SAFETY OF SPORTS GROUNDS ACT 1975
FULHAM FOOTBALL CLUB
SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP (SAG) MEETING

MINUTES OF MEETING

WEDNESDAY 02 AUGUST 2017 – 10:00AM
COURTYARD ROOM, HAMMERSMITH TOWN HALL

PRESENT:

**London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBHF)**

Roy Instrall - Area Manager, Contracts and Enforcement (RI)
Bathsheba Mall (Minutes) - Committee Coordinator (BM)
Laura McGahon - RBKC Licensing (LMcG)
Kieran McKenna - Commercial Services (KMcK)
Stephanie Needham - Commercial Services Manager (SN)
Tony Pegrum - Network Coordination Team Manager (TP)
Ann Ramage (Chairman) - Head of Environmental Health (Commercial) (AR)
Graham Souster - Commercial Services Lead Officer for Fulham FC (GS)
Keith Stevenson - Parking Information and Events (KS)

**Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)**

Acting Chief Inspector James Brockway (JB)
PC Tony Delamo (TD)

**Sports Ground Safety Authority (SGSA)**

Geoff Galilee - Senior Regional Inspector (GG)

**Fulham Football Club (FFC)**

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

**London Ambulance Service**

Claire Fowleraker (CF)
Matt Shute (MS)

**London Fire Brigade**

Clayton Murray (CM)
John Snelgrove (SN)

**National Health Service**
Fulham FC SAG Minutes August 2017

1. Welcome from the Chairman
AR welcomed everyone to the meeting

2. Apologies / introductions
Apologies had been received from:
- Estee Bird / Philip Wayne – BTP
- Rebeca Burton – LFB
- Lisa White - LBHF Licensing
- Jackie Soper – LBHF Parking Control
- Inspector Mike Rumble – LBHF Parks Police Service.
- Ian Hawthorn – LBHF Highways
- Chief Inspector Mark Whitten, MPS
- Michael Allen, LBHF, Highways
- Steve Waspe, NHS

3. Confirmation of previous minutes and matters arising from the meeting of 24th January 2017
AR confirmed all actions from the previous minutes had either been completed or were due for discussion in later agenda items of the meeting, specifically, the Highways update.

The minutes of the last meeting were approved as an accurate record and were signed off by the Chairman for publishing on the Council’s website.

ES provided an update on the season so far. In terms of management operations there were no changes to report.

Season Fixtures – recap
There were 30 fixtures consisting of: 1 Pre-Season Friendly, 2 Capital One Cup Ties, 2 FA Cup Ties, 1 Saudi Super Cup, 23 League games and 1 Championship Play Off fixture. Of these, there was 1 Cat CS, 16 Cat A, 12 Cat B and 1 Cat C.

Arrests, Ejections and Refusals
ES reported the following figures and statistics and that the Club’s arrest
figures may be slightly different to the Police:

111 Arrests, 94 Away supporters and 16 Home, 1 Saudi Super Cup. (46 dealt with by way of Community Resolution).

Home:
7 Drinking in view
3 Possession of drugs
2 Public order
1 Assault
1 Attempted pitch incursion
1 Homophobic chanting
1 Throwing an item

Away:
57 Possession of drugs
8 Public order
5 Pyrotechnic use (QPR, Birmingham, Bristol City, Preston & Aston Villa)
4 Drinking in view
4 Pitch incursion (including 1 Saudi Super Cup)
3 Possession of alcohol on entry
2 Assault
2 Drunk entering
2 Throwing item
2 Intoxication:
1 Drunk and disorderly
1 Racially aggravated public order
1 Racial abuse of a steward
1 Racially aggravated common assault
1 Violent conduct
1 Breach of the peace

Club Bans:
5 serving existing long-term bans (including 1 for unlawful entry)
4 Serving a ban for rest of 2016/2017 Season
2 Supporters have served bans 1 x 3 Game ban, 1 until the end of September 2017
10 Supporters on season long Acceptable Behaviour Agreements.

Ejections:
294 Ejections, 240 Away, 46 Home, 8 Neutral
79 Refused entries
74 Breach of Ground Regulations
46 Fail to comply with steward
40 Drunkenness
22 Drinking in view
10 Disorderly behaviour
6 Smoking
6 Away supporters in home area
4 Fail to produce ticket
4 Pitch incursion
3 Throwing an item
ES highlighted the following fixtures where there had been notable issues:

- **Saudi Super Cup** – Traffic management of cars did become an issue and the TMO has since been extended as a contingency measure to address this. AR observed that following the Saudi Super Cup, they would need to look closely at this for next year, given the level of congestion in the surrounding alphabet streets. This should include a discussion around the TMO and ensure that other reasonable interventions were in place.
- **Newcastle** – Persistent standing issues.
- **Leeds and Aston Villa** - There had been two anti-social behaviour arrests, one of which was for body surfing.
- **Leeds** – A nine-year-old boy was reported missing, was found safe.
- **Brentford** – Persistent standing amongst their own fans was an issue.

ES reported that there had been several minor complaints (which have been noted by the Council) but with no identifiable trend.

Commenting on the number of refusals (79 this year, compared to 76 last season), AR indicated that the Club was doing well to address the ticketing issues and preventing access to the stadium. ES confirmed that a significant portion of complaints on refused entry come from away supporters. GS added that there had been complaints of unnecessary force shown during ejections but the incident had been captured on Body CCTV and from this evidence the complaint was unsubstantiated.

**Safety Management Arrangements**

ES was still the Club Safety Officer and there were no other changes to report. ES confirmed that a new safeguarding manager had joined the organisation and DBS checks had been undertaken for all members of staff with this responsibility.

**Accident and Injuries, Statistics and Trends**

107 incidents were logged in total, 66 staff (including a police officer bitten by a horse) and 41 spectators, with 14 people being taken to hospital, more than in the previous year.

The casualty figures are an increase to last season, albeit there have been an extra 4 matches played this season at Craven Cottage. The following statistics of medical incidents were reported; 167 incidents logged, an increase of 21.

- 6 were taken to hospital
- Preston (x2) - Old ankle injury; mental illness
- Leeds (x2) – Fifteen and seventeen year olds suffering drug and alcohol intoxication
- Wolves – Gashed head, temporarily unconscious
- Reading – Five-year-old with allergic reaction, facial rash
- 19 new injuries (9 Supporters) of which 13 slip/trip/falls, 1 bruised jaw
following punch to the face, 9 scalds, 7 others including 3 on the way to stadium.

AR enquired about the number of medical incidents and how many involved staff. It was noted that 40% of these were involving catering staff, and resolved with a plaster or a pill. ES confirmed that these figures had not previously included those that had occurred outside of the stadium.

**Persistent Standing**

- There were only two matches which had been all seating, Burnley and Rotherham. Public address announcements on the whole encouraged supporters to remain seated and this would continue.

- It was noted that there had been persistent standing throughout a number of notable fixtures including Brighton and Newcastle. Despite this, the vomitories and aisles had been kept clear with limited safety issues arising.

- The Reading fixture (play-off match) saw persistent standing in home areas of the stands. This was a short notice fixture and there were different behaviour patterns than normal for season ticket holders. Lessons were observed from this.

GS confirmed his observation of the vomitories which had been kept clear, through good, robust stewarding and that the interventions had worked well.

ES commented that persistent standing was increasingly more likely towards the end of the season. DP advised that the Club had been in discussions with the Supporters Trust about problems with persistent standing in home areas and are working with them to continue dialogue about this issue.

AR commented that the Away and mixed area presented a different challenge. ES observed that clubs cannot always identify the purchasers of away ticket allocations, making it very difficult to restrict the sale of general area tickets. AR noted that it was important for the Club to be proactive and aware of the potential risks and to ensure that there were adequate contingency plans in place. JB added that the volume of people meant that persistent standing would continue to be a concern and should be monitored.

AR noted that this was a challenge and that members of the Group were working together and doing what they could. With alcohol being a contributory factor, the Group noted in their discussion that this offer would require careful and continuous monitoring.

**Dealing with flares, smoke bombs and pyrotechnics at matches**

There had been two arrests for possession of flares, at the Preston and Aston Villa fixtures. There had been a smoke device set off on the concourse at the Aston Villa match. ES confirmed that he was happy with the current search regime with regards to pyrotechnics, concentrating more on Away supporters. Searching, together with CCTV footage helped with
identifying most supporters who attempt to bring them into the stadium but the sheer volume of people made it very difficult to catch all culprits.

DP confirmed that three new CCTV cameras had been positioned on the Putney Stand concourse, which was an improvement. JB confirmed that the Club’s response in such cases had been excellent.

**Crowd Behaviour**

Issues included - Persistent standing in the Hammersmith Stand; a supporter with personal hygiene issues; and a Fulham supporter alleging homophobic abuse by other Fulham supporters during the Reading Away fixture. ES observed that when some of the clubs had a large away contingent, it was difficult to identify individuals who had been allocated away tickets. This meant that there was an issue with general sale or mixed area tickets going to supporters who could not be tracked.

AR acknowledged that this would remain an issue to monitor, particularly in mixed areas. AR noted that with all seater stands, clubs would need to consider the capacity of stands and maintain an awareness of numbers. In terms of tackling situations where it had become clear that mixed area supporters were causing difficulties, ES commented that a proactive view by stewards would be taken as to whether to intervene but most fans knew how to avoid trouble. AR noted that the Advisory Group was aware of the challenges and doing what it could to address national problems such as persistent standing, often exacerbated by alcohol. Improved management of the issue may only be resolved by a change in regulations. JB advised that the subject of large numbers of away supporters attending the Club does come up regularly centrally but not locally. JB advised that he was nervous with 7,000 Leeds supporters attending, but on the night it went well with no incidents of crime and disorder.

**Customer Feedback**

In terms of positive feedback, both Home and Away supporters had been working with stewards. It was noted that there had been a significant number of complaints from Away supporters regarding refused entry. Specific examples included supporters urinating in Ranelagh Gardens.

GS added that where there were complaints about heavy handed stewarding, many of the incidents could be caught on camera.

**Supporter Group Liaison/Feedback**

GS reported that the Fulham Supporters Group had been contacted and did not have any concerns to raise at the SAG.

**Searching and Security Arrangements**

The level of security had increased since the Paris Attacks, with search wands being introduced. AR asked if the increased number of in possession of drugs related arrests resulted from the search on entry regime? ES explained that the search dogs did not always find drugs and while this was
a challenge, there was no plan to put in place additional measures.

ES confirmed that there were several measures in place and the Club were more confident about this than in the previous season. They had begun testing their systems and there were additional resources and systems in place. This included the issuing of hand-held ticket checking devices to stewards. It was noted that these had been used at the Reading fixture to alleviate queues and had worked well.

**TV Broadcasting/Fixture Changes**

It was reported that there had not been many televised fixtures during the season so far, other than Newcastle.

**Counter Terrorism Update**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JB commented that the current level of threat made it difficult to ensure safety but that this would continue to be reviewed. JB highlighted that the stadium footprint meant that there were vulnerabilities outside the stadium, particularly with large crowds in Stevenage Road. The MPS is talking with the Club about the current threats and hostile vehicle mitigation measures.</th>
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<tr>
<td>ES advised that senior management of the Club had attended an Operation Argus presentation. ES confirmed that they had undertaken several match day safety operation reviews, pre- and post-match, looking closely at behavioural activities, working towards developing an early warning system.</td>
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5. **Metropolitan Police**

**Review of operational arrangements - Staffing**

- JB explained that he and MW would continue to be the main point of contact with the Club and that there were no operational changes to report. There would be Borough level changes resulting from amalgamation with neighbouring boroughs. JB advised that there have been challenges in providing local Matchday Commanders but they would endeavour to do their best in sourcing local inspectors whenever possible.

- JB reported that he would not know what the availability of resources would be but this would be monitored, varying in accordance with match day requirements.

- JB explained that they would do their best to provide cover but that this could not be guaranteed.

- Several police inspectors had qualified for match day command roles and were currently shadowing current inspectors.

- Operational arrangements for the start of each match will remain the
same, with a decision being taken on the day dependent on the assessed risk.

- JB commented that there had been no incidents of public disorder during the Season however, there were a number of matches with anti-social behaviour. There were a number of local derby fixtures with large numbers of Away supporters attending.

### Public Order and Arrests Statistics / Trends.

The reduction was positive, indicating that the Police plan was working. There were no identifiable patterns or trends. There had been 121 arrests overall, representing a 30% reduction. There had been 7 arrests for possession of flares. JB reiterated that the Club dealt very well in terms of its search regime and match-day operations. JB advised that whilst the arrest figures for Fulham does stand out this should be taken into context as to the type of offences, many being low level. The fact that there are regularly large numbers of Away supporters attending matches is also a significant factor.

### Racist / Homophobic behaviour

JB reported that this had decreased and tended to be aggravated behaviour, targeted towards stewards. This happens in all three of the borough’s football clubs and throughout the Season.

### Crowd Behaviour (home and away stands)

JB commented that this had been largely satisfactory. There had been issues of anti-social with a few away supporters visiting the stadium but no serious disorder.

### FFC supporters at away fixtures

TD advised that in general Fulham supporter’s behaviour at away fixtures was very good. There was some disorder on a train for the Rotherham fixture that was still being investigated by the BTP. The Reading fixture had involved a pitch incursion with a number of FFC supporters being arrested. JB thanked ES, DP and the Club for their continued support. ES added that they had been let down at Reading with the lack of CCTV footage that could have helped identify the culprits accused of homophobic chanting.

### Policing Policy

JB advised that ACPO had introduced a positive change in policy which entails alternative charging options. TD advised that he had set up a football Pub Watch.

### Counter Terrorism Updates

General discussions held about CT arrangements. GG advised that nationally, Police SECO’s are reviewing all stadiums.
6. **British Transport Police**
   No officers from BTP were present at the meeting.

7. **Transport for London**
   No issues to report. ES confirmed that there had been a very positive relationship with Transport for London (TfL) with good communication.

8. **Local Authority Review – 2017/18 Season**
   **(Agenda item brought forward)**
   
   **(h) Street Scene Update** – RI advised that pre-match inspections had been conducted in the area around the stadium. GS referred to unlicensed food vehicles (ice cream van) trading outside the stadium on occasions. RI explained that limited Council resources meant that there were issues with officers working at weekends. ES reported that at the previous weekends fixture, refuse sacks had been left on the streets, discovered by stewards on the morning of match. RI agreed to investigate this further but understood that this may have been due to a refuse collection vehicle breakdown.

   **(a) Lead Officer Update**
   
   **Match day inspections**
   GS confirmed that there had been 13 inspections carried out during the course of the Season and these included

   **Pre-January 2017**
   - Newcastle 5th Aug
   - Saudi Super Cup 8th Aug
   - Bristol City 24th Sept
   - QPR 1ST Oct
   - Sheffield Wednesday 19th Nov
   - Derby County 17th Dec
   - Brighton 2nd Jan

   **Post January 2017**
   - Hull City 29th Jan FA Cup
   - Tottenham 19th Feb
   - Leeds 7th Mar
   - Aston Villa 17th Apr
   - Brentford 29th Apr
   - Reading 13th May Play-off and the second leg “beam back”.

   The LA had sent reports to the Club and had received feedback on matters requiring action. GS noted that there had been a number of challenging matches, with particular anti-social issues being witnessed during half time in the Putney Stand concourse – i.e. Leeds and Aston Villa. The LA did
recommend additional deployments of security to be utilised and this together with a Police presence resulted in there not being a repeat during the Brentford fixture. DP added that problems with CCTV cameras at the Derby fixture had been addressed and that they had placed additional cameras with upgraded software, in the Putney Bridge Stand concourse area.

**Compliance with the Safety Certificate and Operations Manual**

GS reported that there was no change to the Safety Certificate and that the Operations Manual continued to be maintained by ES. The LA had attended the Club’s Emergency Exercise on the 3rd July. The annual inspection of the stadium was carried out on the 25th July 2017.

**Customer Feedback – complaints / praise.**

GS advised that the LA had not received any match day related safety complaints.

**Supporters Groups Liaison / Feedback**

GS advised that he had liaised with the Fulham FC Supporters’ Trust and no issues were raised for the SAG.

**Licensing Update**

There was no officer present from Licensing. GS advised that there were no issues to report from the Licensing Team.

ES will be applying to the Council become the DPS for the Club.

**Highways Update**

TP provided the following works information:

- TP confirmed agreement has now been achieved on the way forward with the TMO and in relation to the changes required on street signage. The existing flip-signs will be replaced with ‘no stopping’ ‘trestle signs’ which Fulham FC will manage completely on matchdays. The costing and TMO Order has now been agreed between the Council and the Club and all is in order for final implementation with the view to have everything in place by October 2017. The Order links in with the memorandum of understanding. The execution of the Order has unfortunately been delayed due to Grenfell priorities and it would now be prioritised for all three clubs.

Planned works were given as follows:

- Repair work to Hammersmith Bridge. Panel replacement works is due to commence. Other major works requiring closure of the bridge will continue throughout 2018 and could potentially be announced at short notice. The intention is to undertake work at night;
- Hammersmith Gyratory cycle scheme. Work on this will commence
in February 2018;
- Fulham Palace Road. Will be closed three weeks before Christmas for the Fulham 10K run, taking place on the 10\textsuperscript{th} December 2017. It was noted that this would not clash with the Hull fixture, taking place on the 12\textsuperscript{th} December.

d) Parking Services Update

KS commented that it was business as usual on matchdays for Parking Services and the new tow truck contractor was working well.

e) Parks Police Update

No representative present. Nothing has been raised with the Lead Officer.

f) Building Control

GS confirmed that there were no specific issues to report. DP added that the following small works were being undertaken:
- Extension of the seating area for wheelchair users in the Riverside Stand following the Level Playing Field audit.
- Stand walkways have been widened with the removal of front row seats to complete the works involving the new LED advertising system.
- A replacement backup generator has been installed.
- Improvements to the Hammersmith dug out.
- Improvements to the PA system providing better coverage in the stadium has been carried out. It was noted that this was a large undertaking and formed part of a general upgrade with better coverage in Stevenage Road.

The Club provided assurance that cladding was not present in any part of the stadium.

9. Update from London Fire Brigade

AR welcomed John Snelgrove to the meeting. He had been due to attend the previous meeting of the SAG but had been unexpectedly called away. JS introduced Clayton Murray, an LFB officer based at Hammersmith Station and who would in future, attend on his behalf, if he could not attend himself.

It was noted that there had been a long-standing relationship between the Club and partner agencies, including LFB. There had not been any significant incidents taking place either inside or outside the ground, although the finding of an unexploded device on the foreshore of the Thames during the annual Oxford and Cambridge boat race, had been a rare and unusual discovery.

AR thanked JS, commenting that LFB were an important part of the SAG. AR highlighted possible access issues from Stevenage Road, when there was congestion in the locality. It was noted that there were wider issues here including the need for clear communication between partner agencies.
throughout event days, and, ensuring that first responders were familiar with access requirements and layout.

It was agreed that a meeting between key individuals and all three Clubs be held to discuss access protocols, ensuring full and clear dissemination of access information.

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<th>10.</th>
<th>Medical Provision Update</th>
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<td><strong>Medical Plan Update</strong></td>
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<td>ES advised that a new Medical Co-ordinator had been appointed. The Crowd Doctor would oversee the Medical Plan. There would be some minor procedural changes and further details will be reported at the next SAG meeting.</td>
<td>FFC</td>
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<td>Following a query from GG, ES confirmed that once the Medical Plan had been finalised it would be placed in the “drop box”. It was noted that the plan would be subject to a risk assessment and AR gave an assurance that the plans would be closely examined, in detail. MS added that the Club’s Plan was more detailed than normally provided and it was noted that GS would monitor this.</td>
<td>Graham Souster</td>
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<td><strong>London Ambulance Service Update</strong></td>
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<td>CF and MS attended the meeting. It was noted that they would be discussing the contents of the Medical Plan with the Club.</td>
<td>LAS / FFC</td>
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<td><strong>NHS England Update</strong></td>
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<td>RE reported that there were no areas of concern to highlight.</td>
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<th>11.</th>
<th>Update from the Sports Grounds Safety Authority (SGSA)</th>
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<td>GG informed the meeting of the following key points:</td>
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<td>• Wheelchair evacuation plans had identified the need for stewards training;</td>
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<td>• Guidance was available regarding the identification of cladding used in stadiums, noting the earlier reference which confirmed that there was no cladding used throughout Craven Cottage;</td>
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<td>• The SGSA were currently analysing information obtained through the joint consultation carried out in May (2017); It was hoped that a response would be prepared by the end of August 2017 in terms of the wider definition of safety. ES advised that he had attended a meeting on the consultation that the SGSA had arranged and that the EFL had put in a response on behalf of the EFL.</td>
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<th>12.</th>
<th>Looking Forward to the Rest of the 2016/17 Season</th>
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<td><strong>Pre-season friendly fixtures, other events and International friendlies</strong></td>
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DP advised that Fulham had recently played Wolfsburg in a pre-season friendly at Craven Cottage.

**2017/18 fixture categories and anticipated challenges**

AR observed that there would be some key games that looked challenging in the coming Season, particularly the Millwall fixture on 25<sup>th</sup> November and other key matches against Sheffield Utd (recently promoted to the Championship), QPR and Leeds.

DP added that there were currently on-going discussions regarding an international fixture.

**Special Police Service Agreement**

AR explained that the Special Police Services Agreement (SPSA) framework should commence at the earliest opportunity. There was an agreement in place for the 2017/18 Season but the outcome of the judicial review of the Ipswich FC and Suffolk Constabulary could have an impact.

**Statement of Intent**

TD advised that this has been drawn up centrally and would be issued shortly. JB advised that conversations were taking place between the Police locally and with Central Command on matchday resourcing requirements.

**13. Close season works and stadium redevelopment works**

See Building Control minutes above. DP advised that there was nothing to report to the SAG on the Riverside Stand.

**14. Chairman's Update**

**Hillsborough Inquest – FFC / Stakeholder audit review**

AR thanked everyone for responding to the request to complete the Hillsborough template. The information provided will be reviewed by the LA and a sub-group of the SAG would be convened to further explore this issue and to discuss further action where required. GS to send the review document to the LFB.

**Special Safety Certificate (SSC)**

AR commented that she would like to encourage further dialogue on this issue. She explained that once the SCC was in place, the Club would then be well placed for any future events that it might be considering, such as Beam Back. Good planning and safe logistical arrangements were essential to the success of any largescale event and this took time to implement. Licensing arrangements took at least 3 months to arrange, allowing time for formal consultation periods.

AR added that the previous FFC application for an SSC over the summer
had been turned around quickly but observed that a measured, more thoughtful process was preferable, rather than the process being rushed through. It was helpful too, to involve the Club’s marketing colleagues, who may be able to suggest further innovative ways to help manage largescale public events safely.

**Postponed and rescheduled fixtures**

AR recommended that the Club review its arrangements for contingency plans, should a fixture be cancelled due to severe weather or safety reasons and be required to at short notice cancel an event like recently in a UEFA Champions League fixture. It was noted that this was not an issue for domestic fixtures in the EFL.

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<tr>
<th>15.</th>
<th>Any Other Business</th>
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<td><strong>Child Safeguarding</strong></td>
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<td>ES confirmed that the Club’s Safeguarding Officer has drawn up an Incident Reporting Form.</td>
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<th>16.</th>
<th>Date and Venue of Next Meeting</th>
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<tr>
<td>The next meeting would be in January 2018. GS to confirm the time, date and venue to all parties.</td>
<td>Graham Souster</td>
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The meeting closed at 12.32pm.