

Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975
Fulham Football Club Safety Advisory Group (SAG)
Part 1.
Clockwork Building

Wednesday 22nd January 2020

PRESENT:

Hammersmith & Fulham Council (LBHF)

Stephen Hollingworth, Assistant Director of Leisure, Sports and Culture	SH
Valerie Simpson, Strategic Lead for Environmental Health and Regulatory Services	VS
Stephanie Needham, Interim Head of Environmental Health	SN
Graham Souster, Environmental Health Officer	GS
Geraldine O'Grady, Environmental Health Officer	GO
Matthew Ramsey, Building Control	MR
Lee Currie, Network Management	LC
Tracey Chin, Minutes.	TC

Fulham Football Club (FFC)

Darren Preston, Chief Operating Officer	DP
Aimee McKenzie, Head of Operations & Stadium Management	AM
Eddie Simpson, Safety Officer	ES
Steve White, Deputy Safety Officer	SW


Emergency Services

Matt Shute, LAS	MS
Steve Waspe, NHS	SWa
Chief Inspector Lysander Strong, MPS	LS
Inspector Steve Landers, MPS	SL
FIO Tony Delamo, MPS	TD

Other agencies / organisations

Geoff Galilee (SGSA)	GG
Michael Gregg (Fulham Supporters, Trust)	MG

Item No.	ITEM	ACTION
1.	<u>Welcome from the Chair</u>	
1.1.	SH welcomed members to the meeting and went through general housekeeping information. He confirmed that there would not be a fire alarm test.	
2.	Apologies / Introductions	
2.1	Apologies were received from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tom Stewart / Kris Cardwell (MPS Licensing) • Ben Drewis, Alan Brand & Paul Humphreys (LFB) • Paul Smith (LAS) • Ian Hawthorn and Janet Nairne (LBHF Network Management) • Stefan Bystrzanowski (LBHF Building Control) 	
2.2.	SH welcomed Mike Gregg as a new and welcomed member of the SAG representing the Fulham Supporters' Trust .	
3.	Confirmation of previous minutes, outstanding actions and matters arising	
3.1	The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record.	
3.2	Matters Arising The following matter was noted as outstanding: <p>Item 3</p> <p>Electric Car Charger points / Stevenage Road The Club asked if there was a solution for moving cars when it was plugged in. Officers to follow up with Chris Bainbridge. (LBHF Highways) – <i>no further update has been received on this albeit the use of the electric charger points has not caused problems this season.</i></p> <p>Changes to RingGo</p> <p>Action outstanding from the previous meeting. It was suggested that the Club could be given access to the permit scanning technology to identify resident passes when the future changes are made for virtual permits. (LBHF Parking). <i>No update received from Parking Control (GS to follow up)</i></p>	

<p>4.</p> <p>4.1</p> <p>4.2</p> <p>4.3</p>	<p><u>Stadium redevelopment progress update</u></p> <p>DP reported that they were 6 months into the Riverside Stand project. Works had commenced with the dig for the new basement box but it would be some time before any steel work was erected. They had estimated 18mths until the opening. He confirmed that regular construction SAG meetings were being held to discuss the redevelopment works.</p> <p>DP advised that the new control room, TV studio and first aid room should be ready for the summer 2020.</p> <p>Building Control update</p> <p>MR reported that Building Control was happy with the planned development under the RRO (Fire Safety). The design was compliant with Green Guide version 6 and the LFB had been consulted on access arrangement. SH acknowledged that there were still some issues under review with respects to the new first aid room that he was aware about.</p>	
<p>5.</p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p> <p>5.3</p>	<p><u>FFC Safety Management review 2019/20 half season FFC</u></p> <p> SAG Meeting Stats Season 2019-20 (1).p FFC Half season 2019-20 Stats</p> <p>Management / Operational Changes</p> <p>ES confirmed that the Club had recruited a new Safety Officer as he would be retiring at the end of May 2020. The new Safety Officer is Chris Baker and he would be starting full-time in the summer. Chris Baker would be shadowing ES during the remainder of the current season. ES advised that Chris Baker has a lot of experience and particularly with new build stadiums.</p> <p>Fixtures</p> <p>ES reported with the stadium changes and movement of home supporters from the Riverside Stand into the Putney Stand has had its issues this season. It has required an increase in the number of stewards to manage the Putney Stand from 25 to 60+. There had been 15 fixtures so far up to the mid-season point comprising: 1 Pre-season friendly, 1 Carabao Cup, and 13 League games – 7 Cat a, 5 Cat B and 3 Cat CS.</p> <p>Arrests / Ejections and Refusals</p> <p>The Club reported 7 arrests: 5 Away and 2 Home supporters. Home arrests were due to racial abuse and throwing objects on the pitch, while away incidents included a racially aggravated</p>	

<p>5.4</p> <p>5.5</p> <p>5.6</p> <p>5.7</p> <p>5.8</p>	<p>public order, homophobic language to a steward, pyrotechnic use and an attempted pitch incursion.</p> <p>This was an overall reduction in the number of arrests from the previous season. The number of ejections had increased due to an increase in the need for club interventions owing to less reliance on the police and work with the introduction of the drugs bins.</p> <p>The following stats were confirmed by the Club:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 219 Ejections total: 180 Away, 39 Home. • 73 breaches of ground regulations, including 8 for abusive behaviour, 7 for illegal streaming of the game, the League uses Comsec investigators which the club has to accommodate at matches and 4 for pyrotechnic use, all during the Charlton match. • 44 refused entries (mainly for intoxication) where the Club has robust checks in place at entry points to prevent drunk supporters' entry. Supporters travelling to matches via boat trips is thought to be a significant cause of much of the drunkenness experienced. <p>There were 30 away supporters that had been ejected in Home areas. This as a significant increase from last season owing to the changes at the stadium and the Club's zero-tolerance policy on this owing to home supporters expressing concerns. ES defended the Club's policy of the number of ejections. There had been 100 more than last season when the Club was in the Premier League. Championship figures are generally greater than the Premier League as there is more policing.</p> <p>Club Bans</p> <p>The following figures were given:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 Serving existing long-term court bans • 1 Serving life ban • 4 Serving indefinite bans • 2 Serving ban for 3 years • 1 Serving ban for rest of 19/20 season • 1 Serving ban for 3 years (flare at Norwich away 2018) • 1 Serving ban for 1 year. • 6 Current Acceptable Behaviour Agreements. <p>Match-day issues – including flares, smoke devices, pitch incursions, persistent standing.</p>	
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	<p>ES acknowledged that the Putney Stand segregation arrangements does on occasions contribute to more issues for stewards to deal with and also has generated an increase in the number of complaints from home supporters. The Club has actively publicised that the Putney Stand is a home / away stand and there is no mixed area.</p>	
<p>5.9</p>	<p>ES confirmed there had been some isolated incidents of un professionalism with stewards that have had to be addressed. Agencies are having difficult to with recruiting and the Club is reliant on 2/3 of its stewards from the companies. After every fixture there is a debrief and any issues are dealt with then whereby some stewards have received advice on their conduct.</p>	
<p>5.10</p>	<p>SH made mention of the concerns raised by the MPS about stewarding standards. LS / LS explained the concerns that had been discussed with ES and rationale for the correspondence being sent pre-SAG. LS assured that the police wanted to work with FFC on this matter.</p>	
<p>5.11</p>	<p>ES referred to the matches where the concerns were raised and provided an explanation of the reasons why the stewarding response was necessary. ES explained that response team work in teams of 6 and this may be perceived as heavy handed but it is necessary for their own safety.</p>	
<p>5.12</p>	<p>SH requested that the Club respond in writing to the concerns raised by the MPS and copy in the SAG Chair.</p>	<p>FFC</p>
<p>5.13</p>	<p>GG advised that SIA training does include restraint techniques that may be required.</p>	
<p>5.14</p>	<p>GG recommended that if there are issues at the segregation line than consideration to take out the use of seats between to remove tension between supporters.</p>	
<p>5.15</p>	<p>Complaints and positive feedback.</p>	
	<p>ES provided overview of the variety complaints received by the Club and referred the SAG to his report (attached) above).</p>	
<p>5.16</p>	<p>Medical incidents – accident and injury statistics</p> <p>ES reported that there had been 2 hospitalisations out of 52 logged incidents. The figures also included treatments given to members of the public outside the stadium in the street. It was also noted that there was an increase in staff using the medical</p>	

<p>5.17</p> <p>5.18</p> <p>5.19</p> <p>5.20</p>	<p>facilities to report minor ailments during match days. MS confirmed this was a pan-London trend at events and stadiums.</p> <p>Fixture Categories</p> <p>ES reported the future challenging high profile matches with Brentford, Birmingham and Cardiff still due to play at Craven Cottage. Brentford being a particular important derby match with both clubs in the Championship play-off positions.</p> <p>Supporter Group liaison and feedback</p> <p>ES advised that concerns had been raised by home supporters in the Putney Stand that the segregation line between away supporters is too close. It was confirmed that the segregation line had not caused any significant issues so far this season which was supported by GS and TD</p> <p>Safeguarding issues</p> <p>ES reported that there had been an increase in customer service requests in relation to accessibility issues owing to the new disabled platforms that had been installed in the stands.</p> <p>ES confirmed more training had been provided on spectator sensory issues. ACT training provided by the MPS had also been undertaken.</p>	
<p>6</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p>	<p><u>Fulham Supporters' Trust</u></p> <p>MG advised on the FST's observations for the first half of the season. The FST had been in contact with other clubs Supporter Trusts to collate any information or concerns about their travels to Craven Cottage. The Trust does attend the regular meetings with FFC and meets itself. Feedback on concerns received included issues with stewards standing and blocking the vomitory exits, overcrowding in the Hammersmith Stand concourse area owing to the redevelopment works, exacerbated by people leave their seats even earlier before half-time which was also contributing to the congestion.</p> <p>GS advised he had been monitoring the concourse area during the season and has been speaking to the Club about this particularly in relation to an area that were not agreed for catering outlets. Some of the concourse space has since been returned to the club by the contractor.</p>	

7.	<u>Metropolitan Police review 2019/20 half season</u>	
7.1	<p>Operational arrangements</p> <p>SL confirmed he would be retiring from the MPS, with his last fixture being Preston North End. 17 Command team roles have been required this season.</p>	
7.2	<p>Crowd behaviour (Home and Away supporters)</p> <p>No significant issues were reported other than concerns during the Millwall fixture in the concourse area at half time. The FFC youth group have been anti-social during their away trips.</p>	
7.3	<p>Anti-social behaviour hate crimes and notable fixtures.</p> <p>Nothing of note.</p>	
7.4	<p>Arrests, banning orders and outcome statistics</p> <p>TD reported the following figures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 arrests. • 2 football offences • 0 away game arrests – down from 3 last season. <p>Arrests are higher than last season at this point, (60% up).</p>	
7.5	<p>Racially aggravated offences 2 which is a decrease on last season where there were 4. There have been no arrests at away matches. There were 3 last season.</p> <p>In terms of Football Act offences there have been 2 - pitch incursion and throwing a missile.</p>	
7.9	<p>ES reported that drug abuse has influenced behaviour with cocaine widely used going by the evidence left in toilets. The Club had received a complaint from “Kick-it-Out with respects to Fulham supporters singing the “Chelsea Rent Boys” during one match. Messages were subsequently put out PA and on advertising screens for education purposes.</p>	
7.10	<p>LS advised that it was difficult for the police to take any action where it is from a mass chant. The CPS will always need a victim in order for an arrest / conviction to be made.</p> <p>ES also advised that a Stoke player had received derogatory remarks from home supporters this season.</p>	
7.11	<p>LS advised that the MPS would have a continuity plan for the remaining matches of the season with SL leaving the MPS. TD would continue his FIO role so the change should not cause any issues with LS having oversight on operational arrangements across the borough’s football clubs.</p>	

	<p>British Transport Police feedback</p> <p>No feedback received</p>	
8.0	<p><u>London Fire Brigade Update</u></p> <p>No feedback received.</p>	
8.1	<p>The Chair reminded the Club about an action from the last minutes for the LFB to visit the stadium. ES confirmed that this had happened last April with a LFB emergency exercise held at craven Cottage and a fire pump carried out a drive through of the OBTV set-up during the Manchester City matchday as arranged by GS. There would be further plans of engagement with the local LFB station.</p>	
9.0	<p><u>Medical Provision update</u></p> <p>Update on Medical Plan FFC</p> <p>The Chair confirmed that the Medical Plan had been circulated.</p>	FFC
9.1	<p>London Ambulance Service update</p> <p>MS advised that the temporary first aid room had been in use from the start of the season and had caused some challenges. MS reported the that medical plan had been implemented and was working well now but would need to be updated with the changes being made to the stadium in the future season. He advised that the risk assessment and medical plan would need to be reviewed for 20/21 prior to completion of the new stand of the .</p>	
9.2	<p>There was ongoing dialogue about the new first aid room with the Club's architects. MS noted that the LAS has expressed concerns but was hopeful that these could be resolved. A secondary first aid facility had also been identified.</p>	
9.3	<p>NHS update</p> <p>SW had nothing to report.</p>	
10.	<p><u>Local Authority Review – 2019/20 half season LBHF</u></p>	
10.1	<p>(a) Lead Officer Update:</p> <p>Matchday planning and inspections</p>	
10.2	<p>GS confirmed 10 during performance inspections had been carried out so far (including Aston Villa FA Cup match 4th</p>	

	<p>January) / all inspection reports have been sent to club, MPS and SGSA.</p> <p>West Ham – 27th July Blackburn Rovers – 10th August Millwall – 21st August Nottingham Forest – 24th August Charlton – 5th October Luton – 23rd October QPR – 22nd November Bristol City – 7th December Leeds – 21st December Aston Villa – 4th January</p>	
10.3	<p>Special focus during the inspections at the start at the season had been on how the Putney Stand segregation arrangements had worked and been manage by the Club. The segregation arrangements in the seating deck had been well managed and GS advised that there is very little issues between from home and away supporters. GS outlined his concerns about congestion at some matches of the concourse staircases and vomitories / gangways on entry of away supporters.</p>	
10.4	<p>The Leeds match was noted as being a particular challenging fixture.</p>	
10.5	<p>Persistent standing Away supporters typically stand, the main concern was with the blockages created in the gangways and vomitories particularly for the higher risk / capacity matches in the away section and during the stand filling on entry . GS advised that suggestion was made to reduce the capacity of the away section to provide more space to alleviate the issue as stewarding this issue was very challenging.</p>	
10.6	<p>Safety Certificate There had been 6 amendments made to the certificate from the start of the season owing to the stadium works. The stadium certified capacity was currently 19,300 current capacity.</p>	
10.7	<p>Operations Manual and associated documentation GS confirmed that this was well managed and maintained online.</p>	
10.8	<p>P & S Factor The LA had been supplied an update P & S factor assessment in July 2019.</p>	

10.9	Annual Inspection	
	<p>This had not been carried out due to ongoing works in the Stadium. It was suggested that it would be useful for Building Control to visit with GS.</p>	
10.11	Customer Feedback - complaints/praise	
	<p>GS advised that the LA had received a complaint from the West Yorkshire IAG Chairman expressing concerns about the quality of the stewarding during the Leeds fixture and about the condition of the away section of the Putney stand. GS confirmed a full response to the complaint and matter discussed about stewarding and the proposed meeting with the MPS/FFC was a positive step.</p>	
10.12	(b) Licensing Update	
	<p>GS confirmed there had not been any inspections completed by the Licensing Team this season or other issues to report.</p>	
10.13	(c) Highways Update	
	(d) Traffic Management Order	
	<p>Nothing to report</p>	
10.14	Network issues/ planned closures	
	<p>Nothing to report</p>	
10.15	(d) Parking Services Update	
	<p>No feedback received</p>	
10.16	Fulham Palace Road	
	<p>Owing to the reduced away capacity there have been less coaches this season. Arrangements were made with Highways for the use of Fulham Palace Road for overspill coach parking during a CFC match this season. GS advised that he informed ES in case there were any resident complaints.</p>	
10.17	(e) Parks Police Update	
	<p>No feedback received.</p>	
	<p>ES noted the reduction of lighting in Stevenage Road with the new LED lamps. SH advised that the LUX level could be</p>	

<p>10.18</p> <p>10.19</p>	<p>increased and this would need to be raised with Dave Kiteley, LBHF Street Lighting Manager.</p> <p>(f) Street Scene Update</p> <p>Highways enforcement/Licensing (skips, building materials, scaffolding)</p> <p>LC advised following issues raised following TWU works in the road where the OBTV is parked on match days that any future road works carried out must be completed 2 days before a match. Any requests would need to be sent directly to him.</p> <p>Street Trading</p> <p>There had been many occasions when unlicensed scarf sellers were operating outside the stadium on matchdays GS has liaised with Trading Standards and confirmed that many were the same sellers as at CFC matchdays. GS was hopeful of getting some input from Trading Standards for FFC matchdays.</p>	
<p>11</p> <p>11.1</p> <p>11.12</p> <p>11.13</p> <p>11.14</p>	<p><u>Update from the Sports Ground Safety Authority</u></p> <p>Observations following inspections Issues already discussed, GG attended the Charlton match.</p> <p>Persistent Standing/Safe Standing GG confirmed that there was ongoing research on safe standing and there should be an announcement from government soon.</p> <p>In terms of persistent standing all clubs have now been risk assessment and a licence letter would be circulated by the SGSA with next season's Spectator Act Licence. The data from the information gathered would be used to identify those clubs with high risk stands. GG advised that FFC was not in the high-risk category.</p> <p>Other updates:</p> <p>Women's football – investigations were being carried out on the grounds to ensure that the same safety standards. DP advised FFC did not have a team in the Women's Super League or Championship.</p> <p>GG advised that drinking in view of the pitch legal restrictions does not apply to the women's game, but the FA were looking to prohibit alcohol sale.</p>	

11.15	Substitute rules – it was confirmed players should now go to the nearest touchline, but this has resulted in problems of abuse from supporters and crushing. Referees are expected to use discretion when applying the rule.	
11.16	Fan engagement – the SGSA are working with the FSA on a guidance document.	
11.17	Injury data – the SGSA has published most recent data on its website.	
11.18	Pyrotechnic guidance – this was now in line with UEFA guidance and available on the SGSA website. The key advice was to leave pyrotechnics where they are to extinguish. This is except for disabled areas.	
11.19	The Pink Guide on Safety management is undergoing revision.	
11.20	Rotherham FC – have been prosecuted for RRO offences during a non-matchday. And fined 150K plus costs.	
11.21	Match Official Briefing A document was available to circulate to officials ahead of the match. GG suggested it would be a good idea for FFC to follow, as an addition to a verbal briefing. ES advised the Club already shares information with match officials.	
12.	<u>Looking forward to rest of 2019/20 season</u> Nothing to add	
13.	<u>Chairman's update</u> SH thanked ES for his role as Safety Officer and wished SL and AM well for the future.	
14.	<u>AOB.</u> TD advised a meeting date tbc would be arranged with the FFC / LA / MPS to discuss stewarding standards.	FFC / MPS/ LAS
	<u>Date and Venue of Next Meeting</u> The date would be confirmed - July 2020.	