

SAFETY OF SPORTS GROUNDS ACT 1975

FULHAM FOOTBALL CLUB

**SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP (SAG) MEETING
THURSDAY 7TH JULY 2015 - 10:00AM
MINUTES OF MEETING**

PRESENT:

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBHF)

Ann Ramage (Chairman)	- Head of Environmental Health	(AR)
Stephanie Needham	- Commercial Services Manager	(SN)
Graham Souster	- Commercial Services Lead Officer	(GS)
Tony Pegrum	- Network Coordination Team Manager	(TP)
David Nimmo	- Building Control	(DN)
Philip Wilmann	- Building Control	(PW)
Marya Lee	- Parking Services	(ML)
Antoinette Miller	- Parking Services	(AM)
Maria Jesus	- Parking Services	(MJ)
Mike Rumble	- Parks Police	(MR)
David Abbott (Minutes)	- Committee Coordinator	(DA)

Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)

PC Andy Wigley	(AW)
Inspector James Brockway	(JB)

Fulham Football Club (FFC)

Steve Riley	- Safety Officer	(SR)
Eddie Simpson	- Safety Officer	(ES)


Sports Ground Safety Authority (SGSA)

Lou Elliston	- Regional Safety Inspector	(LE)
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Other Organisations

Rachel Aggar	- NHS England	(RA)
George Hind	- London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority	(GH)
Sgt. Carolyne Buttery	- British Transport Police	(CB)

Item No.	ITEM	ACTION
1.	Welcome from the Chairman	
1.1	The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and informed members that there would be a minute of silence at 11am in remembrance of the 10 th anniversary of the London bombings.	
2.	Apologies / Introductions	
2.1	Apologies were received from: Darren Preston, Rafique Ahmed, Roy Instrall, Lisa White, Kieran Mckenna, Janet Nairne, Rebecca Burton, Inspector Kevin Jacobs, and Paul Smith.	
3.	Confirmation of previous minutes and matters arising	
3.1	Action 4.16 – MR to look into Bishops Park lighting issue. Action 6.1 – CB informed members that queue management was not a major issue at Putney Bridge Station. It was agreed that the issue would be monitored and raised with Marc Dickson. Action 7.10 – The Chairman agreed to follow up with trading standards regarding the request for a presence during the 2015/15 season.	MR AR
3.2	GS confirmed that all further actions from the previous minutes were either completed or were topics on the agenda for this meeting.	
3.3	The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.	

4.	<p>Fulham FC Safety Management – Review of 2014/15 Season</p> <p><i>FFC notes attached / but not to be disclosed via LA website:</i></p> <p></p> <p>Fulham FC SAG Notes - July 2015 SA(</p>	
4.1	<p>Update on Safety Team arrangements and personnel changes</p> <p>There were very few changes to the Safety Team. Paul Clements (Chief Steward) is now working towards his NVQ4 Safety Officer qualification and has assisted more in planning roles. One supervisor had been lost during the Season but on the whole the supervisory staff has remained the same.</p>	
4.2	<p>Stewarding and security</p> <p>The in-house stewarding has been significantly reduced – recruitment had been affected by both relegation and a potential outsourcing issue at the Club. This was during the close season and caused some uncertainties however, while the Club relied more heavily on agency staff, supervision and leadership roles were fulfilled by directly contracted staff.</p> <p>There was a greater focus on training, particularly first aider training for stewards. The down side of this was that the Club had to over rely on using stewards for first aiders at too many games owing to issues recruiting medics.</p>	
4.3	<p>Challenging fixtures / issues</p> <p>The Season was challenging from a safety / security perspective. Fulham was considered the away trip of choice for many clubs with visiting supporters regularly in excess of 4000, which brought associated challenges of pyrotechnics, alcohol, drugs etc. This was mostly handled by stewards without the need of Police support.</p> <p>Millwall</p> <p>A challenging start to the Season with ticketing issues, removal of the segregation netting, heavy drinking, and pyrotechnics thrown. Seven arrests were made. The fixture was a ‘wake-up call’ to the safety operation but the Football Association Crowd Safety Adviser was very complementary about how it was handled.</p>	

	<p>Cardiff Issues with alcohol and drugs led to four arrests and fifteen refusals. A large number of away supporter coaches had to be managed, helped by a pass system created in cooperation with Cardiff.</p> <p>Charlton This was the most challenging game of the Season due to an 'anti-social crowd'. Police were brought in at half time due to threats to stewards. There were seven arrests and ten ejections. The senior steward supervisors and stewards did a fantastic job in very challenging circumstances.</p> <p>Sheffield Pre-game drinking was a major feature and the refused entry reached double figures for this fixture. There were ten ejections for issues ranging from people blocking gangways, pyrotechnics, and class A drug detection.</p> <p>Reading, Bournemouth, Leeds There were many of the same issues at this fixture as the other fixtures with high numbers of away supporters.</p> <p>Rotherham and Middlesbrough Many of the same issues as other fixtures. Fulham were safe from relegation for this last home game of the Season and with a home win the match proved easier to manage. There were virtually no issues from home supporters.</p> <p>Brentford This fixture showed the effectiveness of the partnership planning process. There were a number of refused entries and arrests made enabled by effective CCTV operation. There was also rapid planning between the Club and Police with special deployments and egress plans to separate both sets of supporters leaving the stadium.</p>	
4.4	<p>Turnstiles and queue management There were no significant issues at the turnstiles this season. Overall attendances during the season was significantly down with a drop in the home support, although away supporters had increased by over 10,000 as compared to last season's total attendance. The lowest attendance was Bolton and the highest was Middlesbrough which was virtually a sell-out game.</p>	
4.5	<p>Ticketing issues There were two issues – one caused by overselling tickets to hit targets, disciplinary action was taken by the Club. The other issue was caused by the unreliability of some E-tickets. E-</p>	

	<p>tickets have been removed from use until a more reliable IT solution is implemented.</p>	
4.6	<p>Crowd behaviour Covered in 4.3.</p>	
4.7	<p>Ejections and refusals It was difficult to do a direct comparison between seasons as the data was gathered in a different way. The 2014/15 Season saw 250 ejections including refused entries, while the previous Season saw 205.</p> <p>Changes around refused entries meant that 91 people were refused this Season compared with 40 in the previous. The fair but robust stewarding resulted in fewer drunk supporters being allowed into the stadium and thereby ultimately improving safety inside of the stadium and removing the need of ground elections for behavioural issues. As expected, the most challenging fixtures had the highest numbers of ejections and refusals. 93 ejections in total were made for ground regulation contraventions all in the interests of improving the experience for the majority of supporters.</p> <p>Club bans have been made more robust. Action has been taken in respect of home supporter who have behaved poorly or who were arrested at away fixtures. Despite the increase in arrests made, the number of Police required inside the stadium has been reduced, but without any detriment to the Command and Control arrangements.</p>	
4.8	<p>Searching regime The search dog supplier had been changed and a more proactive stance was taken for both drug and pyrotechnic searches. This worked well and has led to increased numbers of drug detections and arrests made this Season at the stadium.</p>	
4.9	<p>Dealing with flares, smoke bombs, and pyrotechnics Nine flares/ pyrotechnic devices were set off in total and all but one of the perpetrators were arrested and evidence supplied to the Police to support conviction via the Club's CCTV surveillance and security operation. The Club had received a number of positive letters from the FA regarding its response to these incidents.</p>	
4.10	<p>Persistent standing and any related issues No significant issues, the Club has maintained its efforts to ensure gangways and vomitories are not blocked. The</p>	

4.11	<p>Accidents, injuries and near misses</p> <p>There was a reduction to the number of total casualties over last Season. This is primarily attributable to the use of the new ball stop nets during the pre-match player warm ups. Almost all of the hospital transfers have concerned pre-existing health conditions. The Club is reviewing the gangway riser heights in the Putney Stand as there have been a number of falling accidents. However, the contributory factors were alcohol and away supporter's unfamiliarity of the stand.</p>	
4.12	<p>Smoking and e-cigarettes</p> <p>While this was a difficult issue there was no change to the Club policy on smoking inside the stadium. The Club has on occasions taken a pragmatic view and other more challenges issues have been prioritised.</p>	
4.13	<p>Alcohol</p> <p>Alcohol had to be taken off sale at a number of high risk games in the away areas.</p>	
4.14	<p>Customer feedback</p> <p>There had been minimal feedback. There were some complaints from away supporters who felt they had been refused entry or ejected unfairly. The Football Supporters Federation represented one complaint however; they did not take up the Club's offer to review the corroborating CCTV footage.</p>	
4.15	<p>TV Broadcasting arrangements</p> <p>Positive work had been done to map out the parking of TV vehicles in Stevenage Road during the Season. However, there had been no progress with the Council and the installation of road studs.</p>	
4.16	<p>Fixture changes</p> <p>It was felt that the decision making process for changing fixtures was taking too long particularly by the MPS Central Football Unit.</p> <p>JB said the Police would be streamlining the process and this would ensure a quicker response via the Central Office.</p> <p>The Chairman noted that the Police response was key to making the process work. There was pressure on the Club to turn these requests around quickly and all organisations needed to work together.</p> <p>GS stated that there needed to be a fixed deadline from the club for responses.</p>	

	<p>parties were in a strong position moving forwards. For every match this Season the Police Match Commander role was filled by a local officer. JB will remain the first point of contact for the Club and the Chief Inspector will continue to be Tim Ruprecht.</p>	
5.2	<p>Overview</p> <p>The total arrests for the Season were 161 (the highest in the Championship) of which 18 were for Football Act offences, 48 were for public order / anti-social offences, 9 were violence related offences, and 66 were for drugs.</p>	
5.3	<p>Review of operation arrangements</p> <p>While there had been a reduction in Police presence, the number of arrests had increased and the operation to manage resources had worked well. There had been an 87% reduction in the Police resource inside the stadium and a 40% reduction of the wider footprint. The Chairman commented that she had been made aware of how well the partnership / tactical planning meetings had been during the Season and the risk had been matched by the appropriate Police resources. JB agreed but did advise that the Charlton fixture should in hindsight have had Police inside the stadium from the beginning. However, despite this they were still able to get Police inside the stadium very quickly. The Club advised that there had been no lack of Police support.</p>	
5.4	<p>Public order</p> <p>Middlesbrough, Leeds, Charlton, and Bournemouth all had high levels of drunkenness and antisocial behaviour but there was no large scale disorder and no major incidents.</p> <p>Reading, Watford, Birmingham, and Sheffield Wednesday fixtures all presented risk from away fans within the footprint. There was contact between risk groups but through proactive policing it was contained.</p> <p>Brentford was the most challenging fixture but it had been well planned for. There was disorder in Putney and in Bishops Park on the way to the ground but the Police footprint was increased to mitigate these issues. There was also post-match disorder in Barnes and the fixture required significant resources. The operation was successful, with tactical learning and the Police received good feedback from the community and partners.</p> <p>It was anticipated that next Season would be equally challenging.</p> <p>The Club advised that the post-match (Brentford) egress cordon arrangements could be mirrored by Club personnel for</p>	

	<p>future high risk fixtures. AW advised about the issues that created the risk for Fulham v Brentford fixtures.</p>	
5.5	<p>Arrests (see attached above)</p> <p>There were 161 arrests this Season compared with 59 last Season.</p>	
5.6	<p>Racist / homophobic behaviour</p> <p>There were 7 racially aggravated offences this Season compared with 2 last Season.</p>	
5.7	<p>Banning orders</p> <p>Six people received banning orders, four are on bail.</p>	
5.8	<p>Match day policing (outside stadium / environments)</p> <p>Feedback to the Safer Neighbourhoods Team had been positive. The Police footprint had been extended for the Brentford match.</p> <p>The Chairman asked whether next Season would QPR v Brentford pose similar concerns? JB advised it would be challenging as Fulham played Bristol the same day. The policing footprint now with QPR in the Championship would extend to Hammersmith and we would need to monitor this.</p> <p>MINUTE SILENCE HELD TO COMMERATE THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE LONDON BOMBINGS</p> <p>The Chairman asked the MPS to give an update at the next SAG on any fixtures that presented particular licensing issues and work with the Licensing Team should be coordinated to support them on match days where needed.</p>	
5.9	<p>Supporter behaviour at away fixtures</p> <p>Away fixture behaviour had been quite poor, with 12 arrests and 24 rejections. It was however noted that in the main Fulham had a good reputation as a family club. AW advised that some of the matches where home supporters on their travels misbehaved was completely random (e.g. Wigan mid-week). The positive aspect is that Fulham wanted the information and have acted upon it.</p> <p>Those who were banned at home were monitored - one was arrested at the station after posting a photo on Twitter.</p> <p>LE advised the findings were typical for a clubs first season back in the Championship as some the clubs supporters were very challenging. The second season usually calmed down.</p>	

	<p>The Chairman asked what information was sent to the away supporters club on facilities available in the area. The Club advised they did not provide this form of information. AW advised he would provide details of local pubs who accept away supporters.</p> <p>GS noted that the Club, the Police, and the LA had all worked very well together during the Season.</p>	
6.	British Transport Police – Review of 2014/15 Season	
6.1	<p>Putney Bridge Station / network issues</p> <p>There had been no major issues. Queuing had been quieter this Season with the reduced numbers coming to fixtures. BTP were not planning to change their level of resourcing.</p>	
6.2	<p>Operational arrangements</p> <p>A new operation introduced last season (Operation Crack) stationed officers in hub-stations where different groups of fans would normally cross paths so that situations are quickly dealt with.</p>	
7.	<p>Transport for London / London Underground - Review of 2014/15 Season</p> <p>No representative from TfL attended the meeting but they had sent regular updates throughout the Season and there were no reported issues.</p> <p>The Chairman noted that there had been no further inspection of Putney Bridge Station since the January SAG but it will continue to be monitored by the LA.</p>	
8.	Local Authority – Review of 2014/15 Season	
8.1	<p>Lead officer update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DPI Inspections There were a total of 7 DPI's this Season. The inspections had targeted the high risk fixtures (Millwall, Charlton, Leeds, Brentford, etc) and international. The inspection reports had been sent to the Club, Police and the SGSA. GS corroborated issues already raised during the Club/Police feedback. • Safety Certificate No revisions had been made, although it will need to be amended for the coming Season to correct the ownership as Fulham FFC have dropped the 1987 from its Company name. • Customer feedback 	GS

	<p>There has been no feedback or complaints reported to Commercial Services from supporters or residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Inspection The inspection has been confirmed for 14 July 2015. Any issues will be addressed prior to the upcoming 2015/16 Season. Certifications to be received and will be posted online for the first time. <p>The Club requested further information of the inspection so the Club can facilitate. They noted that in the past the fire service attended and requested that they attended this year if possible.</p>	
8.2	<p>Licensing update GS advised there were no licensing issues within the stadium last Season. Applications were received for all stands to replace the designated premises supervisor, the new licences will be issued shortly.</p>	
8.3	<p>Bloom Café, Fulham Palace Road – following complaints the Licensing Team investigated the premises for breaches of conditions. During the investigation it became apparent the premises was selling alcohol without food on match days. The licence holder was issued a warning letter and attended a meeting at the Council offices. The Police Licensing Team are also looking into this premises following issues at the Brentford fixture.</p>	
8.4	<p>Larrik, New King's Road – a joint licensing and police inspection was undertaken prior to the Ipswich Town fixture (14/02/2015). A number of offences were observed therefore a Section 19 Closure Notice was issued. This resulted in the premises being unable to sell alcohol until 16 February 2015.</p>	
8.5	<p>Inside Stadium No major issues and generally well managed.</p>	
8.6	<p>Outside stadium No major issues and generally well managed.</p> <p>There had been some problems with restaurants serving alcohol along the Fulham Palace Road (using glass, no door supervision, and patrons leaving in possession of alcohol). This was discussed at the LAG and the Police were going to apply the standard football conditions on licences.</p> <p>Fulham's first match day TEN in Bishop Park (Middlesbrough) was managed well. The Police did originally object and following negotiations and improved operating measures this was withdrawn. There was positive feedback and these events can help with attendance.</p>	MPS

	<p>The Chairman noted that the beer tent at the Bishop Park event could have taken more sales without risk. It caused irritation to some away supporters at an otherwise good natured family event. The Club would encourage similar events in the future.</p> <p>The Chairman reported that there were some complaints that away supporters had nowhere to drink.</p> <p>AW responded that he sent information including maps marked with suitable pubs to his equivalent. The Police have started using social media to inform fans of designated pubs and when to start moving to the stadium.</p> <p>The Chairman requested to see the information that was provided to away clubs.</p>	MPS
8.7	<p>Highways update</p> <p>Signage - TP reported that updated signage was being delayed owing to the delay in publishing the new Traffic Signs Direction Regulations. The regulations have been further delayed until September, but there is no guarantee of this date as it is dependent on the Department of Transport (DfT). Once the regulations are agreed no formal consultation was needed to implement. The DfT had been approached with a temporary solution but it had been rejected.</p> <p>The Chairman noted the frustration over the continued signage problems and whether a temporary solution could be found? TP responded that whilst a review of existing signage had been undertaken and the aim was to reduce the numbers, it would not be cost effective to replace existing signs until the regulations were published as they would not be enforceable. TP also advised that the LA did not have the budget to replace the existing damaged signs. The signs would only be replaced once the regulations were in place so the correct legal versions were displayed. The Club asked to be kept informed on the situation.</p>	TP
8.8	<p>Coach parking on Fulham Palace Road – Officers proposed extending waiting restrictions to 8pm from Monday to Saturday. Further controls on Sundays would require further consultation.</p> <p>OBTV parking area – TP Advised that he had requested on a number of occasions quotes for the works. GS expressed concern that the efforts made by the Club with SKY TV who specially brought vehicles down on a non match day to map out the road width needed to be followed up by the LA,</p>	

	<p>particularly as the Club was willing to pay for the improvements. Owing to the lack of progress with the installation of road marker studs the Chairman required TP to follow up ASAP with the view to being resolved before the first televised game of the Season which was 13th September 2015.</p> <p>Works - Hammersmith Flyover works were due to be completed in mid-August. Hammersmith bridge reconstruction and refurbishment works had been moved back to Summer 2016 and would entail a twelve month full closure of the bridge. Fulham Road and Kings Road gas main works scheduled for February 2016 would also impact traffic movement throughout the Borough. The Chairman requested that the Club's website linked to TfL's works website.</p>	TP
8.9	<p>Parks Police Update MR advised there were now two football liaison officers in place in the Parks Police Team, and they linked in with the Police. 1 sergeant and four PC's work on Fulham match days. The use of controlled drinking zone powers had been successful and would continue into the new Season. There had been some staff reductions but it should not significantly affect the service.</p>	
8.10	<p>Parking Services Update No major issues were reported last Season.</p> <p>There was no further information on a possible LA consultation with residents about concerns around match day parking. GS advised he had not found out any further information since the last SAG meeting.</p> <p>The enforcement of parking in Fulham Palace Road was now being carried out on match days in the coach parking lane.</p>	
8.11	<p>Street Scene Update No issues were reported.</p>	
9.	<p>Update from London Fire Brigade</p> <p>GH advised there were no major issues but there was a change of personnel. Officers said they would welcome an opportunity to look around the site and give any appropriate guidance.</p> <p>The Club to invite GH to visit the stadium on a match day.</p>	
10.	<p>Update from London Ambulance Service</p> <p>RE read out a submission for PS. It was not clear what medical</p>	

	<p>support would be provided next Season. An LAS restructure was underway and an update was pending.</p> <p>The Club said it was waiting for an update on costs for LAS ambulance.</p> <p>SR noted that the Club had hardly ever used an NHS Ambulance. The current arrangements seemed to be wasting resources and would be worth a review</p> <p>The Chairman noted that there needed to be an ambulance service manager on the scene to provide communication in case of a major incident.</p>	Fulham FC/GS
11.	<p>Update from Sports Ground Safety Authority</p> <p>LE advised the SGSA had no major issues. The Club was very well managed.</p> <p>Millwall was a challenging fixture but LE was very impressed with the Club's response.</p> <p>The SGSA had appointed Karen Ayre-White as its new CEO.</p> <p>New 'alternative uses at sports grounds' guidance was to be published shortly and contains guidance documents for holding concerts etc.</p> <p>Spectators licences should have been sent out but the Club confirmed it had not received one. LE to follow this up.</p> <p>The Club advised it had sent to the SGSA the Season statistical returns.</p>	LE
12.	<p>Looking forward to 2015/16 Season</p>	
12.1	<p>Safety Officer Update</p> <p>SR is due to leave the Club and ES will take on the Safety Officer responsibility next Season. ES advised he has 9 years' experience in Fulham operation, 5 years as police officer and 4 years for the Club since his retirement. ES is a trained safety officer with good knowledge of the operation. The current deputy safety officer will remain in post. ES confirmed there will be no change to the existing safety management operational arrangements next Season.</p>	
12.2	<p>Safety Management arrangements</p> <p>The successful structures and processes from this Season will continue to be used with tweaks made as challenges arise.</p>	

	<p>The Chairman asked who would take over the street role (that ES had carried out) on Stevenage Street. ES responded that the Head Steward would take on the role.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked SR for all his hard work during his tenure as Safety Officer at the Club. The operation had seen continuous improvement and he had introduced some of the best safety systems in the country.</p>	
12.3	<p>Pre-season certification</p> <p>SR reported that the review of the operations manual was almost complete. He was waiting for documents from the Police (SOI / SPSA). He is still awaiting the new service level agreements to be signed with contractors. However, last year's are considered rolling documents.</p> <p>Pre-season certification is nearing completion and would be completed by SR then handed over to ES. GS to get the documents electronically.</p> <p>The Chairman asked for an update on the stadium development. SR reported that the Riverside Stand plans continued although this was a slow process owing to ongoing stadium scoping works. There were plans for a purpose built control room in the Putney Stand as this was the lynch pin for the stadium redevelopment. These works were at the costings stage and planning applications were anticipated at the end of the year. It was not anticipated that any works would commence until next summer.</p> <p>There was also a significant programme of asbestos removal works in the Riverside Stand scheduled for the summer period.</p> <p>A further update would be given at the January SAG.</p>	
12.4	<p>2015/16 fixture categories and anticipated challenges</p> <p>Match categories for next Season have been largely agreed between the Police and the Club.</p>	Fulham FC
12.5	<p>Special Police Services agreement</p> <p>The new SPSA is being centrally managed and is anticipated to be the same as the current agreement and will be sent to the Club soon.</p> <p>Statement of Intent</p> <p>The Police's Legal Services is currently looking at this with a view to consistency.</p> <p>SR asked if a statement of intent was necessary as the Police</p>	

	<p>have now set a clear boundary of dealing only with crime and disorder. The Chairman agreed to raise this with the Central Football Unit?</p> <p>Match Postponement Memorandum Amendments were required to the key contact sheet – this will be circulated by GS.</p>	<p>AR</p> <p>GS</p>
13.	<p>Chairman's Update</p> <p>The Chairman noted that the Club had won awards for customer care and hoped that after last Season's focussing on operations, the Club would be able to spend more time on the supporter experience. ES responded that the customer experience was a key part of delivery in pre-season planning.</p> <p>The Chairman noted that while it was accepted that persistent standing was a wider footballing issue, the LA would be monitoring this for the 2015/16 Season. A request was made to the Club to examine its policies and procedures to ensure that they were written in the Operations Manual or risk assessment, were fit for purpose and implemented.</p>	<p>Fulham FC</p>
14.	AOB None.	
15.	Date and venue of next meeting: Date TBC January 2016 / Fulham FC to host.	GS