

SAFETY OF SPORTS GROUNDS ACT 1975

FULHAM FOOTBALL CLUB

SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP (SAG) MEETING WEDNESDAY 27th JANUARY 2016 – 10:30AM

MINUTES OF MEETING

PRESENT:

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBHF)

Michael Allen	- Network Coordination Team Manager	(MA)
Daniel Anon	- Building Control Officer	(DA)
Stephan Brystanowki	- Building Control Officer	(SB)
Roy Instrall	- Street Scene Contracts and Enforcement Manager	(RI)
Maria de Jesus	- Parking Information and Events	(MdJ)
Stephanie Needham	- Commercial Services Manager	(SN)
David Nimmo	- Building Control Officer	(DN)
Tony Pegrum	- Network Coordination Team Manager	(TP)
Ann Ramage (Chairman)	- Head of Environmental Health (Commercial)	(AR)
Mike Rumble	- Parks Police	(MR)
Graham Souster	- Commercial Services Lead Officer for Fulham FC	(GS)
Keith Stevenson	- Parking Information and Events	(KS)
Ainsley Gilbert (Minutes)	- Committee Coordinator	(AG)

Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)

Acting Chief Inspector James Brockway	(JB)
PC Andy Wigley	(AW)

British Transport Police (BTP)

PC Sam White	(SaW)
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Sports Ground Safety Authority (SGSA)

Lou Elliston	- Regional Senior Inspector	(LE)
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Fulham Football Club (FFC)

Darren Preston	- Chief Operating Officer	(DP)
Eddie Simpson	- Safety Officer	(ES)
Steve White	- Health and Safety Manager	(StW)

London Ambulance Service (LAS)

Claire Foweraker	(CF)
Will Kearns	(WK)

Item No.	ITEM	ACTION
1.	<p>Welcome from the Chairman</p> <p>AR welcomed everyone to the SAG and thanked FFC for hosting the meeting.</p>	
2.	<p>Apologies / introductions</p> <p>Apologies had been received from: Karen Ashdown and Kieran McKenna (LBHF Commercial Services represented by Stephanie Needham and Graham Souster), Rachel Eggar (NHS), Inspector Kevin Jacobs, Sgt Carolyne Buttery, PC Nikki Blandford (BTP – represented by PC Sam White), Marya Lee (LBHF Parking – represented by Maria de Jesus and Keith Stevenson) Lisa White (LBHF Licensing).</p>	
3.	<p>Confirmation of previous minutes and matters arising – 7th July 2015</p> <p>AR confirmed all actions from the previous minutes had either been completed or were due for discussion in later items on the agenda.</p> <p>She noted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MPS use of Social Media to engage and inform fans had been very successful. - Road studs for OBTV lorries had now been installed, which was very good news. - The relevance of the Statement of Intent had been discussed with senior MPS officers, but was still thought to be relevant. FFC could raise the issue again as part of the Green Guide update if it so wished. <p>The minutes of the last meeting were approved as an accurate record and were signed off by the Chairman for upload to the LBHF website.</p>	
4.	<p>Fulham FC Safety Management Review 2014/15 Season</p> <p>ES provided an update on the Season so far.</p> <p><u>Safety Management Arrangements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ES was now the Club Safety Officer. He was supported by SW. The Club had 2 NVQ Level 4 (Spectator Safety) Officers and 1 carrying out Level 4 Training. <p><u>Challenging Fixtures/ Issues</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging fixtures had been Brighton, Leeds, Brentford, QPR and Birmingham. These had been managed, with police support as necessary. There had also been a significant increase in the number 	

of away fans attending Craven Cottage. AR asked how the Club was managing this. ES said that having larger numbers of away fans was not too difficult for the stadium operation, and noted that it was commercially a good decision to sell more seats to away fans, as the number of home and especially neutral fans attending games was lower. GS noted that larger away allocations also prevented issues with away fans trying to get tickets in home areas. ES said that the Club's long term ambition remained to share the Putney End between away fans, neutrals and home fans. JB said that large numbers of away fans could cause problems for the police in areas outside of the stadium but that early information from the Club allowed police to plan for these issues. ES noted that opposition clubs were occasionally very slow in requesting additional tickets, which meant that the police did not always get the necessary information about the number of away supporters until closer to the game than they and FFC might like.

Crowd Behaviour

- Stewards had been sent to away games to monitor FFC supporter's behaviour and provide customer care. There were only minor incidents at the grounds, but FFC were aware of issues on the transport network, especially trains.

Searching and Security Arrangements

- The level of security had increased since the Paris Attacks, with search wands being introduced. Pyro and drugs dogs were still used for all fixtures. Staff briefings now included more anti-terrorist information, and the Operations Manual had been updated to include counter terrorism guidance.

Stewarding Changes

- The proportion of stewards employed by FFC had dropped, and so more agencies had been required. This has not been an issue as sufficient stewards have always been provided. Most stewards with senior roles were employed directly by FFC.

Dealing with flares, smoke bombs and pyrotechnics at matches

- At 3 matches pyrotechnics had been set off by away supporters. These were QPR, Brentford and Birmingham. 3 arrests had been made, whilst 2 other fans involved were yet to be identified.

Persistent Standing

- A pre-meeting was arranged by the MPS whereby they and the Club met Brentford supporters in advance of the match on the 12th December. Supporters who were intent on standing purchased tickets to the back of the stand, allowing 60% of fans to watch the

	<p>game seated with very few issues. ES felt that it was not always possible to get fans to sit down, and so a pragmatic approach of stewards keeping vomitories and aisles clear was routinely taken if attempts to get fans to sit were ignored. PA system warnings were generally ignored. There had also been issues with fans climbing onto structures during the QPR fixture. ACTION – ES to ensure that the operations manual reflected current practices with regard to persistent standing.</p> <p><u>Arrests, Ejections and Refusals</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There had been 47 arrests during the first half of the Season. All but two of these had been away supporters. The number of more serious issues was very low, with the majority of arrests being related to drug detections on entry to the ground. • There had been 117 ejections in the Season so far, 93 of which had been away supporters. This was slightly lower than the previous year. 29 of the ejections had been for drunkenness and a large majority of them were related to alcohol in some way. • There had been a reduction in the number of refused admissions this Season so far. <p><u>Club Banning Orders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small number of fans were subject to Club bans, with a further group of fans required to sign acceptable behaviour agreements. Warnings were also issued where appropriate. <p><u>Smoking</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craven Cottage remained a no-smoking stadium, however, it was not always practical to enforce this due to the volume of offenders. Where this was the case, the focus shifted to preventing smoking in stands which was always treated seriously and ejections have been made. <p><u>Putney End Queue Management Trial</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The trial using TENSA barriers had so far been successful and had improved the queuing system to concessions in the Putney Stand concourse. It had not been used for large crowds yet, but it was intended to trial the system against Derby County where more away fans were expected. The system would only be used where it was felt that it would be safe to do so. <p><u>TV Broadcasting/Fixture Changes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Games against Blackburn and QPR had been televised this Season. No further games had yet been selected for TV broadcast. 	<p>ES</p>
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	<p><u>Traffic Management/Coach Park</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lack of proactive parking enforcement at the coach park bays in Fulham Palace Road had proven problematic, as cars had parked and thereby had taken up coach parking space. ACTION – KS to report back to AR/TP on enforcement options for the coach park. <p><u>Customer Feedback</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There had been minor complaints relating to action taken by stewards, generally relating to ejections. There had been complaints that the Club had not done enough to prevent persistent standing at 2 games, and that stewards had not done enough to prevent drinking in a stand. There had been one racial abuse allegation made via ‘Kick it Out’ which had led to a supporter being given a behavioural warning. There had also been a complaint about Wolves fans presence as hospitality guests in the Riverside Stand. The policy was being reviewed. <p><u>Supporter Group Liaison/Feedback</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AR explained that she had received a letter from football supporters of the 3 Borough’s clubs asking for fans to be represented at SAGs. She had met with representatives of CFC and FFC and held a very positive meeting. Having had discussions with other clubs with supporters on their SAGs she did not feel that it would be appropriate for fans to be directly represented, however, she felt that the terms of reference should make it clearer that these groups could engage directly with SAG members if they had concerns. It should also be acknowledged that supporter views were very important. Practically, this would mean that the Lead Officer from LBHF Commercial Services would offer to liaise/meet with the supporters trust representative(s) in advance of the SAG meeting. The supporters trust will be sent in advance of the SAG meeting the Agenda and would be invited to feed any comments they wanted raised at the meeting. AR stressed that it would be important for any safety related issues to be raised straight away through the usual Club led engagement. All present agreed that this was a sensible approach. DP confirmed the Club regularly meets with the supporters and welcomed the approach of the SAG. The amended terms of reference which had been circulated prior to the meeting were agreed. ACTION – GS is to circulate updated terms of reference unless an objection to these was received before 10th February 2016. The revised Terms of Reference are to be published on the Council’s website. <p><u>Resident Feedback</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DP explained that a resident’s forum had been held, and he had 	<p>KS/AR/TP</p> <p>GS</p>
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	<p>attended the Friends of Bishop’s Park AGM. Concerns were: Litter on the Thames Path towards Hammersmith and rubbish such as bottles being dumped beyond the traffic management order area. The Club already undertakes cleansing on match days, and fans urinating in public. ACTION – RI will take this back to LBHF Waste Management to speak to Darren Preston about the waste issues. DP advised that that the Club had offered the Council to pay for temporary toilets in Bishops Park but the Friends of Bishop’s Park did not want them.</p> <p><u>Clashes with Chelsea FC games</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DP explained that the fixture with Wolves had been moved to a Tuesday night to avoid all three H+F clubs playing on the same day. However, Chelsea had then been allowed to move their Champion’s League game to the same evening which had reduced FFC’s revenue significantly. AR explained that she would be writing a letter to the Football League, the Premier League, the FA and UEFA expressing her concerns about fixture scheduling and the challenges this poses to the clubs, police, transport network and the Borough. She would also highlight that Fulham FC had lost out on revenue as a result of having to move their fixture owing to scheduling. She suggested that FFC might wish to send a letter stating its view as well as including it in the annual fixture questionnaire. 	RI
5.	<p>Metropolitan Police Service</p> <p><u>Operational Arrangements and Staffing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JB explained that Chief Superintendent Mike Hill, and Chief Inspector Tim Ruprecht had left the Borough. Chief Inspector Simon Causer was due to leave the Borough but would carry on as Match Commander responsibilities at QPR for the remainder of the Season. AR thanked those officers for their valuable contribution on behalf of the SAG. JB would remain the senior point of contact for FFC. JB gave an update on the MPS’ operational match day arrangements, explaining that the blueprints for category A + B matches had reduced numbers of officers. The match commander could however request more officers from the Centre if required but would need to give the rationale. There was no change for the higher risk category C game. JB stated that the greater the number of away supporters attending fixtures at Craven Cottage inevitably increases the risk of crime and disorder and is a challenge to manage. The MPS need to know the numbers as early as possible so they can plan resources accordingly. JB explained that 6 of the 7 match commanders who had so far taken charge of FFC home matches had now either left the Borough or retired, but 3 officers who had done so in previous seasons were being brought in, as well as one officer who would shadow another 	

officer before taking the command role at a match. He noted that the problem was exacerbated by FFC and QPR playing on the same day. AR said that she had raised the lack of consistency with senior police officers with the Head of the Football Unit. ES agreed to help any new match commanders familiarise themselves with the ground and local area. LE advised that it was the MPS policy for Match Commanders to attend the pre-planning partnership meeting. JB confirmed this was best practice but not always achievable and in such cases he would represent the Match Commander at the partnership meeting.

Public Order

- JB said that there had been no serious public disorder so far this Season. Brentford and QPR had been the most challenging matches, with some sporadic fighting at the QPR fixture. The Brentford match had been well managed and any potential for disorder contained. There had been 27 arrests made during the Brentford fixture, with the majority outside of the stadium.

Arrests

- There had been 68 arrests compared to 90 at this point of the 2014-15 Season. 23 of these had related to drugs compared to 33 in the previous year. There were no spikes in particular offences, and the number of arrests over the Season was expected to be down on last Season. AW noted that arrest figures at FFC were high compared to other clubs, but this was owing to the drug detection with the use of the dogs. ES noted that police had only been required inside the stadium on two occasions; he felt that this was because a strong policy of dealing with issues at entry to the stadium, meaning that there were more arrests for minor crimes. JB agreed that the entry system for the Putney End was very strong and led to higher numbers of arrests, and prevented problems inside the stadium. AR asked about bench marking against the other Borough clubs. AW advised that arrests made this Season compared to last for QPR was up, for CFC on par and for FFC down. JB advised that the MPS were reviewing its policy on how they deal with the disposal of cannabis offences.

Security Update following Paris Attacks

- JB explained that little had changed in response to the Paris attack, as the threat level had already remained at Severe. The attacks had brought more focus to existing security measures.

Racist and Homophobic Behaviour

- JB said that there had been 5 hate crimes so far this Season, compared to 7 for the whole of the previous Season. The majority were perpetrated against stewards. 4 suspects had been charged,

whilst 1 remained on bail. There had been no large scale chanting inside the stadium.

Policing during Ingress and Egress

- JB explained that there had been some learning to be had following Brentford's visit as it had not worked well owing to issues with Bishop's Park. MR advised that this may have been alleviated with better communication prior to the match. GS said that in future Parks Police would be invited to attend planning / tactical meetings to discuss category C games.

Banning Orders and MPS/CPS Prosecution of Football Offences

- AW explained that 5 Fulham supporters were serving football banning orders. 4 more fans were awaiting trials which might lead to a banning order, whilst a further 4 supporters were being looked at for potential bans under section 14 B of the Football Act.

FFC Supporter Behaviour at Away Games

- AW explained that 99% of Fulham fans were well behaved, however there had been an increase in trouble with fans at away games. There had been incidents on trains, including racial chanting and fans fighting amongst themselves. There had also been incidents of pre-arranged fighting with QPR fans, trouble being caused at a night club, and a fan attacking a police officer. DP said that FFC had sent stewards to some away games to assist the away club and police. However, it was not possible for them to control behaviour on the transport network. The Club had raised the issue with the Supporters Trust, although those likely to be perpetrators were unlikely to engage with the trust. AR asked how this issue was being addressed. AW explained that he had a very good relationship with the Club, and that he was working hard to obtain court bans those fans who were behaving badly.

6. British Transport Police

Update on Operational Arrangements

- SaW explained that the BTP were taking a low tolerance approach to behaviour this year. A new central football coordination unit had been formed which would help with intelligence, planning and banning orders. He explained that a new scheme had been launched with Leeds United which allowed the BTP to ask the club to ban or suspend fans who were causing trouble on the transport network. AW noted that Fulham fans caused only a small fraction of the number of problems which Leeds fans had, and so the scheme might not be appropriate for FFC. DP said that he would prefer the scheme to be investigated now, in order that any necessary changes could be made to season ticket and membership terms and conditions.

	<p>ACTION – AW to look into whether the BTP/Leeds partnership scheme was appropriate for FFC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SaW explained that alcohol free trains were used if intelligence suggested that there would be disorder, however, they were often opposed by train operating companies as they impacted on commercial aspects. • SaW said that there were no issues on the local transport network used for access to Craven Cottage. 	<p>AW/SaW</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Local Authority Review – 2015/16 Season</p> <p><u>Lead Officer Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GS explained that in his view there had been a seamless transition with ES taking over the Safety Officer role at FFC. He had carried out inspections at the Brighton, Blackburn, QPR, Reading, Preston North End, and Brentford games. Detailed reports following these inspections had been sent to the Club, cc'd to the police and the SGSA. Where issues had been identified FFC had responded to these quickly. The most challenging match by far was against QPR with poor behaviour of an anti-social group of away supporters which was very much a result of the score. • All but one partnership meetings had been attended by the LA and these meetings were a successful part of the planning arrangements with the Club and the MPS. • The Safety Certificate had been amended to remove the 1987 from Fulham Football Club's company name as the holder. • Outside Broadcasting Vehicles had been inspected during the two televised live fixtures this Season and good liaison had been established with Sky. The vehicle set ups had been found to be satisfactory in view of the limitations of space outside the stadium. The new road studs was now a real improvement as this set the standard in terms of maximum width taken up in the road that the vehicles could be park, and no issues had been encountered this Season. • The Operations Manual continued to be updated appropriately, whilst the Club's portal allowed GS to see changes as soon as they were made. • Smoking had been discussed earlier in the meeting. • There had been no complaints received by GS. The Fulham Supporters Trust had praised the Club's work with fans. <p><u>Licensing Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GS explained that there had been one licensing breach at the QPR fixture with a bar selling for too long into the second half. A warning letter had been sent by the LA's Licensing Team to the Club. • Licensed premises near to Craven Cottage in LBHF were not 	

causing problems for the police. Most issues originated in LB Wandsworth.

- DP explained that the Club were still considering whether to seek to hold concerts and events at Craven Cottage.

Highways Update

- TP explained that he had redrafted the Memorandum of Understanding to remove references to the MPS. He asked for feedback from the Club on the document.
- He explained that a new experimental TMO would allow for enforcement without the need for the 'flip' signs. GS queried the need for some form of signage in Fulham Palace Road owing to the problem already discussed about the coach park bays.
- ES confirmed that there had been no issues with the dot matrix signs having been replaced by stickers on a temporary basis.
- MA explained that there would be gas works on the King's Road which might cause some additional traffic in the area.
- MA advised that Putney Bridge subway was due to be closed for works by the LB Wandsworth. GS requested further details of the extent of the works and whether it would be possible for the subway to be opened on match days. GS felt contingency plans would need to be in place if the subway is closed on match days to redirect users to other routes.
- Hammersmith Bridge was likely to be closed for 12 months from August or September 2016.

Parks Police Update

- MR explained that the Parks Police budget for 2016/17 had been maintained. The position for future years was still uncertain, and MR advised that where officers were used to patrol the park for football games outside of normal opening hours the Council might look to charge the football Club. AR confirmed that this would not affect this Season, and that only additional costs the Council incurred such as overtime would be asked for. DP explained that the new Riverside Stand would have turnstiles in Bishop's Park; the Council had known about this when planning permission was granted and a S.106 agreement had been concluded which did not include additional funding for the Parks Police. DP said however that the Club was prepared to discuss the issue with relevant officers. He noted that residents would be affected if the Council decided to close the park after games.
- MR explained that lighting in the park remained an issue. AR felt that a contingency plan for a forced closure of the park was necessary.
ACTION – Partnership meeting to consider how a closure of the park with no notice would be dealt with as part of the Clubs contingency planning.
- MR explained that the controlled drinking zone continued to operate

ES/JB

	<p>well, with between 20 and 60 drinks confiscated per game. Details of operations were shared with AW after each fixture.</p> <p><u>Parking Services Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> KS explained that parking enforcement continued to take place, with a tow truck available on match days. The dot matrix signage in the area would be upgraded soon which he hoped would bring them back into full use. <p><u>Street Scene Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RI explained that officers patrolled the area before a game, looking for objects which could potentially be used as weapons. Six households had been fined for leaving waste on the footway. ES explained that some skips in surrounding roads were uncovered which presented safety issues. ACTION – RI to investigate open and uncovered skips within the TMO area. Street Trading was not considered to be a significant issue. ES explained that there was not significant demand for the types of items unlicensed traders tended to sell. Ticket touting was not considered to be an issue owing to the availability of tickets on match days. 	RI
8.	<p>Update from London Fire Brigade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No representative of the LFB was present at the meeting. GS advised the LFB had been invited. ES advised that the Club offer to the LFB to visit Craven Cottage this Season at the last SAG meeting had not been taken up. 	
9.	<p>Medical Provision Update</p> <p><u>London Ambulance Service Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WK explained he had taken over from Geoff Long and CF was now the LAS lead on match days at FFC. There had been structural changes in the LAS. Some changes were needed to update the Medical Plan which would be raised with the Club. ACTION – LAS to advise FFC of changes required to the Medical Plan. ES confirmed that the Club continued to want an LAS Ambulance at all games. WK supported this view, saying that it was very difficult to arrange adequate emergency cover without an ambulance crew on site. 	CF/WK

	<p><u>Medical Plan Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ES explained that Tim Nuttall would be updating the Medical Plan to include the Riverside Stand redevelopment. BF noted that the extra tier of seating would make access more difficult. ES said that Tim Nuttall would work with the LAS to update the Plan. <p><u>Accidents, Injuries and Near Misses / Trends</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ES explained that there had been 70 medical incidents since the start of August, of which 27 had affected staff, and 43 affecting spectators. There had been 5 hospitalisations resulting from: a minor stroke; chest pains; a severe stroke; a diabetic fit, and; a fractured ankle caused by tripping after an excess of drink. A further serious injury had resulted from the last incident, with a fan breaking their wrist; hospital treatment had been declined by the supporter. Overall there had been 14 slips, trips and falls, but there was no pattern to where they were taking place, although alcohol was often involved. 	
10.	<p>Update from the Sports Grounds Safety Authority (SGSA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LE noted that the SGSA sent regular written reports which covered most of this item. It was noted that the Green Guide was being updated and that a consultation on what needed to be changed was currently open. 	
11.	<p>Looking Forward to the Rest of the 2015/16 Season</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ES explained that there were 5 'Category A' games and 4 'Category B' games at Craven Cottage before the end of the Season. JB said that he expected the MK Dons to be the most challenging of these. 	
12.	<p>Stadium Redevelopment and Building Control Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DP explained that the Riverside Stand redevelopment was scheduled to start in the summer, although some enabling works might start sooner. The Club was discharging all pre-condition licences. The vast majority of the preparatory paperwork had now been completed, and partners would be informed of any impact the works would have on their operations. DN said that Building Control was broadly happy with the redevelopment plans. Officers would be available to support the project as it developed. 	
13.	<p>Chairman's Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AR explained that most of this update had been covered in previous items. She said that the LBHF Football Safety Enforcement Policy is being reviewed as is the Matchday Postponement MOU. <p>ACTION – The updated version of the Enforcement Policy /</p>	

	Match Postponement MoU would be circulated in due course.	GS
14.	Any Other Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was no other business. 	
15.	Date and Venue of Next Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next meeting would be in early July 2016. ACTION – GS to confirm the time, date and venue to all parties. 	GS

The meeting closed at 2pm.

To be confirmed at next meeting