

Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975
Fulham Football Club Safety Advisory Group (SAG)

28th September 2021

Minutes of Meeting (part 1)

Via MS TEAMS

Attendees:

NAME	INITIALS	ORGANISATION
Stephen Hollingworth – SAG Chair	SH	LBHF
Graham Souster EHO	GS	LBHF
Janet Nairne	JN	LBHF
Stephanie Needham	SN	LBHF
Claire Willis	CW	LBHF
Ian Baron	IB	LBHF
Anna Pater	AP	LBHF
Christiaan Uys	CU	LBHF
Geoff Galilee	GG	SGSA
James Berry	JB	LFB
Matthew Ramsey	MR	LFB
Dujon Brown-Taylor	DBT	FFC
Darren Preston	DP	FFC
Aimee McKenzie	AM	FFC
Chris Baker	CB	FFC
Trevor Jenner	TJ	TFL
Neal King	NK	TFL
Tony Delamo	TD	MET
Josh Ryan	JR	LAS

ITEM	MINUTES	ACTION
1	Welcome	
	<p>SH welcomed all, mentioned the meeting was being recorded and minuted.</p> <p>The SAG meeting is a debrief of last season. The pandemic made it a difficult season. It's been busy for the club with new staff members.</p> <p>Discussed the tremendous response by the club and the players to a young FFC supporter, <u>Rhys Porter</u>, who received awful abuse online after uploading a video of him playing football. Well done to Fulham FC for this.</p>	
2	Apologies	
	<p>LBHF – Nichola Lang, Director of Public Health</p> <p>MPS – Mark Biggs, Sophie Paeseno (MPS Events)</p> <p>LFB – Brett Loft (James Berry will be representing LFB).</p> <p>LAS – Matt Shute, - Paul Smith has retired from the LAS after many years of service. SH wished Paul Smith the best for his retirement.</p> <p>NHS – Katy John, Sophie Walmsley</p>	

3	Confirmation of previous minutes & matters arising	
	Minutes of the last meeting related to Tier 2 Covid restrictions back in December with the return of reduced numbers of supporters, actions implemented for the Liverpool game. Nothing else discussed.	
4	FFC – Safety management review for the season 2020/2021	FFC
	<p>CB gave the update for the season.</p> <p>Longer days due to red zone as starting 3 ½ hours before kick-off.</p> <p>2 games with small number of fans Liverpool and Newcastle United were very different. Relaxation of measures had a large impact on way the fans behaved.</p> <p>Restructure – stand managers for each stand, qualified safety officers (or qualifying). Felt slightly intimidating before, so improved this. Stand managers able to make decisions, this has been well received.</p> <p>Managing the staffing numbers based on risk of game. Minimum number that is run with, if high risk games, the numbers will be increased.</p> <p>Ejections down on what has been seen before. Flares and ejections, smoking, drink/drugs. Stoke/Leeds United played – both challenging games. Positive response from Police on how being dealt with.</p> <p>Strategically remove people without making a big deal. People unaware ejections going on. Ejections are a last resort.</p> <p>Medical – a steward collapsed, he’s fit and well and back to work soon. 2 fairly serious medical incidents, 5 minor. Both serious have recovered/recovering.</p> <p>Still operating Red Zone – 3 ½ hours before kick off. Team coaches are no longer required to use the Stevenage Road compound outside the stadium. CB advised that overall all arrangements were going well.</p> <p>The new control is fully in use.</p> <p>Safety officers – Chris Baker, Steve White and newly qualified Dujon Taylor-Brown So rotating between all 3 Safety Officers on matches.</p> <p>For the new Riverside Stand development the club has assigned a stand manager all ready. It is only being used currently for the media and other than that it’s being secured off. Team of fire marshals are present in the stand as the fire alarm system is not fully commissioned yet. Challenging working in a building site, but it’s been ok so far.</p>	
5	Metropolitan Police – review for the season 2020/2021	MPS/BTP
	<p>TD gave an update and confirmed the police are still attending all home matches. Some small gatherings of fans (when team coaches arrive), ibut these were managed well. Overall there have been no issues experienced during the season of note.</p> <p>Newcastle match could have been a challenging match but didn’t ended up being due to how the season ended.</p> <p>This season – TD working with the new safety officer team. No issues. 5 arrests so far out of 6 games (flare, drunken disorderly, drugs).</p>	

	<p>Across the country, there has been a deterioration in supporter behaviour generally.</p> <p>British Transport Police – not present at the meeting. TD advised he was not aware of any issues from BTP.</p>	
6	Medical Provision Update	
	<p>CB provided details before the meeting of stats, low so far.</p> <p>Medical team for this season is fully set up – LAS provides an ambulance officer for the control room to support own in-house medical team. The arrangement have gone really well. Awaiting the new medical room to be completed. Plans to build a new secondary facility by the Johnny Haynes Stand as identified in the recent independent medical audit undertaken which has been agreed with the LAS.</p> <p>JR gave an update – 3 of the 4 main LAS event commanders have moved on and have had to start again with new managers.</p> <p>GG queried when the medical facility will be up and running? DP – awaiting confirmation. Keeping the temporary facility for the season. Hoping late this quarter or 1st quarter next season.</p> <p>GS updated with regards to the new first aid facility, Fulham FC did a review and the report was submitted. Sought reconciliation and concerns regarding the size and shape, complies with Green Guide.</p>	
7	London Fire Brigade	
	<p>JB gave an update. Wasn't around last season. Great relationships with the club. Has had some information with the new stand and intend to organise some exercises planned in the future.</p> <p>There have been no incidents requiring the LFB's attendance to the stadium..</p> <p>JB taking over SAG responsibilities for both Fulham and Chelsea Football Clubs and community engagement.</p>	
8	Local Authority	
	<p>Safety Certificate / inspections</p> <p>GS spoke about last season. Did a number inspections during matches behind closed doors to review the Covid-secure measures that were in place. On the whole these were found to be satisfactory despite the challenges with the restrictions of the stadium.</p> <p>GS reviewed the arrangements with for the two matches with spectators (Liverpool and Newcastle). There were very lengthy queues owing to the pre-entry checks required of supporters for the Liverpool match. This was to be expected but the Safety Team implemented changes in queue management arrangements when supporters returned once again for the Newcastle match.</p>	

General Safety Certificate has been reissued 5 times in the past 18 months owing to the Pandemic - behind closed doors / Tier 2 / behind closed doors / Step 3 and now back in August - Step 4 (full capacity)

This season so far GS has attended Charlton Athletic (Friendly) Middlesbrough (Championship) and Leeds United (Carabao Cup). On the whole all went well.

2021/22 season: Pre-season friendly – Charlton Athletic (31/07/2021), EFL – Middlesbrough 08/08/2021 – main issue with not all emergency exits being open prior to end of match, **Carabao Cup – Leeds United 21/09/21:** 4000 – 5,000 Leeds supporters – SW had to act up as Safety Officer, some ejections / drug seizures.

Licensing

GS gave the Licensing update. FFC has applied and received approval for a limited duration Premise Licence for the in progress (workwise) New Riverside Stand (NRS). The application was made to enable the sale of alcohol in the eventuality of the early seat release for this season and thereby allowing for the sale of alcohol.

Pre-application advice meeting was held last week with Adrian Overton / FFC and their Licensing Solicitor to discuss the arrangements for licensing the NRS on its completion.

DP gave a further update on the match day licensing. Each stand has own licence, match day licence, then separate licence for each activities. The club has had a good meeting with the Licensing team on the management plans for non-match day activities for the. Working on this at the moment.

GS advised that on occasion not all gates in Bishop's Park were unlocked. GS advised all gates need to be open and in use on matchdays.

IB – will highlight again that all gates to be opened. TD queried getting the contact numbers.

ACTION - IB to provide contact details to MPS.

TD stated no issues with the public houses so far.

Network Management

CU advised that potentially there may be a review parking Zone T this financial year. May have some impact on parking stress. Zone T is north of where current match day zones end.

CU not engaged with the club as yet. There is no parking policy team any more, being run by other teams.

The club has requested assistance from the police with team coaches and away supporter coaches not to leave engines running as this continues to give rise to complaints from residents.

9	London Underground/TFL	LUL
	TJ updated. Last season majority quiet. Last couple of games a review around Putney Bridge. No concerns so far.	
10	Fulham Supporters Trust	FST
	<p>GS said the trust meets regularly. Last meeting 17/9. DP referenced the usual issues, getting to the toilets at the back of the Hammy. New ticket provider (Securticks) with some issues, some positives.</p> <p>Upgraded some of the ladies toilets.</p> <p>GG queried the new ticketing system. Is it just a provider or a new electronic ticketing system?</p> <p>DP – confirmed not 100% electronic based. Some issues with the provider and access control system, being resolved. Some things easier to do than others. Working on certain stands as some stands have bigger delays than others.</p> <p>GG mentioned concerns around clubs resorting to opening up exit gates and letting people in that way.</p> <p>CB s mentioned for the Reading game, 10k people in for KO, 14k in total, so 4k late arrivals.</p>	
11	Sports Ground Safety Authority	SGSA
	<p>Safe standing</p> <p>Permit licensed standing seated areas</p> <p>Things now moving, number of clubs who have moved in and added rail seating and independent rails. Agreed with the Government, an early adopter scheme – pilot. Clubs who can meet criteria can apply, have the infrastructure in, (home and away supporters), the end date is 6/10/21, they are going to be looked at. Want to issue with new licences by 1/1/22. Has to go to the minister for individual approvals. Those who apply get the licence, they will be monitored closely for the rest of the season – the government will then look to change the law generally, so will be able to put the conditions on licences.</p> <p>GG can send info if anyone is interested.</p> <p>If you have persistent standing in seating areas, you will have to do something about this once law changes.</p> <p>DP stated the new stand will be all seater. Arena seating doesn't have an option to supply rail seating. Will need to think about in the future.</p> <p>Local Authority audits – not completed during Covid. Started up again. GG doing an audit in October. Scoring changed. Reports sent to local authority. H&F have always come out well on similar audits. Won't necessarily lead to annual audits, will depend on scoring.</p>	

	<p>Spectator qualifications – local authorises putting in suggested wordings into certificates. (On the website).</p> <p>Qualified person – check safety certificates has the appropriate qualified person in with appropriate wording.</p> <p>Covid – came out today, government released plan B scheme for certification for events/night clubs/festivals etc, 10k or more capacity. GG not sure if it relates to ground capacity or anticipated capacity. You need to demonstrate you have had vaccination/lateral flow. GG has asked for guidance on how could relate to sports grounds.</p> <p>Stewarding – looking at this. Survey out to local authorities for current situation. It's becoming an issue to attract people with qualifications. Also an issue with fuel and the impact of getting staff/suppliers/away fans getting to the site. May impact on the S factor. CB updated with regards stewarding, early check around to check staffing. We don't have car/park or a foot print, they travel by public transport. All agencies are all fine, don't envisage any problems.</p> <p>Supplementary guidance on SG03, re-written and issued. Available online to purchase. Total re-write and aligns with the green guide. Includes zone X.</p> <p>Safety certificate training for local authorities, how to issue them/regulate them. 2 more coming up 25/11 and 10/3.</p> <p>Conference planned for September 2022, Moleneux Stadium.</p>	
12	Stadium redevelopment works update	
	<p>DP gave an updated.</p> <p>Continued with base build. Looking at completion and commissioning programme. Selected the contractor for fit out work. Insides of stands not finished. Next period into next summer will be fit out for bars/restaurants/spa. Busy working on licencing. Close to a seat release, if we wanted to use, we could take the lower tier. (Possible derby etc).</p>	
13	Current Season	FFC/ MPS/ LA
	<p>TD advised that the home game against QPR all 4 west London clubs playing in West London on that day. Some concerns on the day (not with the stadium). Will need to watch and monitor on the day. Will share information when he has.</p> <p>There were two fixture clashes with Chelsea playing the same evening as Fulham. However, the Fulham v Derby fixture (23/11) is moving to Wednesday so no longer a clash.</p> <p>Fulham v Cardiff 20/10 (Chelsea playing Malmo in Champions League) the police can cover both matches but will monitor the intelligence.</p>	

	<p>GS mentioned we have written in the past to all football authorities regarding fixture clashes to advice against owing to the shared safety resources at the time between the clubs, impact emergency services, transport and the borough.</p> <p>TJ – can't object. We have to point out for London Undergrounds point of view, very difficult to handle. Neither stations are ideal for football matches, will be queues at Fulham Broadway. Will have to increase staff numbers.</p> <p>CB satisfied staffing will be handled fine, contacted all staff, and satisfied we will have the numbers required..</p> <p>TJ confirmed that no station is going to be closed, but Fulham Broadway could suffer short term closures.</p> <p>TD suggested doing some communications, Cardiff coming in on the Piccadilly line. Recommend other lines to fans</p> <p>DP mentioned they do for visiting fans within a day or two of the match and will highlight the potential issues to fan.</p>	
14	Covid 19 /Health protection Advice	NHS/LBHF
	<p>SN updated - current rate of infection in the borough is 202 over 1,000, has come down from 350 in previous weeks. Ranking fallen within London. Vaccine uptake is still low, caution there for residents. Initiative put in place to encourage vaccine uptakes. Lots of measure that have put in place.</p>	
15	Chairman's Update	Chair
	<p>Thank the Sports Ground & Safety Authority (GG) for all advice over the past year.</p> <p>Thank you to DP and team for implementing so well the Covid measures</p> <p>Plus the emergency services to help keeping football going.</p>	
16	AOB	
	<p>TD – boat race 3rd April, Fulham are away.</p> <p>GS no fireworks displays in the borough parks this year.</p> <p>ACTION - Match Postponement MOU to be circulated with updated contacts.</p>	GS
17	Date of next meeting	TBC
	January / February 2022	