



FERNTREE GULLY EAGLES JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB PLAYER WELFARE & DEVELOPMENT POLICY JULY 2009

PURPOSE:

To develop a Club non-elected role titled: “Player Welfare & Development” at the *Ferntree Gully Eagles Junior Football Club* to assist in providing ‘other’ benefits to its players outside of football, and support team officials in their care and management of their respective player lists.

BACKGROUND:

There have been instances in the recent past whereby Coaches and team officials have approached the Executive on how to manage difficult situations in which some of the players find themselves. For example: some players may have a mental illness, some may have a learning deficiency, others may have an intellectual disability, some may demonstrate behavioural difficulties, etc.

Further, in 2008 the *Ferntree Gully Eagles Junior Football Club* in recognition of ongoing support of our Trainers held a training session involving one of our local Physiotherapists on the topic of: “Health and Wellbeing”. Whilst this session was particularly targeted at our Trainers, all Coaches also attended as did Senior Club representatives.

CLUB POLICY:

The *Ferntree Gully Eagles Junior Football Club* remains committed to providing more than just an environment for people to play and participate in football. Our Club realises that often players need additional support and/or assistance in other aspects of their lives; and this is also the case for Coaches and team officials in their ‘Duty of Care’ of their players.

Examples of the types of additional support that our Club may offer to our players and/or Coaches include:

- Provision of training to club officials and players/families (e.g: Trainers, Orientation to new players and parents, etc.)
- Provision of tutorial assistance for students;
- Facilitation of professional services (such as counselling, financial/taxation specialists, etc.)
- Educational sessions on matters such as healthy eating and nutrition, drug awareness, sun protection, etc. (These sessions can be conducted with the assistance of our networks including schools, local funded welfare agencies, local medical staff, Police, etc.)

PLAYER WELFARE & DEVELOPMENT: THE ROLE

The role of the person undertaking this role is that of a facilitator; a ‘conduit’ to professionals in the local area. The person in this role is not necessarily undertaking the specific work (e.g: they cannot counsel people, they cannot provide medical advice, etc.), however they are to be able to source and facilitate a body of work as

identified in a 'Club Workplan'. The 'Workplan' could include individual player issues or broader topics of discussion that are more generic in nature and capture a broader spectrum of players/families/officials.

The occupant of this role will make themselves available to all Coaches in the first instance. They will also research and discuss potential issues and topics with members in order to develop a workplan.

The position will form part of the overall structure of the *Ferntree Gully Eagles Junior Football Club* and will need to liaise closely with the Club's Risk Management Officer as well as with the Club's Complaints officer (who is the Secretary). As such, it is suggested that this position report through the Club Secretary as required.

PLAYER WELFARE & DEVELOPMENT: THE WORKPLAN

To be developed.

PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THIS POLICY:

The key principles that underpin this Policy are:

1. To recognise individual needs and supports that Coaches, Team Officials and players may need
2. To encourage players to excel in areas outside of football
3. As a Club to meet our Duty of Care to players, Team officials and Coaches
4. To ensure the *Ferntree Gully Eagles Junior Football Club* continues to excel in, and achieve, 'best practice'

RECOMMENDATION:

That the General Committee endorse the need to establish a non-elected role to be titled "Player Welfare & Development" at the *Ferntree Gully Eagles Junior Football Club*. This document and the recommendation was endorsed unchanged and unanimously at the July General Committee Meeting 2009. It was also agreed to adjust the Structure Document to reflect the inclusion of this new role.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

The *Ferntree Gully Eagles Junior Football Club* wishes to acknowledge the contribution by Kerrie Gardner in the development of this Policy; and to Brenda McAuley who has agreed to undertake the inaugural position of 'Player Welfare and Development Co-ordinator'.

**Ferntree Gully Eagles Junior Football Club
General Committee
July 2009**

