

## Overview

In July 2020, Football West commissioned an independent consultant to provide an assessment and report summarising key issues in relation to the governance and delivery of football in the South West region.

The objectives for the project were to assess whether FFSW and the current governance structure represent an effective allocation of resources, and if not, recommend a new structure which does make this effective. Further, assess whether the current local association, league and club structure is the most appropriate to support all football in the region.

The scope of the project did not include setting future timelines of implementation, consultation or processes.

The stakeholders consulted as part of the review include:

- Football Federation South West (FFSW)
- Country Coastal Junior Soccer Association (CCJSA)
- South West Soccer Association (SWSA)
- Collie Soccer Association (CSA)
- Department of Sport, Local Government and Cultural Industries
- Leeuwin Naturaliste Junior Soccer Association (LNJSA)
- Lower South West Soccer Association (LSWSA)
- South West Referees Association (SWRA)
- Football West

Individuals recommended by key stakeholders to undertake further review discussions provided to Football West were passed to the independent consultant for consideration.

The 8-page report represents key findings from stakeholder consultation, highlighting key themes and common views that emerged as part of the consultation process. The final recommendation concluded with removal of the current governance structure, to be replaced with a new body allowing for efficient allocation of resources to support football participants in the South West.

## Submissions

As part of the continuing consultation and feedback process, the South West Review was made publicly available and distributed to all association, club, LGA and other contacts.

A survey was sent out by Football West to all registered players, coaches, officials and volunteers for individual submissions while all bodies were asked to submit a written response.

While an initial submission date of 18 November 2020 was set, given the timing of AGMs and the wind down of the local season, the date was extended to 2 December 2020.

At the closure of the deadline, Football West had received 6 written submissions, 5 from club, association, LGA's and DLGSC and 1 individual written submission.

From the individual survey, 24 responses were received, however, 2 were submitted on behalf of associated bodies so this feedback was collated as their written submissions.

Key themes	Football West comment
82% of individual respondents believed that the recommended governance structure represented a more efficient model than the current structure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The individual responses showed a majority were in favour of change.</li> </ul>
9% of individual respondents did not agree with the recommended governance structure contained within the South West Review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The individual responses demonstrated that the recommended governance structure was supported.</li> </ul>
Respondents believed that Football West does not invest resources into the South West.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Football West currently invests over \$90,000 directly into the South West.</li> <li>This includes direct funding of \$60,000pa to FFSW.</li> </ul>
The consultant undertook dialogue with individuals who are known and vocal critics of FFSW.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The consultant was provided additional contacts by key stakeholders to gain a thorough understanding of the current issues and state of play.</li> <li>Football West has no doubt that the consultant was able to discern genuine concerns from unwarranted criticism of the organisations under review.</li> </ul>
There were no facts or figures presented to support the theory that the current governance structure was not efficient or effective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The scope of the project did not include an in depth review of the exact processes and finances that underpin the current structure.</li> <li>Football West is satisfied that having 7 associations involved in governing the game (although Collie effectively acts as a club) in the South West is not an efficient or effective use of resources.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This is underpinned by the fact that overall registrations numbers in the South West have declined since 2015.</li></ul>
The proposed structure did not provide enough clarity or detail to adequately assess its merits and/or shortcomings and the role of South West Phoenix is unclear.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The proposed structure is a framework that enables further consultation to ensure it meets the needs of the South West football community.</li><li>• The role of South West Phoenix as the high-performance pathway will form a part of that consultation.</li></ul>
There was no information regarding a proposed consultation summary or timeline that would underpin any structural changes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A proposed consultation summary and/or timeline was not in the scope of the review.</li><li>• Football West intends to use the findings of the review as a framework to engage with the key stakeholders over the next 12 months. A proposed timeline is included in Appendix A of this document.</li></ul>
There is uncertainty whether Football West has the capacity and ongoing interest to collaboratively drive change at the governance and operational level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Football West recognises the importance of regional football, in particular the South West.</li><li>• Through its recent operational structure change, Football West has the capacity and the interest to drive change.</li></ul>
While there were criticisms of the report and the proposed structure, the majority of individual and associated bodies were supportive of the concept that football in the South West needs to be unified in order for the game to grow.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Football West will be proactive to encourage and support the region's key stakeholders to work together to support any change.</li></ul>

## Football West Management responses

Football West has a clear mandate to seek to improve and drive change in football in Western Australia including the South West. As the governance and legislative requirements of associations and clubs continue to increase, Football West must be there to support our members but also, when required, to hold them accountable.

While Football West is ultimately responsible for the success of football in the South West, it is clear that the organisation can not achieve this goal without a collaborative and cooperative approach with the region's stakeholders. Football West has already developed a high-level 2018-2022 Regional Servicing Plan and 2018-2022 Northwest Service Framework, which can serve as a foundation for a collaborative South West Regional Plan.

Football West agrees with the overarching conclusion of the review that the current structure of football in the South West does not represent an effective allocation of resources. Whilst specific cost savings are not yet quantitatively identifiable it is clear that reducing the number of separate associations in the region will lead to a greater efficiency and economies of scale which will lead to a greater servicing capacity and/or a reduction in fees for members.

Football West will be engaging an independent consultant to work closely with the South West associations, clubs and key stakeholders to determine an agreed upon South West structure, its constitution, reporting processes, employment structure, financials and all other required information.

The following table identifies specific recommendations and Football West responses.

<b>Proposed establishment of Football South West and associated structure.</b>
<p><i>Football West supports the establishment of an overarching South West regional body and the associated governance structure in principle that will be able to support all facets of the game in the region. Football West believes it will provide a more effective allocation of resources through greater cohesion, strong governance practices and providing an advocacy function for the entire region.</i></p> <p><i>However, Football West notes that any changes to the current governance structures need to be developed with relevant stakeholders in a planned and timely manner. Key elements include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>• The development of a structure that best incorporates the diverse activities of the region.</i></li> <li><i>• The development of a consultation and implementation timeline in collaboration with all current associations and stakeholders.</i></li> <li><i>• The engagement of referees and their representatives to provide for specific match official requirements</i></li> <li><i>• Integrating a high-performance talent pathway, male and female, currently provided by South West Phoenix, into the new governance structure to ensure it is a representative team of, and supported by, the whole region.</i></li> </ul>



*It is important that the process which governs the development of and transition to this model is informed by thorough consultation with all relevant stakeholders. A draft consultation plan and implementation timeline is included in the appendix, with gradual changes made to the governance structure conducted throughout 2021.*

*Football West will work towards a revised structure being fully implemented for the 2022 season.*

**Football West would be ultimately responsible for football in the South West. Football West (in cooperation with 'Football South West') would develop a South West Regional Plan designed to reflect both the strategic priorities and approach to football in Western Australia overall, as well as the unique strategic priorities for the South West.**

*As the governing body for football throughout Western Australia, Football West has a clear mandate to ensure the growth and servicing of football in the South West.*

*Football West has already developed a high-level 2018-2022 Regional Servicing Plan and 2018-2022 Northwest Service Framework, which can serve as foundations for a South West Regional Plan.*

*Football West will work with all relevant stakeholders to develop the Plan through the consultation process described above.*

**'Football South West' would have a strategic focus for the region. As the key representative body for the region it would have an integral role in working with Football West to develop the Regional Plan and be charged with overseeing the successful implementation of this plan.**

*The report and subsequent submissions clearly identified the need for a unified, local representative advocacy function within the region.*

*As discussed above, Football West will engage in a comprehensive consultation process to develop the Plan.*

**The Board of Football South West would be skilled based and consist of a mix of elected and non-elected members. It is recommended that for the initial 3 years, the Chair of the Board is either a senior representative of FW or an independent Chair capable of driving cultural change within the region.**

*Football West accepts that the Board of an overarching South West regional body should be skills-based, independent and capable of driving cultural change and performance within the region.*

*Specific requirements to be on the Board, its composition as well as the process for electing its members will be determined through thorough consultation with the regional stakeholders.*

*As per the implementation process described in response to the first recommendation, we do not anticipate that the Board of Football South West will be in place until the start of 2022.*

**If budgets allow, both administrative and development roles should be appointed in the region, reporting to FW. The focus and KPIs for these roles will reflect the priorities of the Regional Plan – which should represent a shared vision for the region among all stakeholders. These roles will report to FW to facilitate improved coordination and**



**cooperation across the State. They would also operationalise the Regional Plan, working closely with Football South West and its sub committees.**

*Football West will prioritise and ensure that substantial administrative and development roles will be appointed in the region. These roles will provide a clear structure for Football South West and its clubs. It is anticipated that both roles will have a dual reporting structure to both Football West, which enables a great scale of efficiencies and to the overarching South West regional body, which provides the operational day to day scope of work as well as other key strategic priorities.*

*Services which these officers will provide include:*

- *Support for Club development across governance, legislation etc*
- *Competition administration*
- *Player pathways and development*
- *Coach development*
- *Referee recruitment and development*

*Football West will be able to significantly invest in the region to employ additional development and administrative roles within the South West region, in addition to the Community Participation Officer currently directly employed by Football West in Leeuwin-Naturaliste.*

*Furthermore, Football West will encourage staff to continue to develop and explore additional programs and competitions to generate revenue to reinvest in the region.*

**Depending on the extent of resources available, the administrative and development functions should include:**

- Support for Club development**
- Competition administration**
- Player pathways and development**
- Coach development**
- Referee recruitment and development**

*As above, these needs will be serviced through newly created administrative and development roles. Ongoing surveys with the region have consistently identified a need for these services.*

*Providing a consolidated competitions administration service within the region will also increase efficiency as well as being able to access Football West employee development plans and services to continually upskill. This model also allows Football West staff to assist regional staff during periods of high workload.*

*Specific targets in each of these areas will be determined through ongoing consultation and the development of a South West Regional Plan.*

**Within this structure, there will be no need for individual associations to exist – specifically Football Federation South West (FFSW); Country Coastal Junior Soccer Association (CCJSA); South West Soccer Association (SWSA); Collie Soccer Association (CSA); Leeuwin Naturaliste Junior Soccer Association (LNJSA); Lower South West Soccer Association (LSWSA); South West Referees Association (SWRA).**

*Football West also envisions that South West Phoenix will not remain in its current format.*



*The current structure includes significant duplication of administrative overheads without providing a unified voice for the region.*

*Football West anticipate that the winding down of Football Federation South West and the associated regional associations will occur as a phased process throughout 2021.*



## Appendix A

### Proposed Consultation and Implementation Timeline

Activity	Purpose/output	Target Audience	Timeline
Release of Football West Management Responses	Information sharing	South West football stakeholders	December 2020
Associated bodies strategy meetings	Canvass options and drive discussion for a preferred framework, consultation schedule and engagement of an external project lead	All South West football associations, LGAs, DLGSC	Jan 2021 - Feb 2021
Open house workshop	Canvass options and drive discussions for a preferred framework	Clubs and individual South West football stakeholders	Jan 2021 – Feb 2021
Engage Project Lead	Manage the project, develop Terms of Reference for PWG	N/A	Feb 2021
Initialise Project Working Group (PWG)	Development of preferred framework, associated processes, and go/no go milestones	N/A	Feb 2021
Feedback to Associated Bodies	Present proposed structure	All South West football associations, LGAs. DLGSC	May 2021
Open house workshop	Present proposed structure	Clubs and individual South West football stakeholders	May 2021
Sign off on proposed structure	PWG, Associated bodies committees, Football West Board	N/A	June 2021
Official announcement of proposed structure	Share information of the finalised structure	All	June 2021
Develop constitution, processes and change management	Ensure a smooth transition to the new structure	N/A	June 2021 – Sept 2021
Work with affected associations where required	Ensure a smooth transition to the new structure	Affected Associated bodies	June 2021 - Sept 2021

Additional milestones will be added as part of the consultation in early 2021