

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 18 APRIL 2011

SCOTTISH FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION PERFORMANCE SCHOOL AT GRANGE ACADEMY

Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** The purpose of the report is to seek Cabinet agreement with the Scottish Football Association's decision to locate the Performance School for Football for South West Scotland in Grange Academy, Kilmarnock.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The Scottish Football Association and the Scottish Youth Football Association are working together on a joint venture to enhance the development of young football players in Scotland.
- 2.2** All young people playing recreational football will now follow the new National Player Pathway which starts with small-sided games and grows with the child. The Associations researched best practice both in Scotland and across the world (Brazil, Portugal, Spain, Holland and Croatia amongst others) to produce a National Player Pathway that will fit into a Scottish context and help young players to reach their potential.
- 2.3** Research has shown the advantages of small-sided games and some excellent work by youth leagues in Scotland has demonstrated the benefits of moving through modified formats to the adult version of the game.
- 2.4** In 2007 a group of players was selected to attend Graeme High School in Falkirk to follow an enhanced curriculum which included daily periods of football and sports science. Pupils who went through the programme graduated in June 2011 at Hampden Park. Two of the ten players have already gone on to represent Scotland.
- 2.5** Since then a second Scottish Football Association Football Academy, or Performance School, has been established at Broughton High School in Edinburgh and two senior clubs have established similar programmes.
- 2.6** There are also fifteen Schools of Football (including one at Cumnock Academy and one at Grange Academy) backed by the Scottish Government's Cashback for Communities across the country, and an elite Women's National Academy has been established at the University of Stirling alongside three regional women's academies.

3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1** Senior SFA personnel are responsible for driving this flagship policy forward. The stated SFA desire to raise standards of performance has schools of excellence at the heart of delivering this change while continuing to support investment in youth. As part of this national programme, the SFA wish to establish a Performance School within Grange Academy, Kilmarnock. In doing so, there is acknowledgement of the excellent links that exist with Kilmarnock Football Club and the support they have given to schools over the years.
- 3.2** The Performance School, will accept talented twelve to sixteen year-olds. The programme, under which these young people will benefit, is based on the idea that, to produce world-class athletes, ten thousand hours of practice must be invested over a ten-year period from ages ten to twenty or twelve to twenty two..For all other aspects of their education, the young people involved will experience the standard curriculum offered by the school.
- 3.3** In session 2012-2013 the first cohort (up to a maximum of twenty four but given football trial results to date probably fifteen) will be current Primary Seven pupils who will enter S1 in August 2012.
- 3.4** Other schools involved are Hazlehead Academy Aberdeen, St John's High School Dundee, Graeme High School Falkirk, Braidhurst High School Motherwell, Broughton High School Edinburgh and Holyrood Secondary Glasgow.

An Elite Performance Coach has been appointed to work with each school and this is also the case with Grange Academy.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** Any pupil outwith the Performance School's catchment area would apply for enrolment in the normal manner via a placing request with the same conditions in operation as for any other pupil on a placing request. As these children are considered as placing requests, there are no transport cost implications for the authority.
- 4.2** Having regard for the current availability and usage of changing facilities and storage space, officers are presently assessing any accommodation needs and space requirements in association with First Class Consortium who run the campus on behalf of the Authority. This includes consideration of the use of semi permanent accommodation, the capital costs of which would be under-written by the SFA. Cleaning and maintenance would require to be met from within existing resources.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The development of Performance Schools is closely linked to Curriculum for Excellence initiatives in Health and Wellbeing and particularly to the Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007 from which much of the Curriculum for Excellence guidance is derived. The legal framework outlines the expectations upon individuals, schools and local authorities to promote the health and wellbeing of children and young people.

5.2 The Performance Schools initiative is linked to the Cashback for Communities programme which takes the gains of crime, recovered through the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, and invests them into community programmes, facilities and activities. The key principles that underpin all Cashback activities indicate that they should be:

- Positive: broadly defined as wholesome, healthy, fun, active and engaging.
- Open to all: accessible, well-advertised, free of charge, of interest to all ages and to both boys and girls, ethnic minorities, young people with disabilities etc.
- Developmental: changing behaviours and attitudes, developing personal and physical skills and
- Sustainable: providing medium and long-term as well as short-term benefits; linked to mainstream funding.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Performance School would contribute to the Council's overall strategy to promote Health and Wellbeing in schools in line with Curriculum for Excellence and other Scottish Government initiatives.

6.2 The standard circulars listed below have been scrutinised and appropriate sections and sub sections identified to ensure that no legal obligations on the authority will be breached as a result of the performance school being established and non-East Ayrshire pupils attending:

SC48 Establishment Excursion and Educational Visits

SC5 Attendance and Absence in Educational Establishments

SC8 Managing Procedures and Provision for Exclusion

SC9 Placing Requests

SC83 Flexibility in the Curriculum

SC45 Admission of Pupils Normally Resident Outwith East Ayrshire

6.3 A binding agreement will require to be signed by parents and carers of the SFA Performance School pupils if they are not East Ayrshire residents. The SFA has a very demanding set of guidelines which are also signed by parents and pupils.

7. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

7.1 With reference to East Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership's Single Outcome Agreement 2011-2014 the Performance School will contribute to the Strategic priority of Improving Health and Wellbeing:

- Active, healthy lifestyles and positive change promoted
- Children and young people assisted to be active, healthy, nurtured and included.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Pupils involved would either be part of the normal school curriculum or involved in Scottish Football Association coaching, supervised at all times by General Teaching Council for Scotland registered teachers and/or the Scottish Football Association's own Elite Performance Coaches. There would thus be no additional risks involved.

9. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 Positive

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (i) approve the nomination of Grange Academy as a Scottish Football Association Performance School;
- (ii) ask the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services to provide a further report to Cabinet on any issues arising from paragraph 4.2 of this report: and
- (iii) otherwise, note the contents of this report.

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Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

AW/ND
14/3/12

List of Background Papers

The SFA Performance Strategy

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