

# Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee

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Meeting Venue:  
**Committee Room 2 – Senedd**

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Meeting date:  
**23 May 2012**

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Meeting time:  
**09:15**

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Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales



For further information please contact:

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## Agenda

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**Private Pre-meeting – 09.15 – 09.30**

### **1. Introductions, apologies and substitutions**

### **2. Inquiry into the Welsh Premier League – Evidence session (09.30 – 10.10)** (Pages 1 – 4)

Rondo Media  
CELG(4)-14-12 – Paper 1

Gareth Williams, Chief Executive of Rondo Media  
Emyr Davies, Executive Producer and Company Director of Rondo

### **3. Inquiry into the Welsh Premier League – Evidence session (10.10 – 10.40)** (Pages 5 – 7)

Welsh Local Government Association  
CELG(4)-14-12 – Paper 2

Peter Gomer, Interim Policy Adviser (Leisure, Culture, Tourism & Heritage), Welsh Local Government Association  
David Phenis, Community Development Manager, Welsh Local Government Association

### **4. Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the**

**public from the meeting for the following business**

**5. Committee Forward Work Programme (10.40 – 11.00) (Page 8)**

CELG(4)-14-12 – Paper 3

Terms of Reference

**6. Papers to note**

**CELG(4)-14-12 – Paper 4 – Further Information from Carmarthen Town A.F.C.**

(Pages 9 – 11)

**CELG(4)-14-12 – Paper 5 – Further Information from the Football Association of Wales (Pages 12 – 14)**

**CELG(4)-14-12 – Paper 6 – Letter to the Minister for Local Government and Communities (Pages 15 – 16)**

## Rondo Media – General Presentation

Rondo Media is one of the main production companies in Wales and has offices in Caernarfon, Cardiff and Menai Bridge. The company produces programmes and online material in the fields of sport, drama, music and events, children's series, and entertainment and factual programmes. The company's recent productions include the youth drama series *Rownd a Rownd*, the drama series for BBC 1 *The Indian Doctor*, and the football series *Sgorio*. The company currently has an annual turnover of over £14 million.

Rondo won a substantial contract to produce a number of new series for young people, including the drama *Gwlad yr Astra Gwyn*, and the studio shows *Gwefreiddiol* and *Fi Di Duw*. Our drama series for BBC 1, *The Indian Doctor*, won Royal Television Society and Broadcast awards. The company has produced a film of Michael Sheen's dramatic interpretation of The Passion in Port Talbot: *The Gospel of Us*. The company has also secured its first commission with Channel 4, as part of the *Cutting Edge* series.

Rondo was established in April 2008 with the uniting of two of Wales's most experienced independent production companies, Ffilmiau'r Nant and Opus TF. The company's first substantial commission was a four-year contract to broadcast Welsh Premier League games and international football games. Since then, Rondo has doubled in size and doubled its staff numbers. The popular youth drama series *Rownd a Rownd* is now broadcast twice a week on S4C. We also co-produce S4C's events series and broadcasts from *Llangollen International Eisteddfod* for S4C and BBC Wales.

The company succeeded in becoming part of the Welsh Assembly Government's and Skillset's 'Talent Attraction Scheme', the BBC's XM25 scheme, and Channel 4's Alpha Fund scheme. Currently, the company employs over 60 permanent members of staff and up to 150 part-time and freelance staff. Recently, the company invested £650,000 in new post-production offices and facilities in Caernarfon and Cardiff.

## Sgorio – 1988 – 2008

The first *Sgorio* programme was broadcast on 5 September 1988. Although there was an emphasis from the start on games from Spain and Italy, the first few series included a wide range of different sports, including rugby 13, rallying, ice hockey, climbing, canoeing, rafting and much more.

Following several successful series, we decided to concentrate fully on football, with an emphasis on the leagues of Spain, Italy and Germany. The *Sgorio* brand became very important to S4C, and drew in non-Welsh-speaking viewers in Wales and viewers from over the border in England.

## Sgorio 2008 – present day

In 2008, Rondo won the rights to produce the broadcasting of Welsh Premier League games, the Welsh Cup, and the highlights of Welsh international home games, and a few away games, under the *Sgorio* brand via an open tendering process held by S4C.

From the outset, the *Sgorio* team's aim was to provide programmes with high production values whilst ensuring value for money for S4C. Under the BBC's previous arrangement before the 2008/09 season, Welsh Football League games were broadcast for half an hour on Saturday evenings under the *Y Clwb Pêl-droed* brand on S4C. The broadcast included one main game and goals from one or two other games.

The *Sgorio* team felt strongly that, if the league was to be taken seriously in terms of television production and general credibility, every league game needed to be recorded, so that a record of every main event would be recorded and that an archive of historical value and of the league's development would be created. The aspiration was that *Sgorio*/Rondo would achieve this before the end of the four-year rights period. In reality, much more than this was achieved through the encouragement and support of S4C, Welsh Premier League officials and the clubs.

Since the beginning of the 2010 season, one game from the Welsh Premier League or the Welsh Cup is broadcast live on Saturday afternoons, and the highlights of every league game played over the weekend are broadcast in an hour-long *Sgorio* programme at 10pm on Mondays. (*Sgorio* was moved to Tuesdays at 6.30pm for 30 minutes a week between March and mid May 2012).

In addition to three hours of live broadcasting on Saturday afternoons and the Welsh Premier League being given prominence on the hour-long *Sgorio* programme on Monday evenings, a 10-minute version of *Sgorio* is now broadcast every week as part of S4C's provision for children and young people under the *Stwnsh* banner.

Despite the changes made during this period, *Sgorio* on Mondays and *Sgorio Stwnsh* have kept an international element and flavour to the series by continuing to show highlights from La Liga, the main Spanish league, as part of the coverage. This has ensured continuity, which enables viewers to see some of the best players, clubs and stadia in the world, alongside the Welsh Premier League, and, to the amazement of some, the two elements sit together very comfortably.

## Sgorio – the future

*Sgorio* welcomes the opportunity to improve and expand the service from the Welsh Premier League. We are now in the multi-platform age in terms of content, and it is important that our content reflects the changes in user viewing patterns and the ways in which they find content. Our aspiration next season is that a few games that are played on Friday evenings (in addition to the main live game) will be broadcast live on the web, and we have already trialled this successfully. Our content production team is already working on providing a *Sgorio* App, which will be an additional portal for followers of the league. We are also developing a "widget" system that will allow clubs to access videos of their games for their own purposes (training, websites, etc).

These developments are dependent, of course, on ensuring that enough funding is available, but they give the viewer a full opportunity to use the latest technology in order to promote the series and the achievements of the clubs and the league throughout Wales. We believe that the recent developments of broadcasting a live game on

S4C every week have been a big step for the league. Having a broadcaster and the popular characters who contribute to the programme are intrinsic to the Welsh Premier League and will increase its profile.

One essential development is to ensure that league club areas have suitable high-speed broadband systems. This would allow broadcasters to broadcast on the web, and for the clubs to distribute relevant information to media agents and so on, be it news, scores, results, and so on, in a reliable and consistent way.

In terms of producing television and multi-platform output of the highest standard on the Welsh Premier League, an injection of funding would:

1. Ensure that there are facilities of a high standard to broadcast from pitches – e.g. television gantries of the required standard.
2. Ensure that there are appropriate places to set up cameras around the pitches and specific areas for presenters.
3. High-speed broadband connectivity for broadcasting, which will, of course, benefit the club and the whole local community.
4. General maintenance work and the development of the club's facilities for the use of the team and the community.

The main other general concerns

1. The Welsh Premier League clubs' consistent lack of success in European competitions. The results of every league club in European competitions are noted in a table showing the success of all countries. Currently, Wales is forty-sixth on a list of 53 clubs, while Cyprus, which is a much smaller country and has a population of 1,099,341, is sixteenth. The other countries that have a smaller population than Wales but whose leagues are higher than Wales's on the UEFA list are Latvia, Macedonia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Malta, Iceland and Liechtenstein.
2. The lack of crowds at games. The lack of feeling in communities that games are social events.
3. The lower league clubs' lack of general ambition to improve their facilities and to apply for a domestic licence in order to secure promotion to the main league. The lack of variety in the league clubs' constitution from season to season, which leads to a lack of variety in games.
4. The condition of pitches. The standard of the football games is dependent on the condition of the pitches, and although the condition of the pitches of some clubs has improved substantially over the past years, in general, the condition of pitches in Wales needs to be greatly improved.
5. Football over the summer – a sufficient number of comments have been made on this enterprise, which is being considered, but there is a lack of evidence/detailed research regarding the maintenance and practicality of the enterprise.



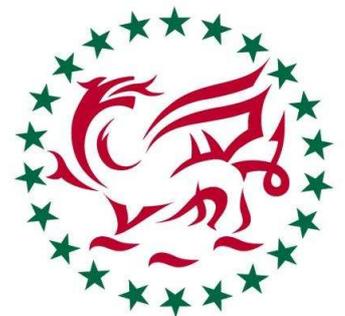
Emyr Davies Rondo Media May 10, 2012

**Sgorio**



Communities, Equality &  
Local Government  
Committee -  
Inquiry into the Welsh Premier  
League

May 2012



WLGA • CLILC

## INTRODUCTION

1. The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) represents the 22 local authorities in Wales, and the three national park authorities, the three fire and rescue authorities, and four police authorities are associate members.
2. It seeks to provide representation to local authorities within an emerging policy framework that satisfies the key priorities of our members and delivers a broad range of services that add value to Welsh Local Government and the communities they serve.
3. The WLGA welcomes the opportunity to provide evidence to the Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee on the Welsh Premier League.
4. The WLGA are unable in this briefing document to give a detailed response on the Welsh Premier League but will be able to give a more detailed verbal response to the Committee on the issues the WLGA and Local Authorities identify as having an impact on the Welsh Premier League.
5. The Areas the WLGA will give evidence on are:-
  - i) Exemplars of good practice particularly in partnership with the FAW Trust.
  - ii) Present trends in the development of playing facilities and their management
  - iii) The Role of 3<sup>rd</sup> generation playing facilities
  - iv) Transient nature of Football teams/clubs
  - v) Local League management structures

### **For further information please contact:**

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By virtue of paragraph(s) iv of Standing Order 17.42

Document is Restricted

- Has the requirement for domestic and UEFA licences contributed in any way to improving the infrastructure of WPL clubs, and if so, how?/ A yw'r gofyniad i gael trwydded ddomestig a thrwydded UEFA wedi cyfrannu mewn unrhyw ffordd at wella seilwaith clybiau Uwch Gynghrair Cymru ac os felly, sut?

**Domestic and UEFA licences have certainly benefited clubs in the Premier League, and those not in the league.**

**First, they have forced every club to establish a solid base for its infrastructure, from the Academy to the first team. The criteria are clear and tangible, with every part being relevant to every club. This establishes a basis on which to make decisions.**

**I would like to thank the FAW's licensing team for its support and willingness to assist in attempting to ensure that the goal is reached every year.**

**Its greatest benefit, in my opinion, is to ensure that it is the most ambitious clubs that can benefit from this. With the licence being used to bring the league down to 12 teams, in the past, only those with the vision could fulfill the requirements. Therefore, it is the clubs that have the best facilities and infrastructure within football in Wales that have survived.**

**It sets a goal for clubs outside the Premier League to aim for. Perhaps it is now time to consider these clubs and to give them more opportunities to reach their goals.**

**First, a debate should be held again on the number of clubs in the Premier League. It has already been noted that Carmarthen Football Club favours having 16 clubs and that it is time to consider this.**

**Secondly, there are clubs that are given a domestic licence that are prevented from accessing the Premier League because only one team from south Wales and one from north Wales can be promoted. We feel that the teams in the north are more ambitious than those in the south.**

- Do you have any views on the FAW Strategic Plan, published in January 2012, and the way in which it relates to the WPL?/ A oes gennych farn ynghylch Cynllun Strategol Cymdeithas Bêl-droed Cymru, a gyhoeddwyd ym mis Ionawr 2012, a sut y mae'n berthnasol i Uwch Gynghrair Cymru?

**Again, the content of the Strategic Plan needs to be discussed further. We believe that more input is needed from the members of the Premier League so that there is an agreed vision for the future. One meeting is not enough to ensure that that happens.**

**We strongly believe in development but there must be common agreement on the way forward.**

- You say that the Welsh Government should 'do its bit in supporting our Premier League'. What would be the most effective form of support it could provide and what would you wish to see the Government doing in this respect?/ Yr ydych yn dweud y dylai Llywodraeth Cymru wneud ei rhan drwy gefnogi ein Huwch Gynghrair. Beth fyddai'r gefnogaeth fwyaf effeithiol y gallai ei chynnig a beth yr hoffech weld y Llywodraeth yn ei wneud yn hyn o beth?

**Apart from direct funding, practical support for clubs must be considered. As most Premier League clubs are run by volunteers, there is often no specialist knowledge in searching for additional funding sources.**

**The FAW's Grow Your Club initiative was laudable, but it did not solve the problem as its suggestions were not clear enough.**

**Clubs need a clear list of funding sources, with additional assistance on how to fill in the application forms in order to utilise these sources.**

**We hope that these meetings will be the first step on the path to ensuring that assistance is received. However, a discussion is needed to draw up a five-year plan for the league, regarding how to expand it to include more teams in order to make it more viable. Unfortunately, the clubs cannot do this without assistance.**

**County Councils need to be directed to support their clubs in a practical way. Carmarthenshire County Council must be applauded for attempting to do this.**

**What input has the Welsh Government had in the Strategic Plan? Does the FAW need political representation or does the Premier League need a politician on its management board? These are all questions for you and it will be interesting to hear your response.**

- Can you expand on your comments that the Welsh Government should support Wales's independent position within FIFA? What specific actions should it be taking in this regard and what role does the WPL have to play in safeguarding this status?/ A allwch ymhelaethu ar eich sylwadau y dylai Llywodraeth Cymru gefnogi safle annibynnol Cymru yn FIFA? Pa gamau penodol y dylai fod yn eu cymryd yn hyn o beth a beth yw swyddogaeth Uwch Gynghrair Cymru o ran diogelu'r statws hwn?

**The Olympic Games have brought this to the attention of the media once again. Wales's independence within FIFA's ranks must be defended. The comments made by the representative of the English FA has not assisted Wales, and the situation needs to be resolved.**

**Again, the partnership between the Welsh Government and the FAW, if it exists, needs to be addressed. Transparency within this relationship needs to be ensured.**

**Wales (and Cardiff specifically) benefits from having a national team. Players such as Aaron Ramsey and Gareth Bale are known throughout the world. They**

must be used to attract support for the national team and also draw people to the capital.

It is a great honour for Carmarthen Football Club to stage three games at Richmond Park in August 2013 as part of the UEFA championships for women under 19. We are already working alongside the local tourism board and the County Council to publicise the area throughout Europe.

Cardiff will certainly benefit when the 2014 World Cup preliminary games are held. This is an economic reason for protecting the independence of our national team.

The Premier League has a key role in this. As we compete in Europe, the aim is to try to improve our status within UEFA. As the national team, and hopefully our results in Europe, improve, our UEFA rank will rise, ensuring a more favourable situation for clubs and the international team in Wales.

- What are your views on the work the FAW and WPL is undertaking with respect to tackling racism and homophobia in football and in reaching out to more diverse footballing communities (such as women, BME people and LGB people)?/ Beth yw eich barn am y gwaith y mae Cymdeithas Bêl-droed Cymru ac Uwch Gynghraiir Cymru yn ei wneud i fynd i'r afael â hiliaeth a homoffobia yn y byd pêl-droed ac i gyrraedd cymunedau pêl-droed mwy amrywiol (megis menywod, pobl dduon a lleiafrifoedd ethnig a phobl lesbiaid, hoyw a deurywiol)?

Carmarthen Football Club has incorporated the FAW's attempt to tackle racism and homophobia in the football world. As a club, we welcome the Show Racism the Red Card team to Richmond Park every year. This year, over 60 local primary school pupils from the area were made aware of social problems.

The sessions are lively and the participants are full of enthusiasm. I have made suggestions regarding developing the structure of the initiative.

The advantage for us is that school pupils now use the community centre, not only to play football, but to expand their knowledge and to discuss contentious issues.

Learning through football is effective. It is given a great deal of coverage in the media and it is an effective way of conveying positive messages. It is perhaps an area to develop further.

# Agenda Item 6b

Further information was requested by the Committee regarding the following points and here is the Football Association of Wales' response:

***The current support provided by both central and local government in Wales for the Welsh Premier League and suggestions for support in the future.***

While no funding whatsoever has been invested directly into the WPL by WAG in the past 10 years, Welsh Football is receiving £1,332,418 in 2011/12 through the Welsh Football Trust out of Sport Wales' annual budget of over £25 million.

A further investment of £750,000 has also been confirmed by Sport Wales for the National Development Centre in Newport.

During the same period the Welsh Rugby Union is receiving funding to the tune of £555,345.21 from Sport Wales and a further £500,000 for purchasing the big screens at the Millennium Stadium.

As previously mentioned there are 1,500 football clubs in Wales compared to 340 rugby clubs and the WRU's annual turnover last year was over £54 million compared to the FAW's £10 million.

We have requested figures from the WLGA regarding funding for football at all levels but haven't received the relevant information as yet but it is no secret that that the level of local government investment has fallen sharply in recent years. Five years ago the Welsh Football Trust received partnership funding for the Football Development Posts from 21 of the 22 local authorities – this would equate to about £350,000 of financial support. None of the LA's are now funding posts but due to additional FAW funding 18 posts are still active which again proves the FAW's commitment to developing football at all levels.

The main costs to LA's will be facility provision because the majority of WPL clubs play on council owned pitches. Due to the fact that many councils now have a decommissioning strategy to close down costly and under used facilities it would be beneficial to clubs and communities and a prudent financial investment to position 3G/4G pitches as they produce a revenue stream and can absorb activity from 6 to 8 grass pitches.

This 3G/4G strategy with the 12 WPL clubs becoming community hubs for all sections of society would benefit and strengthen community links, health, civil obedience and make the clubs far more sustainable.

Due to the fact that 3G/4G pitches generate income – no further investment would be required once the 9 year life span of each pitch came to an end. The total, one off investment, to introduce 3G/4G pitches to all WPL clubs, either as first team pitches or training facilities for club and community would cost a maximum of £5 million. The perfect model for this has been proven at Crusaders in Northern Ireland.

The government paid 75% of the 4G costs – gave the club the responsibility of managing and maintaining the pitch – but demanded that local schools were allowed free allocated access to the facility on a weekly basis. Every party involved has reaped benefit from the new arrangement.

***The work being undertaken with respect to tackling racism and in reaching out to more diverse footballing communities such as women, BME and LGBT people.***

In our recently launched Strategy Plan the FAW positively declares our aspiration to be a “standard bearer for health, participation and inclusivity... for players at all levels, abilities and genders.”

Two of our specific actions are to:

**1) Prioritise development of Disabled & BME inclusion initiatives**

- Set up two impairment – specific national disability squads
- Set up three regional disability performance centres.

**2) Prioritise development of women’s and junior football**

- Set up Women’s Football Taskforce to raise profile, review player pathway and competition structures.
- Include junior and female development in Domestic Licence
- Set up six regional performance centres for girls.

**Inclusion**

In March 2012 the FAW signed up with Stonewall’s Diversity Champions Project to promote fair treatment for all. Andrew White, director of Stonewall Cymru said that the FAW’s commitment to the project was “ a great step forward and signals the kind of leadership we hope to see more of in Welsh sport.”

The FAW seeks to promote an environment in which all individuals, regardless of background, are offered a level platform on which to fulfil potential.

**BME Football**

At present we have 90,000 registered football players in Wales of which 3% are from BME backgrounds. Through the WFT’s newly launched Strategic Plan for the Development of BME Football in Wales 2012-14 the aim is to increase the number of registered players to 4%.

At present there are 7 community clubs across Wales with 50% + BME players and 1 multicultural 5 a Side League in South Wales. An annual BME tournament is held across the South / West Wales and Gwent Regions.

The aim is to increase the number of BMA coaches at all levels of the coaching pathway by 2014 to; 80 level 1/24 level 2/16 level 3/2 level 4 and 8 goalkeeping level 1.

As well as this drive to increase participation levels the FAW is also fully supportive of the ***‘Show Racism the Red Card’*** scheme.

The majority of this work is funded by Big Lottery Funding and has resulted in 100% of schools visited requesting further sessions. For the past four years the FAW has directly funded the Show Racism the Red Card Fortnight at a total cost of £52,000. Last year this involved 32 Welsh Clubs and

the National Team at which 77,500 people were present. WPL clubs formed the backbone of this campaign as will be the case again this October.

### **Women's Football**

The FAW now invests 25% of international budgets into Women's Football and will launch the National Women's Premier League for the first time in the Autumn. A female representative will also be elected to the FAW Council in the present financial year.

The FAW also fully endorses the Welsh Football Trust's Strategic Plan for the Development of Women's and Girls Football in Wales 2010-2014. Prior to the scheme there were 3,500 registered players in Wales – the achievable aim of a further increase of 40% is the next target by 2014.

Sport Wales Chair Laura McAllister believes that "The WFT and FAW has demonstrated a real commitment to create further opportunities for women's and girl's football" through this strategy.

***"Gorau Chwarae Cyd Chwarae"***

Pwyllgor Cymunedau, Cydraddoldeb a  
Llywodraeth Leol

Communities, Equality and Local Government  
Committee

Carl Sargeant, AM  
Minister for Local Government  
National Assembly for Wales  
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Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd / Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

24 April 2012

Dear Carl

## **Health and Social Care Committee – Inadequate public toilet facilities**

You will be aware that the Health and Social Care Committee has recently undertaken an inquiry into public toilet facilities.

The Committee concluded that the public health case for better public toilet provision is strong. Furthermore, the evidence collected by that Committee suggests there is a case for further investigation of local authority provision of public toilet facilities.

The Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee considered and noted the letter relating to this issue in its meeting. In light of the contents of the letter, I felt that it would be appropriate to write to you to seek further information on the local government aspect of this issue.

I would be grateful, therefore, if you could provide me with an update in relation to local authority provision of public toilet facilities. In particular, I would be grateful if your response could address the following:

- Does the Welsh Government have any involvement in strategic level decisions relating to public toilet provision?

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg / We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh  
Pwyllgor Cymunedau, Cydraddoldeb a Llywodraeth Leol / Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee  
Gwasanaeth y Pwyllgorau / Committee Service  
Ffôn / Tel : 029 2089 8429  
Ebost / Email : [Communities.Equality&LocalGov@wales.gov.uk](mailto:Communities.Equality&LocalGov@wales.gov.uk)

- Does the Welsh Government issue guidelines to local authorities on provision of public toilet facilities, including levels of provision?
- Does the Welsh Government monitor or have a role in reviewing the levels of provision, to ensure that they are appropriate?
- What mechanisms are available to ensure that local authorities provide an appropriate level of access to public toilet facilities?

Thank you in advance for providing this information to the Committee, which I will be sharing with the Chair of the Health and Social Care Committee. I look forward to receiving your response in due course.

Yours sincerely

**Ann Jones AC / AM**  
Cadeirydd / Chair