

Scottish Rugby to get £3.65m investment

Cash totalling £3.65 million recovered from the proceeds of crime will be invested in Scottish rugby club activities and facilities over the next three years.

This investment builds upon the success Scottish Rugby has achieved in growing the game in recent years. Through Scottish Rugby initiatives, including the Cashback scheme launched in 2008, the game's governing body has delivered in partnership more than 60,000 school, club and street rugby sessions attended by over 1.15 million participants, and has assisted in creating a 26 per cent increase in registered club and school players.

✘ Cabinet Secretary for Justice, Kenny MacAskill announced the increased funding during a visit to Musselburgh rugby club, alongside Gordon McKie, the Chief Executive of Scottish Rugby.

Mr MacAskill said:-“Rugby is one of Scotland's most popular sports – just look at the interest in the current RBS 6 Nations campaign. Everybody wants to see our teams and players succeeding at the highest level and that can only happen with investment at grassroots, to support every tier of the game.

“In addition to making funds available to help clubs improve their facilities, the support announced today ensures the opportunities are there for young people across Scotland who want to give rugby a go. Scottish Rugby are to be congratulated for their role in making that happen.

“This investment will go right to the heart of the game's grass roots and will make sure we are better placed to get more young people involved and give them the chance of becoming the next generation of rugby stars.

“By taking funds from the ill-gotten gains of crime and putting it back into our communities we are making those communities safer.”

Scottish Rugby will channel £2.4m of the funding towards its successful national network of jointly-funded development staff who provide playing and coaching opportunities across all of Scotland’s 32 local authorities.

The remaining £1.25m will be made available to local rugby clubs with a track record in growing the game at junior, youth and adult levels. Clubs will be able to apply for awards of up to £50,000 to invest in new or upgrading existing facilities, with priority given to projects that benefit primarily young people. This fund will be administered by sportscotland.

Gordon McKie, Scottish Rugby Chief Executive, said: “Sport plays a powerful role in improving the quality of life for young people, including their health and wellbeing, and assists in building stronger and safer communities.

“For a number of years, we have promoted the importance of the grassroots game and the need for supporting the development of club rugby facilities in Scotland. As a governing body we have, in recent years, increased our investment in grassroots rugby including facilities support and I am delighted by today’s announcement.

“Through exceeding all of our Cashback for Communities targets in recent years, we have secured this important funding boost so that tens of thousands of young people in every local authority, including areas of urban and rural deprivation, will have the opportunity to take advantage of rugby and coaching opportunities in schools, clubs and local neighbourhoods.

“The investment in local club facilities will complement the planned club facilities support recently announced by RBS as part of their sponsorship of Scottish Rugby and is further

great news for the game in Scotland.

“I would like to thank The Scottish Government for their continued support of Scottish rugby and look forward to seeing the benefits across the country’s grassroots game in the years ahead.”

Cashback for Communities is a programme of diversionary activities for young people to increase the opportunities they have to develop their interests and skills in an enjoyable, fulfilling and supported way. This contribution takes the Scottish Government’s commitment to the CashBack for Communities programme to over £30m, all drawn from proceeds of crime, with over 300,000 young people having participated in a wide range of activities across Scotland.

Application forms and guidelines covering applicant and project eligibility for the facilities fund will be issued to clubs in the next two weeks, with details on how to apply, application deadlines and contact details for further information.