

**FULHAM FOOTBALL CLUB
SPECIAL SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP (SSAG) MEETING
(COVID 19 : STAGE 5 - SAFE RETURN OF SPECTATORS)
MONDAY 7th DECEMBER 2020 – 11:30am**

VIRTUAL MEETING

Stephen Hollingworth (LBHF), Chair	SH
Graham Souster (LBHF)	GS
Matthew Ramsey (LBHF)	MR
Stephanie Needham (LBHF)	SN
Geraldine O' Grady (LBHF)	GoG
Janet Nairne (LBHF)	JN
Adrian Overton (LBHF)	AO
Valerie Simpson (LBHF)	VS
Matthew Hooper (LBHF)	MH
Katia Neale (LBHF)	KN
Darren Preston (FFC)	DP
Chris Baker (FFC)	CB
Steve White (FFC)	SWh
Tony Delamo (MPS)	TD
Geoff Galilee (SGSA)	GG
Matt Shute (LAS)	MS
Sophie Walmsley (NHS)	SW
Michael Gregg (Fulham Supporters Trust)	MG
Trevor Jenner (LUL/TfL)	TJ

1. Welcome from the Chairman

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and explained the protocol.
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2. Purpose of the meeting

- 2.1 SH, the Chair, outlined the purpose of the meeting, which followed the Government's Covid-19 winter plan announcement to allow a limited number of spectators to attend sport events. Today's meeting was to review the arrangements for spectators return to Craven Cottage. As London was Tier 2 it meant that the maximum number of spectators allowed was 2,000, excluding staff and media.
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3. Apologies and introductions

- 3.1 Apologies were received from:
- Michael Mulholland, Alan Brand (London Fire Brigade)
 - Dr. Nichola Lang (Director of Public Health)
 - Stefan Brytrzanowski (Building Control)

- Lee Currie (Network Management)
 - Robert Spry (Parks Police)
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4. Update from the Sports Ground Safety Authority

- 4.1 GG noted that the overall experience so far had been positive with the majority of people wearing masks most of the time during games. The Premier League protocol stated that all of their clubs should include on their own protocol the use of masks during games everywhere within the premises. The EFL had not requested that but most of their clubs were moving towards it, which was reassuring to the spectators. He would get further feedback following a group meeting on the following day.
- 4.2 GG referenced the changes in relation to Tier 2 areas noting that spectators would be allowed to watch sport in Tier 2, with a maximum crowd capacity outdoors of 2,000 people or 50% of the capacity of the stadium, whichever was smaller. The 2,000 capacity could go to 4,000 should the situation in London improve. The figures excluded all staff, players, media and up to 10 directors (clarified later on the meeting).
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5. Return of spectators to Craven Cottage / management arrangements

Risk assessment / Operations Plan

- 5.1 DP introduced a presentation on the Stadium Risk Assessment and Operation Policy and gave a brief synopsis on the arrangements for the safe return of a limited number of supporters. This would be required for certification purposes.
- 5.2 The stadium had been delineated into four zones: red (accessed by players and football staff only), amber (all internal areas and the pitch side interview positions), blue (the only area assessed by supporters and located at the two end stands) and green zones (the stadium exterior and its immediate vicinity). There had been minor changes to the red and amber zones, and they were waiting for the Premier League to authorise the changes. Wayfinding signage would be utilised to identify one-way systems, wherever possible. However, some of the additional signage would be difficult to implement for this coming weekend.
- 5.3 Out of the 2,000 spectators, 1,100 would be allocated in the Hammersmith Stand and 900 in the Putney Stand (inclusive of hospitality who would dine pre-match at Fulham Palace). Part of the Putney Stand would be dedicated for media use. Media and directors would be located in the Johnny Haynes Stand.
- 5.4 DP stated that all their plans were in accordance with the Government guidance. They had implemented a new code of conduct for their fans and

new ground regulations, the requirement to use of mask be supporters aged above 11 (mandatory in Premier League), new ticketing terms and conditions, new terms of entry, test and trace, health questionnaire and reminders, temperature checks and promoting digital ticketing.

Ticketing / communications

- 5.5 DP added that in relation to allocation of tickets, the communication team had run a ballot two days earlier for the 2,000 tickets and had experienced a high volume of interest. The ticket allocation was for season ticket holders only in order to prevent supporters travelling from Tier 3. A rudimentary post code check had been done to remove people from Tier 3 areas from applying on the ballot. The tickets would have the spectator's photo on them and would also be electronic and usable on smart phones.

Entry control

- 5.6 Supporters arrival would be staggered. The first half of both stands would be encouraged to arrive 1:15 minutes before kick-off and the second half 45 minutes before kick-off, to avoid congestion on the streets. Briefings were being written to implement the arrival procedure including the capacity calculations, queuing system and use of the facilities. The concourse areas were the limiting factor and for this game they would allow 900 fans into the station from the Putney end and 1,100 from the Hammersmith end.
- 5.7 Entry lanes would be provided for media and spectators (including hospitality) using the Putney exit gates. There would be temperature checks and supporters would be required to complete in advance a medical declaration.

Stadium arrangements: Social distancing / circulation / seating bowl

- 5.8 A seating pattern had been implemented. They had taken out restricted views, they had clearly identified the seats in use, rather than removing or covering those not in use, and they would sit people living in the same address/household bubble together. They had taken rows out and left three seats between bubbles to give a 1m halo around each of the seating positions. They had identified the best available seats to put up for sale.

Stadium facilities: hospitality, toilets, catering/retail concessions, etc

- 5.9 General admissions would be able to bring in food and drink (excluding alcohol) as the club would not be opening any of the bars or food concessions owing to restrictions with the concourses for both Hammersmith and Putney Stands. A free plastic bottle of water would be given to all spectators following the first two games.

Security Plan

- 5.10 CB reported that the media would be accessing the stadium via Gate 50 at the Hammersmith end. During peak times they would be requested to walk along the Hammersmith concourse to get to the Johnny Haynes Stand to minimise cross-over.
- 5.11 CB reported that the numbers of stewards had been enhanced considerably and would be placed along all the approaches to the stadium and as far as

Bishop's Park. They would be getting the message to fans that the medical declaration should be completed and remind them that they should wear a mask before entering the stadium and keep the social distancing. All the TMO staff would also be briefed the same way to ensure a unified message was given to all fans. Road closures would be in place and Red Teams (security) would be deployed outside. The Red Zone would go live 3.5 hours before kick-off and TMO would be in place about 1 hour earlier. Residents would receive communication about the return of spectators and the road closures this week.

Zone-ex (spectators' journey)

- 5.12 With regards to the barrier system for both entrances at the Hammersmith and Putney end, Customer Care Stewards would be checking whether medical declarations had been completed and Ticketing Stewards would be checking with their tablets the digital tickets on people's phones. Closer to the entrance, stewards would be taking temperatures before fans could enter the queueing process. At the queues Search Stewards would be carrying out checks on bags and random checks on people. Fans without a bag would be placed on the fast track queue. Inside the stadium, stewards would be giving direction to the spectators. There would be 200 staff working on the day to look after 2,000 fans. Stewards would be fully briefed with emphasis on customer services.
- 5.13 GS asked CB to consider how to avoid congestion at the entry point on the barrier queueing system for both approaches in the event of an incident, such as issues over digital tickets, high temperature readings or no medical declaration completed.

ACTION: CB and GS to discuss

Medical Plan

- 5.14 GS reported that the Premier League protocol stated that there was a need for a Crowd Doctor. They have agreed that only one Crowd Doctor would suffice for both blue and amber zones. There would be Medical Co-ordinators present and a paramedic in a medical room.
- 5.15 The Medical Plan had been revised to include COVID19 and new guidelines. MS stated that this plan should include how the Crowd Doctor would manage the early stages of incidents until taken over by LAS.

ACTION: FFC

Egress management

- 5.16 Egress was originally considered to be phased but taking from experiences from other games they were still considering whether it would be beneficial. The TV screens on the concourses would be displaying safety messages and announcements would be coordinated.

Any other matters

- 5.17 DP reported that an additional cleaning team would be responsible solely for sanitization, replacing alcohol gels and disinfecting surfaces to reassure the spectators.
- 5.18 On the Putney tunnel used for media, the first wheel chair deck would be the break point between the amber and the blue zones; therefore the ladies toilets in this area would be available.
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6. COVID-19 / Health protection advice

- 6.1 SN and SW noted that there was nothing to report.
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7. Emergency services

- 7.1 TD reported that they would continue to monitor the area as before, with himself and two other officers on duty. He informed that the Hammersmith Police Station had now re-opened. On the afternoon of the game they would be sending officers on horses to patrol Stevenage Road. They had received no intelligence to date about Liverpool fans potentially travelling to watch the game but expected some fans to arrive on the day to try to get tickets.
- 7.2 CB stated that the weak point would be the exit gate at the Putney end that would need to be open to allow people in. The Red Teams would be in place along the barriers to ensure no one would try to get in without a ticket. The end of the barrier system linked to the coach compound and would be protected by three security guards.
- 7.3 AO updated on the licensing issues after carrying out a number of visits to the pubs in the area and noted that they had substantial food to offer. Therefore, officers were confident that if fans visited those pubs before the game they would not turn up drunk at the grounds.
- 7.4 CB and GS agreed to carry on with the parking arrangements allowing residents to park in the bays in Stevenage Road opposite to Bishop's Park as the number of fans was not high enough to cause an impact.
- 7.5 LFB and LAS had nothing to report at this stage.
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8. Transport undertakers

LUL/TfL

- 8.1 TJ reported that they would be closing Putney Bridge Station owing to distance from the stadium and crowd numbers. They were considering closing the station a few minutes before final whistle and up to 30 minutes after the

end on the match. This closure would be subject to review after every single game. The public would need to be made aware of it.

- 8.2 CB would need to get communication out to fans to ensure they were aware of the closure.

ACTION: CB

9. Feedback from other members

ALL

- 9.1 DP stated that they would be selling hospitality customers tables to households only with a validation process in advance, making it harder for tickets to be transferred from a Fulham fan to a Liverpool fan. Hospitality customers would sit on the same location as in the past (P1 and P2). Some Premier League and club partners would also get tickets.

- 9.2 MS, AO and JN had no concerns to report.

- 9.3 CB reported that highways needed to update the date of the game on the lamppost posters as they still showed the wrong date.

ACTION: FFC/ LBHF Parkin

10. Local Authority / regulation

- 10.1 GS stated that he was looking forward to receiving the Stadium Risk Assessment and Operation Policy. He would be carrying out a pre-match inspection of the stadium and COVID19 secure arrangements. The General Safety Certificate from Craven Cottage would need to be updated as current version was restricted to Behind Closed Doors. This would need to be issued before the match.

- 10.2 DP noted that they had not envisaged directors being part of the 2,000-capacity given they were part of Stage 3 accredited personnel. It was clarified that up to 10 directors per club would be part of Stage 3 (placed in the Johnny Haynes Stand) and anything above this number would be taken out of the 2,000-capacity. It would be down to the club to manage these numbers.
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11. AOB

- 11.1 DP stated that on the Boxing Day game he would like some parking bay suspensions for the outside broadcast.

ACTION: FFC / LBHF Parking

- 11.2 MS stated that the medical room would need to be reconsidered before spectators numbers increased. DP replied that these would be discussed after Christmas.
- 11.3 TD reported that the previous Sunday's Farmers Market in Bishop's Park had been very busy. They would need to get the parks police patrolling Bishop's Park on the match day to control the area, even if the market closed before the game.

ACTION: LBHF
