the process, the PFA published the Review's key findings and recommendations on the PFA website in November 2020. These were also proactively communicated to PFA members and the media in member emails and press releases. The key findings and recommendations are still available to access on the PFA website (thepfa.com).

Following the completion of the Review, the PFA moved to implement its key recommendations. This led to the formation of a new Operational Board, the appointment of a new CEO (Maheta Molango, who appeared

before the Committee and who began in post in June 2021), the appointment of a new group of NEDs and the creation of a new, elected Players' Board.

The Players' Board, which is elected by the membership as the 'voice of the players', consists of representatives from all key constituencies, including two current members from each of the five divisions (Premier League, WSL, Championship, League One and League Two) and three former players.

Since its completion, the PFA has also published regular reports (available at thepfa.com) to allow scrutiny of progress made against the specific recommendations from the Review.

We are, of course, aware of the interest in the Review from some and of requests for it to be published in full. This is something to which the union has given genuine and careful consideration. However, having listened to further feedback from members, and following consultation with the PFA's Operational Board and the elected Players' Board, the decision was made to publish in line with the agreed Terms of Reference, with the key findings and recommendations being made available.

The contributions from PFA staff, which were made with knowledge of the Terms of Reference and the guidance around publication and confidentiality, were crucial in informing the recommendations of the Review and driving important changes at the PFA, some of which I have outlined above.

Whilst conscious of the interest, there is a clear responsibility on the PFA to ensure that the terms under which staff volunteered to contribute to the process are adhered to. It's important to say that our responsibilities in this regard are something on which the organisation sought external and independent legal advice.

We are aware through contact they have had with us that some MPs have received letters or emails raising the subject of the Review and specific, individual, personal engagement with the PFA.

As we have said in personal correspondence and in wider communication with members and media, and as set out clearly in the Terms of Reference, the Review was established to examine issues around organisational governance and structures, and to make recommendations on those subjects.

The Review had no remit to review or report on any other areas associated with the activity of the union or specific issues around any individual's personal engagement with the PFA. As reflected by the published key findings and recommendations, it did not do so.

To provide clarification, and to follow up on the comments made to your Committee by the Chair of our Operational Board, Geoff Thompson, in February, we have offered (and continue to offer) to meet with or speak to any PFA member, or groups of members, who wish to discuss any issues regarding the Review and to discuss the key findings and recommendations in more detail where helpful and appropriate.

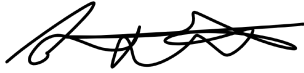
When Mr Thompson, in his comments to the Committee, referred to members being given access to, and sight of, the Review, he should have made clear that he was referring to the publication of the key findings and recommendations, and the subsequent offer of further detailed discussion of these with members, rather than the full Report, for the reasons set out above.

Again, it is important to make clear that we understand the interest in the Review. We also accept that there will be different views regarding this process.

However, as Mr Thompson told the Committee, we do believe that, by proactively communicating the key findings and recommendations of the Review in line with the Terms of Reference, the PFA has met the agreed obligations and responsibilities which were set out clearly in advance of the process.

I hope this provides some helpful additional detail on the process around the Review, but if I or the senior team at the PFA can provide any further information we would be very happy to do so.

Regards,



BEN WRIGHT

PFA Director of External Affairs