

Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975
Chelsea Football Club Emergency Safety Advisory Group (ESAG)

9 September 2019

MINUTES

Present:

Chelsea Football Club (CFC)

Chris Baker (CB), Head of Matchday Safety
Paul Kingsmore (PK), Director of Operations
Keith Overstall (KO), Head of Security
Wills Payne (WP), Match Day Safety Operations Officer

Hammersmith & Fulham Council (LBHF)

Graham Souster (GS), Environmental Health Officer
Stephen Hollingworth (SH), Assistant Director Leisure, Sports and Culture (Chair)
Kieran McKenna (KM), Environmental Health Officer
Tracey Chin (TC), Clerk

Ajax Representatives

Mr Joris de Lange (JdL), Ajax Matchday Operations & Security Manager
Mrs Suzanne Adriaansen (SA), Ajax Head of Match Organisation and Supporter affairs

Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)

Chief Inspector Lysander Strong (LS), Police Match Commander
PC Paul Wright (PW)
Chief Inspector James Brockway (JB) (Conference call)

Sports Ground Safety Authority

Geoff Galilee (GG)

CFC Security Contractors

Margaret Guildea (MG)
Tracy White (TW)
Emilia Lopez (EL)
Jim Harkness (JH)

| Item no. | ITEM | ACTION |
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| 1. | Welcome from Chairman | Chairman |
| | The purpose of the meeting was a request from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to discuss their concerns for the safety of all those attending or working at the Chelsea v Ajax, Champions League fixture at Stamford Bridge on Tuesday 5th November | |

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| | <p>2019 and to consider the measures required to mitigate these concerns - particularly the ticket allocation for Ajax supporters.</p> <p>SH explained how the meeting will be run and no objections were raised.</p> | |
| 2. | Apologies / Introductions | Chairman |
| | Apologies were received from Lee J Sparks, MPS. | |
| 3. | Metropolitan Police Service – Presentation of Evidence / intelligence | MPS |
| | <p>An outline of Ajax’s disorder at previous fixtures was given:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nov 2018 – Ajax vs Benfica Crowd disturbances and criminal damage. • Dec 2018 - Athens Missile throwing inside stadium and a petrol bomb outside. • Mar 2019 – vs Real Madrid Missile throwing and criminal damage inside the stadium. • April 2019 – vs Juventus Missile throwing and seat removal inside the stadium, crowd disturbances and blocked stairways also inside the stadium. • Fifty-four people had been arrested and expelled in Italy after machetes, knives and smoke bombs were found on a coach. • 30 April, Tottenham The Tottenham game was still under investigation, but there were issues with ticketless fans trying to gain/force entry, although they had been kept out of the stadium. Violent disorder was reported in the surrounding streets. MPS confirmed there were no major issues with the crowd inside the stadium dispersal. | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further incidents of disorder had been recorded in 2015 and 2013. In 2012 at a Manchester United fixture 300-400 Ajax risk splintered and attacked a public house and caused disorder. In 2013 disorder was recorded at Celtic on board a ferry and the Police were overwhelmed and had to retreat for their own safety. Pyros were set off and seats were broken and thrown by some Ajax supporters. <p>The Chair asked if there had been any restrictions placed at these games. MPS confirmed that full allocation had been available.</p> <p>The Chair referred to the report of the Tottenham game, noting 2 main issues: supporters rushing to get into the ground and ticketless fans. MPS agreed that these were issues that needed to be considered when looking at mitigation.</p> <p>PW for clarified the term “disorder” was needed as the Tottenham incident involved head injuries to an innocent supporter by breaking up paving slabs.</p> <p>Ajax representatives raised concerns about the accuracy of some of the incidents outlined by MPS: at the Juventus match, they claimed that the majority did not have tickets and concluded that it was the ticketless fans causing the violence.</p> <p>Ajax disagreed with the assessment of fans with weapons. MPS clarified that the responses were based on information they had received. They also clarified that not all the 54 fans mentioned were carrying weapons.</p> <p>Ajax informed that the petrol bomb thrown in Greece was by AKA Athens supporters.</p> | |
| 4. | Chelsea Football Club Representation | CFC |
| | <p>PK welcomed Ajax to the meeting and that they recognised that the safety of supporters is a priority home and away. The Club will follow UEFA rules for ticket allocations but it recognised that they need the support of the MPS and other partners. Ticket allocation is a key issues for CFC and Ajax. The Club will recognise the advice from the SAG and be steered by the SAG Chairman.</p> | |

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| | <p>Ajax also informed that the club has no legal powers to prevent banned supporters travelling to the UK. For the Juventus match they operated a ticket collection point with ID checks on the named tickets. They would like to replicate this for the CFC match. They would make sure the ticket allocation is strictly controlled and stewards will travel with them. They also said they would talk with the Dutch Police on how to stop banned supporters travelling. They reported typically 50-100 ticketless risk travel to matches by coach.</p> <p>The Club agreed that ticket allocation was a key issue for discussion and the idea of having a ticket collection point was welcomed.</p> <p>JB stated it was a factual report of the evidence and the disorder experienced and arrests made at the Tottenham Hotspur fixture was unprecedented, with nine arrests. We all need to be careful and are accountable with the decisions made to ensure the safe delivery of the match.</p> | |
| UEFA Ticketing Arrangements and Timescales | | |
| | <p>SH enquired when the tickets need to go on sale and it was confirmed it was three weeks before the match.</p> <p>PK advised the decision needs to be made as soon as possible.</p> <p>Ajax advised that supporters were already planning their travel arrangements.</p> <p>Ajax reported that the risk group is minimised already and therefore will not be able to travel to England.</p> <p>LS reported that there are two strands to this, the ticketless supporters travelling and the risk group which may or may not have tickets. The MPS would also support a ticket collection point.</p> <p>GG enquired if UEFA could place a ban on Ajax following the Spurs incidents to prevent supporters travelling to away fixtures?</p> | |

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| | <p>PW reported they will know more after the UEFA conference but as most of the disorder was away from the stadium he felt this would be unlikely.</p> <p>Ajax reported there is no UEFA investigation following the match against Spurs.</p> <p>GG advised the Club reported significant damage had been made caused inside the stadium. Ajax confirmed no investigation on this had been carried out by UEFA.</p> | |
| 5. | AFC Ajax Football Club representation | AJAX |
| | <p>Ajax were asked to provide information on what mitigations would be implemented. The following proposals were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ID printed on all tickets. • Stricter ticket allocation: restricted to members only. • An increase in the numbers of stewards. • Preventing travel for ticketless fans. • Ticket collection only. <p>MPS noted the suggestions as “helpful” but recommended that the effectiveness of the solutions also needed to be measured.</p> | |
| 6. | SGSA response / advice | SGSA |
| | <p>GG expressed concern over supporter behaviour and how this will be safely controlled in the upper tier of the South Stand?</p> | |
| | <p>The Chair thanked Ajax for their attendance and they were requested to leave the meeting.</p> | |
| 7. | Proposed matchday safety / security management arrangements & mitigations | CFC / MPS |
| | <p>JB reiterated that the Spurs fixture was a standalone fixture with nine arrests made and this is unprecedented.</p> <p>CB noted that the ongoing issues with Ajax supporters were historical and had dated back to the 1980s.</p> | |

PK raised concerns regarding away supporters getting tickets in home areas. Further concerns are with a reduced allocation how do you mitigate for ticketless supporters around the ground. LS said they will deal with the ticketless supporters and will intercept coaches if required.

General discussions with the group were then had regarding the ticket allocation.

JB said they have a good system in place for large walks up and the filters they use for the supporters. The large allocation would mean a larger amount of ticketless supports attending. It was agreed that reducing the ticket allocation would allow the MPS to concentrate on the risk and hangers on who are dependable on the hard-core groups.

KO said the risk for this match is on the ticketing policy and they have systems in place to deal with the walk ups but are very reliant on the MPS. Supporters who don't have a tickets need to be kept away from the turnstile.

KM asked if there was a large walk up to the Stadium for the Spurs match. PW confirmed this was the case.

MPS agreed that reduction of tickets available to away fans may be the most effective method.

It was suggested having a ticket collection point away from the stadium: Hammersmith Apollo had been used in the past.

As per UEFA rules alcohol can be served. However, a dynamic decision will be made on the night depending on the circumstances.

GS asked was there any disorder at the end of the Spurs match. LS advised that the Ajax supporters stayed behind to celebrate with their team, so this was not an issue.

Discussion arose on the arrangements for the hospitality section. The Club clarified that UEFA's sponsors were responsible for distribution of the tickets. KO confirmed they would discuss arrangements further with UEFA.

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| | <p>PW reiterated the need for local Pubs including Earls Court to adhere to the match day restrictions.</p> <p>KM said that both LBHF and RBKC Street Scene need to carry out pre-match checks to ensure the streets are clear for building, fly tipped material and planned road works.</p> <p>It was agreed that there needed to be additional consultation with RBKC.</p> <p>Different seating configurations were discussed and the pros and cons of these. It was felt that the allocation to the lower tier would be the safest option from all the evidence presented during the meeting.</p> <p>The ticket office manager was requested to attend the meeting in order to ascertain the exact number of tickets this area provided.</p> <p>KO stated that written confirmation would be required from the SAG to detail the decision made as it is likely to be requested by UEFA.</p> <p>The LA will communicate with the licencing officers to remind the retailers selling fireworks to make them aware about the risks in selling to fans approaching the event.</p> <p>The ticket office manager provided the information regarding the lower tier. With the required segregation in place the available number of seats would be 833, which included 30 wheelchair and 30 personal assistants for lower South Stand tier only.</p> <p>The SAG decided this was reasonable and appropriate.</p> <p>There were concerns about UEFA's response to the meeting. CB anticipated that UEFA would not question the decision of the SAG.</p> | <p>LBHF</p> <p>LBHF</p> <p>LBHF</p> |
| 8. | Safety Certification | LA |
| | The Chair confirmed he would write a letter of confirmation of the mitigations agreed. | LBHF |
| 9. | AOB | |
| | None | |