



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-1027
Ein cyf/Our ref DET/03036/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Chair, Petitions Committee

16 November 2020

Dear Janet,

Thank you for your correspondence, regarding petition P-05-1027 to allow Welsh domestic football clubs to play friendly matches.

Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to your query. We have been dealing with large amounts of correspondence during the lockdown period on various subjects.

New national coronavirus measures came into force from 9 November which allow additional tiers of athletes and teams to return to competition or competitive matches. Sport Wales has been provided with the responsibility to consider further additions to the elite designation where appropriate, to enable more team sports to be played outdoors where the 30 person gathering number has been restrictive. This will be done in a controlled and phased way and only where clear guidance is in place by sport governing bodies to protect all participants.

The Football Association of Wales has been invited to submit their proposals for the minimum number of players that would be required for competitive football to return, and their plans for which teams or leagues might return and when.

It is important to point out that while we are seeking to allow more outdoor team sports to return to play, this must be managed through a phased approach to ensure we do it safely and mitigate any risk to controlling the spread of the virus.

You ask about the science behind the implementation of these measures. The Technical Advisory Cell (TAC) provides coordination of scientific and technical advice to support Welsh Government decision makers during emergencies such as the current Coronavirus

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

pandemic and ensure Welsh Government and Public Health Wales have timely access to the most up-to-date scientific and technical information related to the outbreak, which is published weekly here: <https://gov.wales/advice-coronavirus-technical-advisory-cell>.

The situation in relation to hosting sporting events, I can confirm that my officials maintain regular dialogue with FAW on the issues facing the sector. In addition, a stakeholder group consisting of organisations from the world of sport, arts and other events have been brought together, and will continue to advise on how we can safely and cautiously bring back spectators to events – but **only** when it is safe to do so. We are not yet able to put a date to this, however we continue to monitor the science and trends. Unfortunately, due to the current public health position, the next phase of Test Events has had to be put on hold – this is also the case across the UK. We do not expect test events to resume until February 2021 but we will keep this under review.

The Welsh Government fully appreciates the difficulties many of our sporting clubs and organisations will be facing now, and this is why we have been delivering a substantial £14 million financial support package via sports wales, and discussions are also ongoing for additional funding for our tier 1 and 2 teams via the lottery.

I hope this clarifies the current position.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'I. Elis-Thomas'.

Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas AS/MS

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Diwylliant, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth
Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism