



### **Slide 1**

Thank you for your time and the opportunity for FAEQUALITY NOW to present to yourself Tracey and the committee for the fan led review of Football Governance.

FAEQUALITY now was set up in July 2020. Our group all have different experience in the football industry whether on or off the field. Collectively we are all fans.

Even though we have not launched publically, the group has grown considerably involving all sections of English Football which wish to see deep, structural change of the Football Association

### **Slide 2**

Vision: Equality for all in English Football and that solely resides in our mission: to fundamentally change the representation and governance structures and membership of the Football Association.

### **Slide 3**

The organs of the FA:

Council, Main Board, Professional Game Board, National Game Board

There is no real over-arching organ: and the council, main board, professional game board, national game board compete and where they can over-rule each other. No other company or sports governing body has this conflict of interest in their governance

The governance and articles of association of the FA has hardly shifted since the 19<sup>th</sup> century/pre-war, it is elite, privilege, irrelevant and does not represent the people, the fans or football in 2021.

Council – Which assumes to be the parliament of Football. Composition:

- 16 life senior/vice presidents (most of a certain age). This should not be a private members club for life. Most of them have been there since the 1980s.
- Only Two universities (Oxford and Cambridge) and Independent Schools. Highlighting Victorian elitism in 2021 still.
- Armed Forces (RAF, Army, Navy). Whilst we are very proud of them...this is really irrelevant for football governance in 2021 and beyond.

- 51 County Football Associations (the counties when set up in the 19<sup>th</sup> century their role was somewhat different to what it is now.

Half the council is made up of counties, of which the representatives are also of a certain age.

But the key point is football has changed, the 19<sup>th</sup> century there were no academies, there were no private soccer schools and private academies, there were no organized fan groups and the consumption of football has changed through the media. The county FAs at best represent 20% of football interest in each county but represent a half of the governance in reality of The FA.

The players and fans involvement in the current FA governance structures is also a token gesture.

Then there is the Professional Game Board – a powerplay by the Premier League to assert both influence and soft power throughout The FA. To ensure the Premier League and their clubs can influence nearly every national team and professional decision (whether the crown jewels of the FA Cup or the fixture list).

Then there is the National Game Board – who in reality have their own written and unwritten rules. Even when the Main Board recommended that a county chairman should not be reinstated his privileges because of racism, the fact being is the national game board made their own decision and in reality over-ruled the main board.

We then have a plethora of committees to ensure self-interest continues and efficient decision making does not occur.

In reality Tracey we have a situation: where no one is representing The FA in a strategic way. We have had for generations, conflicts of interests, competing agendas and in reality the FA is a composition of just that. We need the governance torn up and started again. It needs to be truly independent and truly democratic, in which I will come on in a later slide on our FAEQUALITYNOW BLUEPRINT solution.

## **Slide 4**

### **Black and Ethnic Minorities**

The Football Association have made a lot of noise, marketing and communication but once you take a shovel for the first dig, diversity and inclusion substance within the FA is hollow.

The FA have no baseline data. Having data is the starting point for any strategy.

The FA have no data on the following:

1. How many black coaches have their uefa A, B or level 2 coaching license?
2. How many British south Asians are playing in the 92 football league academies and at different age groups?
3. How many full time employees do the county FA's have from different ethnic minorities, also on the council and board of the counties.

Etc. – These are some of the core areas of football development, all missing.

So despite lots of noise, fancy brochures, PR and campaigns the fundamentals are not there and the FA strategy is flawed from the beginning.

The Football Leadership Diversity code was another vain attempt to show that the FA are changing. In reality this was a deflective strategy to the 92 clubs for the FA to be seen to be leaders of the game. The reality here is the FA don't have their own data, they don't have their own house in order, so this is just meaningless. There are of course no checks and balances to the clubs.

Even Sky Sports for some reason covered the so-called groundbreaking careers section of the FA diversity code, when I looked last week there were 12 jobs. There are over 40 recruitment portals doing this with 10 times more roles. So again, despite lot of noise there are hollow and flawed processes and outcomes.

As for the social media boycott on racism. The FAEqualityNow team believe this is another poor attempt to deflect the issue and again showcase the Football Association as a leading light. If the FA were credible and legitimate they would have their own house in order but they cannot and have not because of a governance model which has snow balled out of control, for the last century or 157 years to be precise.

### **Slide 5**

This year alone has showed institutional failings by the FA:

- Child Abuse, Child Protection, safety and the Sheldon report
- Dementia and safety

Both been swept under the carpet, with the same narrative. Apology, blame of a previous regime and we have learnt our lessons. These are huge institutional failings along with ethnic minority representation in English Football. This must be the opportunity when government finally intervene and change the FA.

The European Super League debacle in our opinion again stems from a weak governing body, where the PL wield soft power throughout the FA. This time the PREMIER LEAGUE had a bit of their own medicine with the 6 clubs.

So again the root cause is the Football Association.

### **Slide 6**

Even in the last 25 years, we have had countless chairman and CEO, having a change remit and change agenda. Those chairmen quickly realize they cannot change anything and as you know Greg Dyke, Lord Triesemann and David Bernstein all wrote collectively to government post roles saying the FA cannot change itself. This time round we have the first lady chair starting in January, but again it does not matter who is the figurehead, the structure, governance is flawed.

## **Slide 7**

Our group did not just want to analyse the status quo, we wish to offer a new solution, a new governance model for the FA. Hence the FA EQUALITY NOW Blueprint.

At its core is the following:

- The FA Structure as it currently is should be disbanded, we move away from an association of associations/groups to a FA Membership where everyone can be part off. Individual and inclusive. Open for every individual in England to be a FA Member. In reality we could have hundreds of thousands/millions people joining. This being truly Independent, open and inclusive.
- It is then the FA Membership who elect a 24-person board by open, democratic elections and voting. Not closed doors, not done by false recruitment procedures and promises. The people up and down the country elect who should govern English Football. The mandate to the people has been given, so English Football and the FA can govern to finally develop the game FOR ALL.
- The Management like in any good company implement the strategic plan and make decisions and report to one single board.

## **Slide 8**

FAEQUALITY NOW Blueprint for a new governance model for English Football is:

- Inclusive
- Democratic
- Independent
- No conflict, but healthy debate
- Strategic – Doing the best for English Football

Best interests for all at the heart of our FA EQUALITY NOW BLUEPRINT

## **Slide 9**

So currently on the table is preserving the status quo, elite, privilege, conflicted, irrelevant, closed door workings of the governance of the FA or to debate further and ultimately implement the FA EQUALITY NOW blueprint.

## **Slide 10**

Our recommendations apart from the Blueprint:

County FAs to be strengthened in their delivery (but governance and their governance changed)

Football Foundation to be disbanded and incorporated into the Facilities division of the FA. (The PREMIER LEAGUE apart from wielding more soft power within the game have no strategic reason to be part of the Football Foundation). No other European league has a remit or involved in the governance of football facilities.

Football Supporters Association (FSA) and Kick it out, plus LMA and PFA, revenues protected, governance independent. No interference from The FA or PL.

FA – Should come under a public body. As a first step and come under the freedom of information act on all aspects. Transparency should be its first central tenet going forwards.

Independent regulator – Our view is very clear, if the Independent regulator will change the FA then fine. Long term Football should govern itself and the FA should be able to be the regulator and govern football. An interim independent regulator maybe needed to ensure all the short and mid- term changes are implemented effectively. However, to emphasize the Football Association must completely change from composition, representation and be truly Independent (as suggested in our blueprint)

Yes, we need laws and legislation passed to protect the crown jewels, the FA cup, that another Wimbledon to Milton Keynes location does not occur or changes in the club's name, crest and heritage. But unless the FA is changed the Independent regulator will cause more confusion and conflict within English Football governance.

Let's first fix the FA and then debate the need for a long term regulator.

### **Slide 11**

**Paul Stewart** – headline overview of the football association on child protection, safeguarding and his experiences with the FA

Handover to Dr. Judith Gates and John stiles on the failure of the FA on dementia and safety.

Mickey Ambrose – with some additional remarks

### **Slide 12**

Nigel (Summary)

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Whilst I do not wish to do a rendition of John Lennon, but just imagine the English Football Association being truly inclusive and open to all, where membership access is open and everyone is proud of the FA, that can all aid performance both off the field and even on it.

Thank you for your time and listening to us.