

SAFETY OF SPORTS GROUNDS ACT 1975

FULHAM FOOTBALL CLUB

SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP (SAG) MEETING

12th February 2019 at 10am

Fulham Football Club, Craven Cottage

PRESENT

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBHF)

Ann Ramage (Chairman)	- Interim Assistant Director for Regulatory Services	(AR)
Graham Souster	- Commercial Services Lead Officer for FFC	(GS)
Kieran McKenna	- Commercial Services	(KM)
Helen Tilbury	- Parks Police	(HT)
Tony Pegrum	- Highways	(TP)
Keith Stevenson	- Information & Special Events	(KS)
Matthew Ramsey	- Building Control	(MR)
David Abbott	- Clerk	(DA)

Fulham Football Club (FFC)

Darren Preston	- Chief Operating Officer	(DP)
Eddie Simpson	- Safety Officer	(ES)
Steve White	- Deputy Safety Officer	(SW)

Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)

Chief Inspector James Brockway	(JB)
DFO Tony Delamo	(TD)

London Fire Brigade

Paul Humphreys	(PH)
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London Ambulance Service

Matt Shute	(MS)
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Item No.	ITEM	ACTION
1.	<p><u>Welcome from the Chairman</u></p> <p>Ann Ramage welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted it would likely be the last SAG meeting in the current Riverside Stand.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Apologies</u></p> <p>Apologies were received from Stefan Bystrzanowski (LBHF Building Control), Mark Ashley (BTP), Lisa White (Licensing LBHF) Janet Nairne (Highways), David Pullan (LBHF), Christopher Ellison (LBHF), Nicholas Henry (Parks Police), and Steve Wasp (NHS) Geoff Galilee (Sports Ground Safety Authority).</p>	
3.	<p><u>Confirmation of previous minutes</u></p> <p>Actions arising</p> <p>5. Medical incidents – accident and injury statistics FFC confirmed that the revised pro-forma had now been completed.</p> <p>8. Parks Police – flares in Bishops Park Regarding safe handling and disposal Helen Tilbury to follow up. Regarding being in radio contact – it was noted all communication was done via mobile phone and that worked well.</p> <p>9. London Fire Brigade It was noted that the last inspection visit with the LFB had been cancelled. GS to speak to Michelle McHugh about possibly rolling it into the upcoming annual inspection.</p> <p>Eddie Simpson noted that he had been contacted by Hammersmith Fire Station despite the Club already having close links with the Fulham Station. Both the Club and the Police preferred the local station attending on a match day as part of an access test.</p> <p>GS advised that a debrief meeting had been held with the Club and MPS / LA following the Derby play-off semi-final post-match pitch incursion.</p> <p>All other actions were confirmed.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p>	<p>GS</p>

	The minutes of the meeting on 19 July 2018 were agreed as a correct record.	
4.	<p><u>Stadium Redevelopment Update</u></p> <p>DP reported that the redevelopment works for the Riverside Stand were scheduled to commence this summer. The preferred contractor is the Buckingham Group who were currently building Brentford's new stadium, had built the Amex Stadium, Brighton and had been involved with Tottenham's new stadium. They have a good record of delivery.</p> <p>The formal tender was going out at the end of April with a target price to meet. The Club would be discharging pre-commencement planning etc conditions to start work with deconstructing the existing stand commencing in May. It would be a two season build for an August 2021 opening.</p> <p>The Chairman would like to meet with DP and the Club to look at the timetable and anticipate any necessary support from partners.</p> <p>TD advised that the MPS would need to move equipment from the Control Room to the temporary location.</p> <p>ES noted that capacity would be circa 19,000 for next season.</p> <p>The Chairman said there was lots to think about and that she expected a number of meetings between now and the next SAG on the logistics and impacts of the redevelopment. The Chairman asked the Club to put together some key points for the group to consider.</p>	<p>AR / DP</p> <p>FFC</p>
5.	<p><u>FFC Safety management mid-season review</u></p> <p>ES reported the following statistics from 4 August 2018 to 1 Jan 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 13 Fixtures, 1 Pre-Season Friendly, 1 Carabao Cup tie, 1 Friendly International (Ladies) and 10 League games. - 5 Cat A, 4 Cat B & 4 Cat CS. - 7 Arrests – 4 Away supporters & 3 Home. - 93 Ejections - 76 Away, 17 Home. <p>ES highlighted the significant decrease in arrests from 2017-18 to 2018-19 (53 to 7). Ejections had also reduced by 21 compared with the previous year.</p> <p>Match day issues</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new accreditation system to improve security was working well • The drug bin trial had gone very well <p>Match specific issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WWII Ordinance issue was well managed inside and outside the stadium. • A flare was let off at the Exeter fixture – the culprit was banned, and the police are dealing with them. <p>Medical casualty comparisons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ES noted a reduction of 19 on last season. <p>The Chairman asked if there had been any management and operational changes. ES said they had hired a new safety officer, Steve Copp (Luton Town Safety Officer) to provide oversight of staff that who would report to him – providing additional resilience. Peter Lacey the radio controller will have finished his NVQ 4 Safety Officer training by the July 2019 SAG.</p> <p>The Chairman asked if there had been any feedback from the supporters' groups. DP said the Club met with the supporters' trust monthly. Following feedback, the Club was looking to enhance the clarity of the pitch announcer. Other issues raised included pricing and long queuing times in the street at the Exeter game and that there was not enough food concession units open. The Club would take the learning from this for future cup ties.</p> <p>DP noted that the Club had also formed a group of supporters with accessibility needs that could be consulted on changes to the stadium. They had met twice so far. The Chairman commended this and noted she had been involved with similar projects at other clubs. It was best practice to use disabled fans to test these facilities, get feedback, and improve. She was keen to be involved.</p> <p>TD advised that the Independent Advisory Group which engages with supporter trust for London teams had been set up.</p> <p>GS noted that the agenda for the meetings is routinely sent to the supporters' trust, so they can feed-into the SAG. The Chairman noted that she would like the disabled supporters' group to be involved with the SAG in the same way. She wanted the SAG to be as inclusive as possible.</p>	
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	<p>The Chairman asked if there were any issues with racist and / or homophobic chants. ES said there was odd individual reports of abuse directed at players or staff members. There were two arrests after Christmas. Overall though there were few incidents of note.</p> <p>The Chairman asked if the Club was happy with the processes they had in place for dealing with these issues. And the admissibility of evidence. ES said quality of evidence was a major issue – the ability of stewards to produce detailed written records etc. was challenging. Staff could get more training in this area but given the turnover it was difficult to embed. All staff know the processes and all briefings cover the issues.</p> <p>TP said the ‘Kick It Out’ campaign has resulted in the figure nationally increasing. They did receive anonymous reports which had to be added to the figures but, given they were anonymous, there was no way to them follow up.</p> <p>The Chairman asked if there were any upcoming fixtures that required additional tactical meetings. ES advised that they had just had one with Manchester United last weekend. Chelsea would be sending extra stewards which was welcome. Liverpool was the biggest in terms of historical events, but he was happy that the operation was sufficient. This season the Club was getting more away attendees than normal but with intelligence it’s been managed well.</p> <p>TD said the last two fixtures of the season, Cardiff and Newcastle, would need monitoring as the season progresses. He added that for the Newcastle game, Newcastle would bring 2,700 with many of the fans arriving by boats from central London. The Club and the MPS were monitoring this situation.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p><u>Metropolitan Police – mid season review</u></p> <p>JB reported that the first half of season was relatively quiet / slow with no disorder. The majority of matches were Cat A, with only 3 Cat B this season.</p> <p>Operational arrangements Policing remained consistent this season with a local officer forming the command team. FFC have not required police resources inside the stadium as part of the SPS. JB advised he was likely to move on at the end of the season.</p> <p>Crowd behaviour In terms of crowd behaviour there were no notable fixtures. The Man Utd fixture was busy but there were few issues.</p>	

	<p>Public order and arrest stats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arrests were lower than last season (86% down) compared with the same point in the season. - Racially aggravated offences numbered 0 which is a decrease on the 1 from last season. - Fulham have had 1 arrest at away games compared to 0 last season. - Football Act offences - 1 flare, down from 3 last season. - One court ban was issued. <p>The Chairman asked if there were any away issues of note. TD apart from supporters being unhappy with events on the pitch and the occasional minor issues with behaviour there was little to report on.</p> <p>The Chairman asked if the drugs disposal bin was working well. JB said it meant officers were not tied up processing arrests. There were on average around two positive finds per game and they were bagged up and disposed of. ES said there were 12 finds of possession of drugs in first half of season – both class A, and class B.</p> <p>The Chairman asked on ticketing if there were any lessons learned on the mixed / away area. ES said the Club had been trying to restrict sales by postcode address, but it was difficult as not all fans live in the area of the team they support an ancillary effect was an increase in ticket touting. At the Man United fixture ticket office queue wasn't cleared until after half time – because so many people were using illegitimate online resale platforms / fake tickets. The current situation promoted by clubs for the resale of tickets does magnify the problems and makes management on matchdays difficult.</p> <p>The Chairman asked the MPS attendees to send any BTP issues to GS and he will add to the minutes.</p>	<p>MPS / GS</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><u>Medical Provision update</u></p> <p>MS, London Ambulance Service, reported that there were no issues from the service.</p> <p>There was one incident of note – a cardiac arrest in the stadium. He said the way staff responded was a real credit to ES and his team. Staff performed mouth to mouth and ultimately saved the person's life. ES noted the member of staff who was key had been celebrated and won a staff award.</p>	

	<p>MS discussed the implication of the new Green Guide / stadium redevelopment and did not believe there was a need for a Medical Advisory Group but would possibly need an ad-hoc meeting on this.</p> <p>MS also noted that Clare Foweraker (LAS) was changing roles and would be stepping down from the SAG. The Chairman noted the group's thanks for her work on the SAG. Paul Smith, the new group manager for Fulham, was a possible replacement.</p>	<p>FFC / LAS</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><u>London Fire Brigade Update</u></p> <p>PH advised that the LFB had no issues externally this season.</p> <p>PH reported that an exercise was being planned for 28 March – it would be a small-scale incident in one of the stands that required brigade attendance.</p> <p>GS advised that a LFB visit on a match day would be required to assess access / egress capability of fire pumps particularly via the fire route where the OBTV set up is and licensed street trader. GS to arrange with PH (LFB).</p>	<p>GS/LFB</p>
<p>9.</p> <p>(a)</p>	<p><u>Local Authority Review – mid season review</u></p> <p>Lead officer update GS reported that 7 inspections had been undertaken so far this season. The key points had already been discussed.</p> <p>Match day inspections: GS highlighted the following inspections so far this season carried out by the Local Authority.</p> <p>Crystal Palace (11th Aug) inspection carried out by Geraldine O'Grady.</p> <p>Watford (22nd Sep) drug bin in use and monitored use. Crowd egress was monitored owing to the new TV studio structure.</p> <p>Arsenal (7th Oct) – there were competing events taking place with a street run and farmers market etc in Bishops Park.</p> <p>Southampton (24th Nov) - looking at new accessible seating platform in the Putney stand. It was under occupied – there was some learning to put extra gates in for steward access to the platform. In Bishops Park the gate by the church was broken by a vehicle hitting it. It was managed by Parks Police.</p>	

	<p>West Ham (15th Dec) - stewards were under pressure with significant away crowd, poor weather but it went well. There were minor CCTV problems, but they were resolved.</p> <p>Wolves (26th Dec) – large number of coaches, tested LBHF parking control with the removal of a parked car blocking the fire path by the OBTV.</p> <p>Spurs (20th Jan) – there were around 6,000 in the stand – it was well managed. There were issues with touts and scarf sellers. GS had spoken to trading standards and he wanted them to come down by the end of the season.</p> <p>For the rest of season there were inspections planned for the bigger games. GS felt that there may be a pitch-incursion at end of season if the Club avoided relegation which would require enhanced preventative measures from the learnings from Derby play-off semi-final.</p> <p>GS advised that the Local Authority has not received any matchday safety complaints this season.</p> <p>The revised General Safety Certificate was being drafted and is due to be issued during the season taking into account the SGSA Wider definition of safety and capacity changes at the stadium owing to the accessibility works carried out.</p> <p>Building Control</p> <p>(b) The Chairman asked for an update from Building Control. MR reported that he had attended a briefing on the new development and said the Council will be acting as Building Control for it. He had received plans from the Club and had no initial concerns.</p> <p>The Chairman asked how selling the disabled seating had gone. DP said they were beginning a marketing plan to target those users. The Club was building more facilities – it was an ongoing process. They were looking at access end-to-end. It was all on website and they were working on getting it on the app too. Accessibility was a club-wide project and was being taken very seriously.</p> <p>The Chairman and GS noted there was a lot of learning in this area available – contact details for ‘Level Playing Field’ (www.levelplayingfield.org.uk) were passed on.</p> <p>Highways</p>	<p>GS</p>
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<p>(c)</p>	<p>TP reported there were minor works outside the ground scheduled for around 3-4 weeks. All were programmed outside of game time. There would be two-way control in Fulham Palace Road by the Hammersmith Gyrotory owing to urgent works required to be undertaken by Thames Water.</p> <p>TP confirmed the new match day flip down signs were now in place. The Chairman asked on the TMO – if there had been any major issues since the signs had gone up. ES said he had a dedicated pair of stewards to put them up and take them down. There hadn't been any significant issues.</p> <p>GS noted the suggestion of letting the crowds disperse first before the stewards with ladders attend to the sign closure following his observation during the last match.</p> <p>TP noted that there had been a comment at the last SAG about the location of a Blue City EV charging points in Stevenage Road and wanted to get the Club's view. ES said there had been some early match day issues, but they'd been managed. The risk was if a larger private vehicle is in parked in the space it couldn't be moved and no other vehicle could get past. GS view was that the EV point should go. The Chairman asked partners to work on a business case for relocation. The Chairman asked TP to get the business case for the charging point and see if there had been a proper consultation.</p> <p>Parking update</p>	<p>TP</p>
<p>(d)</p>	<p>KS noted there had been an issue when a tow truck didn't attend or respond to calls on one match, but it had been resolved. New processes were in place to avoid this in future.</p> <p>KS confirmed the VMS signage was now back in working order.</p> <p>ES noted that with the new RingGo system it was very difficult for the Club to tell if someone is parking legitimately or not. Further changes planned for resident virtual parking permits would also make it difficult for traffic teams to differentiate when access to the streets was requested. The Chairman advised that we needed to re-think how this was managed. KS to follow up with ES.</p> <p>The Chairman noted the number of parking meters and signage was insufficient and confusing. KS advised the Local Authority does take payment by phone.</p>	<p>KS</p>

<p>(e)</p>	<p>Parks police</p> <p>HT said there were a few minor first-aid incidents, but all were quickly resolved. Her main concern was the scarf sellers near the Putney Bridge Station bookshop.</p> <p>There was a need for closer links with Parks and events – there was an issue with a Sunday game and a last-minute charity walk where they weren't aware. The Chair noted a new Head of Culture / Events was being recruited and should help with this.</p> <p>The Chairman asked if there were enough Parks officers to continue their role on match day following the Council's restructuring. HS said there would still be two officers plus a Sargent. She would provide a more detailed update at the next meeting. The Chairman said the split was likely to happen towards the end of year so there should be no disruption this season.</p> <p>Licensing</p> <p>GS advised that the Club had consulted the Council on The Premier League trial on the use of re-usable plastic cups towards the end of the season. Fulham will only trial this in the home areas. The Chairman to provide details for the Council's recycling officers for ideas on recycling / plastic replacements.</p> <p>Street scene</p> <p>Issues covered in previous sections.</p>	<p>AR</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p><u>Remainder of the Season</u></p> <p>The remaining matches coming to Craven Cottage included: Chelsea, Liverpool, Everton, Manchester City, Cardiff, and final match of the season is against Newcastle (12th May).</p> <p>If FFC avoid relegation, arrangements for pitch protection may be required for the last game of the season.</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p><u>Update from the Sports Ground Safety Authority</u></p> <p>The Chairman noted that the safe-standing review was due for an update in January, but this had been delayed and no further date had been confirmed. ES noted that if clubs had a legitimate business case then they could put alternate seating in - provided it was genuinely alternate seating and not there to encourage standing.</p>	

	<p>The SGSA had updated their website with a new certificate template - changes included capacity for 'all people' (a wider definition that included all staff).</p> <p>The Chairman said the Council wanted to issue the Club with a new certificate for the new season. She anticipated working through all the additions by the end of the season. ES said that would be very challenging given the work required related to the new stand. The Chairman said a practical plan was required.</p>	ES / GS
12.	<p><u>Chairman's update</u></p> <p>No further updates.</p>	
13.	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <p>None.</p>	
14.	<p><u>Date and venue of next meeting July 2019</u></p> <p>The next meeting is planned for July 2019 – final date TBC. Seagrave Road Ambulance Station was suggested as a potential venue with the redevelopment works planned at FFC and Council offices.</p>	GS