

**Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975
QPR Football Club
Safety Advisory Group (SAG) Meeting
13 January 2015 09:30am**

MINUTES

PRESENT:

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBHF)

Ann Ramage	- Head of Environmental Health	(AR) Chair
Stephanie Needham	- Commercial Services	(SN)
Kieran McKenna	- Commercial Services	(KM)
Karen Ashdown	- Commercial Services	(KA)
Tony Pegrum	- Network Operations	(TP)
Roy Instrall	- Enforcement Officer	(RI)
Ibrahim Ibrahim	- Committee Services	(II) Minutes

Queens Park Rangers Football Club (QPR)

Jenny Winstanley-Griston	- Operations Manager	(JWG)
Jim McNeill	- Safety Officer	(JMc)
Alex Fish	- Safety Officer	(AF)
Dick Turner	- Facilities & Operations Manager	(DT)
Mark Gibson	- Facilities & Operations Assistant	(MG)

Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)

Inspector Simon Causer	- Detective Chief Inspector	(SC)
Jason Evans	- Inspector	(JE)

Sports Ground Safety Authority (SGSA)

Lou Elliston	- SGSA Inspector	(LE)
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Item No.	ITEM	ACTION
1.	<p>Welcome from the Chairman</p> <p>1.1 The Chairman welcomed the group to the meeting and wished them all a Happy New Year.</p>	
2.	<p>Apologies / introductions / new members</p> <p>2.1 Apologies had been received from Josh Ryan (London Ambulance Service), Dr Meng Aw-Yong (Crowd Doctor) and Pat Halpin (St John Ambulance).</p>	
3.	<p>Confirmation of previous minutes and matters arising</p> <p>3.1 Minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the last meeting held on 8 July 2014. Following confirmation of the minutes, these would now be uploaded as final to the Council's Website.</p> <p>3.2 The Chairman was satisfied that all actions from the last meeting had been completed except for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Page 9, point 12.4: Statement of intent. JWG confirmed the document had been signed at the beginning of the 2014/15 season and the file had now been updated to reflect this. - Page 2, point 3.2: Medical Plan. JWG confirmed the Medical Plan had been signed in principle at the start of the 2014/15 Season but some further changes were then requested. It was noted that there had been no change to the content of the Medical Plan and if there was an emergency; the Medical Plan would be executed as per previous seasons. The difficulty in agreeing the updated Medical Plan was in respect of changing terminology from LAS, SJA and the Crowd Doctor from within their command structures. Though this action was still outstanding, the existing Medical Plan was in place and accurate. AR requested that the draft Medical Plan be uploaded to the portal to show the work in progress. - Page 7, point 6: British Transport Police. AR noted that although the Council has a good working relationship with the BTP at the other SAGs, she had experienced problems in coordinating a similar relationship with BTP and QPR. She had received a response from Inspector Tate who had informed her that he was no longer responsible for the Central Line and has now given the name of a new inspector, Inspector Sanderson who AR and KM will now attempt to 	<p style="text-align: center;">JWG/MG</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AR/KM</p>

	liaise with.	
4.	QPR Safety Management Review 2014/15 Season	
4.1	<p>Safety Team. JWG provided an update on behalf of the safety team. The only major change occurred in Summer 2014, which was the introduction of Servoca Stewarding on a full time basis to work alongside the other companies. If the Club were looking to increase response numbers, they would request extra resources from Servoca as they had been impressed with their operations.</p> <p>There had been no change within the safety team and it was noted that into the second season the team were working well together.</p> <p>QPR had lost a member of the operations team though this staff member was not a part of the match day team so there were no implications.</p>	
4.2	<p>JMc expressed his thanks to all the partners who were realistic in their approach to matters and prepared to listen, which makes the job of the safety team much easier. It was felt that this good relationship would be vital in delivering a good response to the Manchester United home game on 17 January 2015 as wherever these fans had travelled this Season, there had been problems.</p>	
4.3	<p>Stewarding. JMc explained that the stewarding arrangements had been working very well in particular the searching of fans before they came into the ground. The stewards had been asked to take their time and if anyone is drunk, they are refused access. This approach prevents problems from occurring inside the ground.</p> <p>JMc does not expect any other changes between now and the end of the season other than taking on additional resources.</p>	
4.4	<p>Crowd Behaviour. The crowd has been very supportive and the behaviour was typical of normal match going fans.</p>	
4.5	<p>Dealing with Flares and Pyrotechnics. JMc noted that the flavour of flares and pyrotechnics appeared to be waning nationally. There had been 1 fixture where pyrotechnics had been used (smoke bomb canister), which was ignited within the crowd and then thrown onto the pitch.</p>	
4.6	<p>It was noted that the Police had cracked down on the use flares and pyrotechnics. JE noted that the CPS and the Courts had come on board and people were now receiving lengthy prison sentences.</p> <p>AR agreed with JMc's assessment that the searches had been working well and this 1 incident appeared to be an isolated incident.</p>	
4.7	<p>Persistent Standing. JMc stated the Club tried to encourage away</p>	

	<p>supporters not to stand but noted that it is not easy to enforce as persistent standing is endemic in football in the away area in particular.</p>	
4.8	<p>JMc noted that from the games to date, it was very much business as usual and that the safety team had not altered their approach. Much of the intelligence was communicated prior to the game and many of the fixtures required low or no police in the ground. Based on this intelligence, police would be deployed within the ground when QPR play Manchester United.</p>	
4.9	<p>Alcohol and fans, kick off times and the reputation of some clubs fans were an issue year in and year out but the safety team was aware of these issues. JMc noted that nothing major or significantly different had presented itself from any debriefs to date.</p>	
4.10	<p>JE noted that arrests were very low as the Club had refused entry to 47 spectators. It was felt that arrests would have been higher if refusals had not been enforced. This would have caused problems if the Police were then forced to go into boisterous crowds to remove poorly behaving spectators. There were 59 refusals, which supported what the MPS stated.</p>	
4.11	<p>Ejections/Refusals. AR noted that it was really positive that QPR have now started to show a breakdown in the figures for ejections and refusals, which was helpful and would pick up any trends better. AR noted that from June 2014 to January 2015 there were 104 ejections and refusals. There were 59 refusals and 45 ejections. There had been around a 20% increase on the figures at this time last year but we do not have the split hand to see what the ejections and refusals split was. We will get this information for the next SAG.</p>	
4.12	<p>JWG noted that many of the refusals were alcohol related.</p> <p>KM noted that some ejections had been observed during DPI's. JMc noted the staff are more in tune with how the Club wished to operate and it was noted that the crowd behaviour determined the stewarding response.</p> <p>The Police were only called once this Season to help to remove a spectator from the ground.</p> <p>AR noted that the Club arrangements appeared to be working well.</p>	
4.13	<p>JWG advised the group that the Club had not done any major work on drugs this year but if the intelligence presented a problem, it would be dealt with in a proactive manner.</p>	
4.14	<p>Accident and Injuries. MG noted that there had been a total of 18</p>	

	<p>accidents and injuries so far this Season, which was broken down into various injuries from being hit with the ball and foreign objects in the eye.</p> <p>There was a reported RIDDOR incident on 20 December 2014 where a supporter suffered a deep cut to the back of the leg from a seat after celebrating a goal. No defects were found.</p> <p>The big screens and the PA announcer notified supporters to be wary of footballs being hit into the crowd during the warm up session.</p> <p>No specific trends had been identified with the accidents.</p> <p>Smoking Policy. JWG noted that there was a consultation amongst fans to keep or get rid of smoking areas. The vote was split 51/49 and there was no overwhelming majority to change the current arrangements. The Club were looking to change this for next Season but it could be difficult operationally. The SAG would be informed of any changes to the Smoking Policy.</p> <p>TV Broadcasting and Fixture Changes. Current TV and broadcasting arrangements were working well and there were no complaints to report. There was much more broadcasting as a result of being in the Premier League and some cables had been tidied up as directed by KM.</p> <p>Customer Feedback. There was no significant customer feedback or reoccurring complaints. AR noted that a Sunderland supporter had made some positive comments which had been passed to KM.</p> <p>JWG explained that much more had been done in the stadium to improve user experience as part of a wider review by the Premier League.</p> <p>No significant comments or feedback had been received from the Supporter Group.</p> <p>A website had been set up for details on any potential new stadium.</p> <p>As for the remainder of the Season, QPR were no longer in the FA Cup or the Capital One Cup. There was a Chelsea Category C fixture coming up in April. There were no plans to upgrade anything at this stage.</p>	
<p>5.</p> <p>5.1</p>	<p>Metropolitan Police</p> <p>Inspector Simon Causer reported that he was the QPR lead. He reported there were no problems to report with the Club in terms of the organisation, the stewarding and he had no reason to raise any issues. SC noted that there was no issue of match commander continuity in terms of policing arrangements which other clubs may</p>	

	<p>have experienced.</p> <p>SC expects some of the fixtures in the second half of the Season to be more challenging but the continuity with staffing should help with that.</p> <p>5.2 Jason Evans updated the group on the arrests which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 assault - 2 drugs - 1 public order offence - 1 racially aggravated assault (against steward) <p>QPR had 5 arrests in total which was much lower than at the other two clubs in the Borough.</p> <p>All arrests had been dealt with and banning orders would be sought. It was felt that the Club was very supportive when the MPS issued banning orders.</p> <p>A breakdown of the arrests had been submitted for the record.</p> <p>5.3 There were no reported incidents of racism at QPR.</p> <p>5.4 JE shared SC's assessment that there had been very little issues with QPR.</p> <p>JE explained that the BTP had recently setup a central football office, which may assist AR. JE would pass on details to AR.</p> <p>There were no issues on the tubes or public order issues.</p> <p>The pubs within the footprint and wider area were all supportive and again there had been no issues.</p> <p>5.5 The Special Services Agreement for 2014/15 had been signed and everyone was now on board. AR noted that she had received an email from the Police advising of further consultation on the 2015/16 SPSA. There had been a significant amount of work by many of the partners to get this document signed and she was concerned about having to go through the process again. There was a desire to get an agreement this year that is longer lasting and secure it as part of a wider footballing family.</p> <p>5.6 QPR were satisfied with the police resources and had no issues to report. The Club had been resourced to what their risk assessments had outlined.</p> <p>The Council had issued a new safety certificate to QPR and one of the reasons for the delay was to observe how the School End operation would work now the Club were back in the Premier League. SC noted that there had been no change and nothing he</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">JE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MPS/QPR</p>
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	<p>needed to address.</p> <p>AR confirmed as the Club approaches the higher risk fixtures they would follow the agreed risk assessment. JMc noted that the operation would remain consistent for all games and the only change would be as a result from intelligence. JMc advised the group that the bigger games were easier to manage as the away clubs had more control on the sale and distribution of tickets.</p> <p>JWG noted that additional stewarding would be considered for the bigger games and noted that a year in the Championship was much more difficult to manage.</p> <p>JE confirmed that the Club was tested rigorously against Sheffield United on 4 January 2015. There were 3000 away fans and the MPS kept it as Category A as the Club was confident in dealing with supporters within the ground. Even though the capacity was doubled, the situation was dealt with well and there were no issues.</p> <p>AR noted that the risk assessment was working well and where risks were identified, seats were not used.</p> <p>AR asked JE, MPS and the Club to be vigilant regarding the School End operation and to give for further feedback to the SAG in July 2015.</p>	
<p>6.</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p> <p>6.3</p>	<p>Local Authority Review – 2014/15 Season so far</p> <p>KM advised the group that he conducted 4 DPI inspections this Season so far, which were when QPR played Hull, Stoke, Liverpool and Burnley. KM was in particular looking at the School End operations such as the safety certificate and risk assessments and reported no issues.</p> <p>TV and Broadcasting areas were taking up a lot of space and KM reminded QPR to be vigilant in case of an emergency.</p> <p>The safety certificate, version 3, had been issued which updated the wording and a small reduction in seats owing to extra media requirements.</p> <p>KM confirmed that a Statement of Intent was now in place.</p> <p>KM had been reviewing the Operations Manual. Once he received the Medical Plan, this would be up to date. The draft Medical Plan would be added to the Portal and the Emergency Exercise would also need to be added.</p> <p>AR noted that she recently received a complaint that she would be investigating and will be contacting the Club to view some records. AR agreed to update the group accordingly.</p>	<p>KM</p> <p>AR</p>

6.4	<p>KM noted there were no licensing issues to report. AR asked the Club to remain vigilant regarding drinking in view rules, especially in terms of the hospitality areas. This was now being looked at London wide.</p>	
6.5	<p>TP noted that the only highways issue was access and egress problems for some of the residents in Batman Close, as some stewards weren't accommodating of residents. JWG noted that these residents were right in the middle of a road closure and it was difficult to alleviate but where possible, access would be maintained.</p> <p>A new traffic management order had been received and signed.</p> <p>AR queried the debris in the streets near Loftus Road. RI confirmed that there was a dedicated enforcement team that performs Saturday pre-match checks. They were responsible from removing fly-tipping and other articles that could be used in any type of violence.</p> <p>RI explained that they were looking at removing waste from front gardens and other similar areas accessible to public highways to prevent these being used for violent actions, which would then be included in the pre-match checks.</p> <p>If there were waste in housing estates, this would be the responsibility of Housing Services and RI would raise this.</p>	RI
6.6	<p>No checks were performed on a Sunday but there is an emergency contact number available which the club had in their records. AR was keen to know that the number works though the club confirmed they had never needed to utilise this. AR noted that an increasing number of games take place on a Sunday and this may need to be reviewed in the future.</p> <p>RI noted that any issues are fed back to the Council's contractors, SERCO.</p> <p>There were no parking issues.</p>	
7.	<p>Update from the London Fire Brigade</p>	
7.1	<p>No representative was present from the LFB though the Chairman confirmed that they were going through an organisational change.</p> <p>AR was awaiting a structure from LFB and how this relates to SAG representation. The email that she had received remained open ended.</p> <p>AR will update the group as soon as an update was received.</p>	AR
8.	<p>Medical Provision Update</p>	

<p>8.1</p>	<p>Dr Meng sent the Chairman the following comments with his apologies:</p> <p>“It may assist attendance including that of SJA if it was an early evening. Otherwise there are no issues outstanding. One point for exploration is that of the TA centre in case of a major incidence, the TA centre has parking catering and a large indoor gym. This would serve well for walking wounded and staff.</p> <p>Also can we factor in as a risk assessment should the TA centre be targeted by terrorists during or before match days”.</p> <p>If there was a major emergency, JWG suggested it was likely that the TA centre would be used by the emergency services which was why the club had never progressed this.</p>	
<p>8.2</p>	<p>AR noted that there was concern about stretchers and evacuating larger people from higher parts of the ground. JWG confirmed that the Club purchased a person evacuation chair, which was requested.</p>	
<p>8.3</p>	<p>London Ambulance Service weren’t present but noted they had a good working relationship with the Club.</p>	
<p>8.4</p>	<p>St John Ambulance sent the Chairman the following comments with their apologies, “St John Ambulance continues to enjoy a good working relationship with the Club and is assisted on match days by the crowd Doctor and the London Ambulance Service NHS Trust when required.</p> <p>To date (4 January 2015), St John Ambulance have recorded a total of 40 casualties/patients. Of those 40, 35 were members of the public, the other were staff, of the 40 people treated, 1 patient has been transported to hospital.</p> <p>There have been no identifiable trends in casualties/patients to note this season”.</p>	
<p>9</p>	<p>Update from the Sports Ground Safety Authority</p> <p>9.1 LE visited QPR twice this Season and noted the bad language from the family stand. JWG claimed that there was little the Club could do to prevent this as it was endemic in the game.</p> <p>LE asked the Club to remain vigilant with persistent standing and asked that the management plan be specific for each game.</p> <p>The SGSA is having a conference in March 2015.</p> <p>LE noted that there would be guidance on alternative uses coming</p>	<p>KA & KM</p>

	<p>out later in the year [2015].</p> <p>SGSA were looking at reviewing the Green Guide. If there are any issues with the green guide, the group was requested to put those comments to LE via KA and KM.</p> <p>LE reported no other issues or upcoming projects or reviews.</p>	
<p>10</p> <p>10.1</p> <p>10.2</p> <p>10.3</p> <p>10.3</p>	<p>Chairman's Update</p> <p>In light of how long it took to secure the Statement of Intent and Special Police Services Agreement last year, AR will be raising with the Club to request that this process start earlier next Season.</p> <p>AR was also speaking to Colin Morgan with Superintendent Hill regarding the SPS agreement and policing across the Borough.</p> <p>AR noted that QPR were not having issues in terms of continuity with match day commanders. However, AR was keen to understand the consequences and impacts of a lack of continuity in match day commanders in the event SC was sick or moved to a different role.</p> <p>JE noted that policing was an ever changing environment and MPS priorities were likely to change because of this evolving environment.</p> <p>In light of some of the issues faced by the SAG, the Chair reminded the group of the SAG's purpose, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assists the Local Authority to discharge its functions to oversee safety - Provides an integrated safety management forum - Provides an advice source - Provides a forum to learn lessons and identify trends from the experience of the group. <p>The General Safety Certificate should be seen as part of a total integrated system for managing health and safety at Loftus Road. The safety certificate process should contain all that is necessary to ensure the responsible safety of spectators at QPR.</p> <p>AR highlighted the ever-increasing aspect of social media within the game and asked if the Club had utilised this from a safety point of view. JWG noted that QPR use social media widely and it is looked at broadly though JWG would be reluctantly to utilise this from a safety point of view.</p> <p>AR felt that this could usefully be included in QPRs next emergency scenario that they would be running in due course.</p>	<p>QPR</p>

11	Any Other Business	
11.1	There was no other business.	
12	Date and venue of the next meeting	
12.1	Week commencing 6 July 2015 at Loftus Road.	

Meeting Commenced: 9:30am
Meeting Ended: 11:15am

To be confirmed