

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

**Friday, 2nd February 2018, 10.00am
Queens Park Rangers Football Club**

MINUTES OF MEETING

Name	Initials	Organisation
Alex Fish	AF	Deputy Safety Officer (QPR)
Ann Ramage (Chairman)	AR	Head of Environmental Health Commercial (LBHF)
Debbie Farr	DF	Environmental Health Officer (LBHF)
Geraldine O'Grady	GO'G	Commercial Services Acting Lead Officer (LBHF)
Graham Souster	GS	Commercial Services (LBHF)
James Brockway	JB	Acting Chief Inspector (MPS)
Janet Barr	JB	Safeguarding Manager (QPR)
Jim McNeill	JMcN	Safety Officer (QPR)
Jim Prescon	JP	Chief Steward (QPR)
John Gerrard	JG	Dedicated Football Officer (MPS)
Joshua Scott	JS	Facilities & Operations Co-ordinator (QPR)
Karen Ashdown	KA	Commercial Services Lead Officer (LBHF)
Maria de Jesus	MJ	Parking Services (LBHF/RBKC)
Mark Donnelly	MD	Chief Operating Officer (QPR)
Mark Gibson	MG	Operations Manager (QPR)
Mark Whitten	MW	Chief Inspector (MPS)
Mike Dorans	MDs	Safeguarding (MPS)
Paloma Pionetti	PP	Governance and Scrutiny (LBHF)
Rachel Eggar	RE	NHS
Richard Acholowino	RA	Public Protection & Safety (LBHF)
Richard Turner	RT	Facilities & Security Manager (QPR)
Steve Waspe	SW	NHS
Tony Pegrum	PG	Highways (LBHF/RBKC)

ITEM	ACTION
<p>1 Welcome from the Chairman</p> <p>1.1 The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.</p>	
<p>2 Apologies/Introductions</p> <p>2.1 Apologies were received from: Stephanie Needham (Commercial Services), Roy Instrall (Environment Enforcement), Ahmad Rafique (Environment Enforcement) Patrick Hickey and Matt Shute (London Ambulance Service) Peter Hollely (St John Ambulance) and Geoff Galilee (SGSA).</p>	
<p>3 Confirmation of previous minutes and matters arising</p> <p>3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 12th July 2017 were approved as an accurate record. The Chairman identified the following actions from the minutes that were outstanding:</p> <p>3.2 Item 3.4 – MG confirmed that the medical plan had been reviewed and approved.</p> <p>3.3 Item 5.8 – Prosecution of football offence- QPR and MPS confirmed that this had been actioned.</p>	
<p>4 QPR Safety Management Review</p> <p><u>Management/Operational Changes</u></p> <p>4.1 MD noted that there had not been any change of team members and stressed that everyone had been working very well together. Overall, he was pleased with the first part of the Season.</p> <p>4.2 He informed the SAG that RT would be leaving the organisation. AR and the group thanked RT for his invaluable contribution to the work of the SAG and wished him well going forward.</p> <p><u>Challenging Fixtures/Issues</u></p> <p>4.3 MD reported two challenging fixtures that nevertheless were handled quickly and effectively. The first fixture referred to was the charity event, Game 4 Grenfell; the second fixture was QPR</p>	

v Millwall. MD explained that the latter had been identified as a high-risk match (Category C) and that the appropriate level of planning and resource had been provided. A full risk assessment, 2 partnership meetings, 2 tactical planning meetings and a conference call with key supporter liaisons and fan representatives from both clubs were held, pre-match.

4.4 A summary of the main issues in the Millwall fixture is as follows:

- a) Surge of crowd and disorder on entry to School Upper, resulting in the temporary closing of gate 5
- b) Surge of crowd to the segregation line between X Block and Y6 when Millwall scored on 2 minutes
- c) Reports of Millwall fans in home areas – some isolated ejections and disorder between a small number of fans
- d) A fan bundled onto the roof of the executive boxes: A spectator was on the roof of the executive boxes having been pushed over the barrier of the South Africa Road Stand. He walked along the roof and was pulled over the barrier by stewards in A Block. Serious injury to the individual and those below in the Paddocks was avoided. A further review of the incident and CCTV footage showed that there had been an altercation between the spectator and two home fans, before he climbed onto the roof. The two home fans were identified, interviewed, and have subsequently received banning orders. The individual on the roof was believed to be a Millwall FC fan with mental health issues and his details have been passed to Millwall FC
- e) Complaints about missiles being thrown
- f) Stairways and vomitories were not kept clear
- g) A smoke bomb/ flare was set off in the away end
- h) QPR received complaints about road and access closures, both pre- and post-match.

4.5 It was explained that Game 4 Grenfell was an exceptional, one-off event, where those in attendance were not regular football fans. However, it was noted that this raised some issues for the Club to reflect upon. At the end of the match, there were two pitch invasions with mainly children going onto the pitch as they wanted to meet the players and take photos with them.

4.6 AR thanked the Club for their contribution to the local community by engaging in such an event.

<u>Stewarding/ security arrangements</u>		
4.7	JMcN reported that the stewarding companies remained the same as last season. The Club was looking at providing further training to encourage positive customer interaction.	QPR
4.8	The Club were pleased with the new away fan entry protocols. The Club would consider extra security measures under evaluation for future higher risk fixtures including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Additional response teams b) Additional control points to slow the progress of the queue and the ability to hold the flow of spectators joining the queue c) Police resources including the use of physical assets to control the movement of fans approaching the gates d) Additional communication to ensure that fans access the correct entry point and have a valid ticket. e) Additional parking suspensions. 	
4.9	AR expressed concern about an obstructive signpost near the Gate 5 entry point and suggested TP and herself, liaise with Parking and Highways to remove/relocate this signpost.	AR/TP
4.10	AR suggested that the Club assesses whether the barriers in use for the away fan queues are fit for purpose. JMcN explained that the Club was satisfied with them but welcomed the opportunity to further explore the market, with a view to explore new barriers solutions.	QPR
<u>Search regime</u>		
4.11	JMcN reported that the Club had softened their search regime layout and meet/greet fans using a friendlier approach, however the search procedures remained the same.	
4.12	He explained that following the Millwall match in September 2017, there was a full debrief and review of the incidents which occurred. There was greater focus on how to improve the entry/exit experience, ensuring a smoother flow of supporters.	
4.13	JMcN explained that the Club had been exploring new entry and exit routes. He briefly summarised the main changes to the entry point for away supporters, utilising the School Upper tier. The previous entry procedure for School Upper was the utilisation of the "Fence box" which QPR had used as the entry method for away supporters for many seasons. The new, single lane entry	

<p>procedure was trialled for 10 matches over the last four months and was reported to be successful. This included low and medium risk matches. Moreover, nine of the matches were at full capacity for the School Upper seating. JMcN stated that the new layout, apart from being more welcoming helped to regulate the flow of spectators in a timely manner.</p> <p>4.14 AR suggested that the Club could review more effective signage and guidance for queuing. Effective signage could make the difference between a relaxed supporter or a confused and stressed one. AR said that the Local Authority would continue to monitor this.</p> <p>4.15 AR suggested that the relevant document addressing the new procedure was uploaded on the Dropbox. AR also noted that the Operations Manual would need to be updated accordingly.</p> <p><u>Dealing with flares, smoke bombs and pyrotechnics at matches.</u></p> <p>4.16 JMcN reported that the Club had signed up to the Football League's flare initiative and would ban home supporters for a minimum of 3 seasons, if found in possession of flares or pyrotechnics at a match. There had only been one report of a QPR fan throwing a missile to the Away area however, although the missile had been found, the perpetrator had not been identified. JMcN had noted that there had been some away fans at Loftus Road who had been in possession of pyrotechnic devices: three arrests and two ejections had been made. JMcN mentioned that the use of CCTV footage had been invaluable for identifying perpetrators and praised the excellent working between the Police, the response teams and the Control Room.</p> <p>4.17 AR asked about the issue of spectators throwing coins. In response, the Club explained that unless the individual was caught in the act or clearly on CCTV it was difficult to eradicate but the Club would remain vigilant. The Chairman noted that in this respect, the only solution was prevention, and advised the Club to continue good communication, adhering to policies and communicating the penalties.</p> <p><u>Persistent standing and Management</u></p> <p>4.18 JMcN affirmed that the Club was aware of the persistent standing issue and the potential safety implications and highlighted examples of good practice that had been developed to alleviate persistent standing:</p>	<p>LBHF</p> <p>QPR</p>
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<p>a) ground regulation posters were placed around Loftus Road stadium which reinforced the message against standing;</p> <p>b) stewards were briefed to ensure that every ticket holder sat in their allocated seat;</p> <p>c) no migration was permitted between ticketed areas.</p> <p>4.19 Overall, the first half of the season indicated that QPR supporters were happy to remain seated. A bigger challenge is Away Fans who largely stand throughout the match in School Upper and School Lower. The main risk was spilling onto aisles and stairways. AR noted that it was particularly important to keep clear aisles and stairways especially at the start of the match and to ensure the vomitories were kept clear following the movements at half time.</p> <p>4.20 JMcN highlighted the Middlesbrough fixture as an illustration of how the new arrangements operated, with a dedicated, permanent stewarding presence in School Upper to ensure that aisles remained clear throughout the match. AR asked whether a risk assessment was carried out in relation to higher risk matches. JMcN informed the Group that a risk assessment was carried out and additional potential solutions explored. This would involve either the front row not being sold or some additional stewards monitoring the front row. AR noted as an action to upload on Dropbox the relevant documentation for that proposal and reminded the SAG to indicate the issue date on each document.</p> <p><u>Accident, Injuries, near misses: statistics/trends</u></p> <p>4.21 MG reported that there had been 30 accidents/injuries, showing an increase compared to last year's half season data. There had been a total of 19 illnesses, which included 15 supporters and 4 members of staff. It was noted that none of the cases were cause of concern. MG highlighted that there had been significant reduction of the number of supporters hit by the ball following the introduction of protective netting during the pre-match warm up which was pleasing.</p> <p><u>Ejections/refusals: statistics/trends</u></p> <p>4.22 MG reported that there had been 15 refused entries; 12 away fans and 3 home supporters. There were 77 ejections in total. 32 away fans were ejected for drinking alcohol. MG said that these numbers showed an increase of ejections but a decrease of refusals compared to previous years. In response to a question</p>	<p>QPR</p>
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from the Chairman, the Club confirmed that there was enough signage forbidding drinking in view of the pitch.

Smoking Policy

- 4.23 It was reported that an arrangement had been agreed with the Local Authority, with two designated smoking areas. Additional signage to identify the permitted smoking areas were put in place. GO'G mentioned that an issue remained mainly in relation to match day staff. The Club confirmed their commitment to enforcing the smoking policy.

TV Broadcasting/fixture change

- 4.24 The Club confirmed that they maintained a good relationship with TV broadcasting companies and explained that they were satisfied with the procedures to implement changes to fixtures.

Customer Feedback – complaints/praises

- 4.25 The Club noted that there had been a major focus on customer service, compared to the previous season where poor customer experience had been reported.
- 4.26 MG explained that the Club was committed to responding promptly to all correspondence and any match day complaints. He mentioned that a total of 28 complaints had been received to date and there had not been any identifiable pattern or trend highlighting fundamental or recurring issues from the complaints received post-match.
- 4.27 MG further noted that QPR was committed to regular and meaningful consultation with its fans and their representative fan groups. During each season, the Club would have a minimum of two supporter consultation meetings to discuss issues raised by the fan base. In addition, there was also at least one fan event, with the manager, Director of Football, and CEO in attendance to answer questions from fans; the latter was streamed live to reach a wider audience.
- 4.28 AR explained that supporters' groups had requested to attend the SAGs/ and become part of the Group in the past. It was agreed this would not be appropriate due to the scope and role of the SAG. However, AR appreciated the interest shown and noted that she would be interested in attending one of the Clubs engagement events.

MD/AR

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Counter Terrorism/ Security</u></p> <p>4.29 AR explained that going forward, the Club’s general progress would be discussed during SAGs and a stand-alone meeting would take place with key personnel after the SAG meeting to discuss any sensitive issues around security and counter terrorism.</p>	
<p>5. Metropolitan Police</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Review of operational arrangements</u></p> <p>5.1 JB explained that they were awaiting confirmation of an operational change which would lead to Hammersmith and Fulham sharing their borough command unit with Westminster City Council (WCC) and the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea (RBKC) to achieve savings and improve services.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Safeguarding</u></p> <p>5.2 MDs explained MPS’s mission to improve child protection and safeguarding at football matches across London. He highlighted the importance of raising awareness of the Clubs’ duty of care towards children, young people, and vulnerable adults. He is visiting Clubs across the city to review procedures and identify areas of good practice. A report of the findings and recommendations will be compiled. QPR explained that the Club was fully committed to ensure that the safety needs and well-being of all young people were met. They also added that they had a full-time staff member dedicated to safeguarding. The Chairman commended this as a useful piece of work. AR added that it would be a good idea for the safeguarding officer to attend on occasions on a matchday to observe the policies in practice. QPR confirmed that this already happened over the course of the season.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Public order</u></p> <p>5.3 JB reported that the Club had a good first half season and there were no public order incidents. JB noted that even the most challenging match against Millwall could not be considered as truly disruptive.</p>	

Any notable fixtures

5.4 There had been 17 fixtures played at Loftus Road, up to and including 20/01/2017. There was only one category C fixture, which did not raise significant concerns. A total of 17 MPS command team officers had been required during the first part of the Season.

Arrests

5.4 JB reported that there had been 16 arrests, which was slightly higher compared to last season.

Racist/homophobic behaviour

5.5 JB reported that racially aggravated offences had been limited to one indecent/racist chanting from a youth.

Crowd behaviour (home and away stands)

5.6 The breakdown of the arrests by offences type included:

QPR supporters:	Away fans:
1 x Common Assault 1x Pitch encroachment 1x Throwing a missile 1x Indecent/racist	2x Missile throwing 3x Possession Flare 2x Common Assault 1x Possession of Cocaine 3x Section 4a Public Order 1x Theft

QPR supporter behaviour at away fixtures

5.7 JG commented that QPR had played 15 away fixtures domestically up to the 27/01/18. Around 12,210 QPR supporters had attended away domestic fixtures so far. There had been four ejections for breach of ground regulations. There had been two arrests, one at Nottingham Forest for indecent and racial chanting, the other at Millwall for indecent and racial chanting and criminal damage.

Banning orders

5.8 JG reported that there had been one QPR supporter who had

<p>been issued with a three-year banning order.</p> <p><u>MPS/CPS Prosecution of football offences</u></p> <p>5.9 JB highlighted that that out of the 16 arrests, 8 suspects had been charged, 3 cautioned and 3 had no further action.</p>	
<p>6. Local Authority Review</p> <p><u>Lead Officer Update</u></p> <p>6.1 AR noted that GO’G had been covering the Season at QPR in terms of partnership and match inspections. She informed the SAG that while GO’G would continue monitoring, KA is returning as lead officer. AR thanked GO’G for her efforts and contribution. AR also informed the Group that DF would be shadowing for the rest of the Season.</p> <p><u>Matchday inspections carried out</u></p> <p>6.2 GO’G reported that 13 matchdays had been attended. All items for action had been acknowledged by the Club but some matters remain outstanding. Overall, GO’G noted that the Club responded pragmatically to challenges and took a proactive approach.</p> <p><u>Persistent Standing Monitoring</u></p> <p>6.3 Persistent standing continued to be an issue with away fans, with vomitories and aisles blocked for significant periods during three fixtures. Monitoring would continue to see whether the Club’s response was working.</p> <p><u>Safety Certificate</u></p> <p>6.5 The Safety Certificate had been modified and reissued due to the addition of disabled seating for away fans.</p> <p><u>Operations Manual and associated documentation</u></p> <p>6.6 A full review will be conducted by the Local Authority. MG said that he would be happy to assist.</p>	<p>LBHF/MG</p>

<p><u>Smoke Free compliance</u></p> <p>6.7 It was noted that continued improvements were being implemented, however there was still evidence of smoking incidents outside the kitchen.</p>	<p>QPR</p>
<p><u>Customer Feedback - complaints/praise</u></p> <p>6.8 GO'G received positive feedback from two away fans on how polite the stewards were. No complaints had been received.</p>	
<p>(b) Licensing Update</p> <p>6.7 A premises inspection would be carried during matches occurring in the second half of February. There had been no significant issues for licensed businesses near the stadium.</p>	<p>TP</p>
<p>(c) Highways Update</p> <p><u>Traffic Management Order</u></p>	
<p>6.8 TP reported that the Traffic Management Order (TMO) and associated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), had been finalised for execution and sent to legal. TP will ensure completion of this.</p>	
<p><u>Network issues/planned closures</u></p>	
<p>6.9 TP reported that there was ongoing incident involving a burst water main on Goldhawk Road which had caused a full road closure for just under a week so far.</p>	<p>QPR/LBHF</p>
<p>6.10 There are carriageway resurfacing works in Bloemfontein Road J/W South Africa Road planned for 1-3 May. Temporary traffic signals will be in place around South Africa Road J/W Dorando Close 5-9 May for communications duct work. Finally, TP reported that there will be the construction of three crossovers in Wood Lane. An update of exact dates would be provided once available but this will not be before the temporary walkway is removed.</p>	
<p>6.11 Vehicle movements had been witnessed in crowded areas within the road closure areas. AR requested that measures to control access to the closed roads are reviewed and monitored and</p>	

<p>brought back to the July SAG.</p> <p>(d) Parking Services Update</p> <p>6.12 MdJ noted that pay and display meter replacements were nearing completion. It was noted that almost 1,130 old meters would be replaced with approximately 400 new meters. Only 50 of those meters would accept cash at key locations across the Borough. AR suggested that the Club consider possible communication solutions on how to inform fans about parking arrangement changes during matchdays to avoid complaints.</p> <p>6.13 It was noted that MdJ would provide the Club with an emergency phone number to contact the Parking Team (a duty manager) for out of hours events.</p> <p>(e) Street scene Update</p> <p>6.14 RA explained that his Team had been monitoring in Ellerslie Road and Loftus Road on a regular basis. He explained that the main risk in relation to fly tipped items was that they could be used as weapons on matchdays.</p> <p>6.15 The housing association managing Imre Close had been contacted and informed of their duty to avoid fly tipping. They were trying to arrange a site meeting with the housing association to discuss options that could help alleviate the problem.</p> <p>6.16 In response to a question from the Chairman, RA explained that it would be difficult to provide a Saturday morning monitoring and fly tip removal service. The Club will be given an emergency contact number to be used in exceptional circumstances.</p>	<p>MdJ</p> <p>RA</p>
<p>7. London Fire Brigade Update</p> <p>7.1 There were no officers in attendance. GO'G noted that they had been contacted. JB recommended matchday attendance of LFB to stress test access issues to the Club and local roads. AR noted as an action to liaise with LFB to request their presence at the next SAG.</p>	<p>AR</p>
<p>8. Medical Provision Update</p> <p>8.1 Minor technical changes to the medical plan were noted. The</p>	

<p>updated Plan would be uploaded onto the Portal.</p> <p>The Club reported that they were increasing scope to widen resiliency. In the highly unlikely event of a short-full of St John Ambulance medical personnel, QPR will utilise the following: QPR's in-house Matchday medical supervisor plus additional trained staff from the stretcher team supplier and London Ambulance Service.</p> <p><u>St John Ambulance Update</u> (received by email)</p> <p>8.2 St John Ambulance continues to work closely with Queens Park Rangers Football Club and has a very good working relationship. We also have a very good working relationship with London Ambulance Service (LAS). To date, we have treated 46 casualties including 2 major ones that were transported to hospital. No specific concerns or trends have been identified from these casualties. The match that saw the biggest number of casualties was the Game 4 Grenfell when we treated 9 patients.</p> <p><u>London Ambulance Service (LAS) update and NHS update</u></p> <p>8.3 It was reported that there were no areas of concern to highlight in relation to the LAS and NHS.</p>	<p>QPR</p>
<p>9. Update from the Sports Ground Safety Authority</p> <p>9.1 AR provided a brief update from the SGSA. It was noted that the feedback on the Joint Consultations was available to view on the SGSA website and that new guidance and model policy documents had been published.</p>	
<p>10. Looking forward to the rest of the 2017/18 Season</p> <p>10.1 It was noted that nine matchdays remain.</p> <p>10.2 The most challenging match is anticipated to be the last home fixture against Birmingham on 28th April. JG noted that he would engage with his equivalent in Birmingham and reassured the SAG that some coordination with QPR had already taken place.</p>	

<p>11. Chairman's update</p> <p><u>Ticketing Policy</u></p> <p>11.1 AR acknowledged that the Arsenal v Cologne game raised the importance of ticketing policy as a control measure and that good collaboration must be ensured with the ticket office, the Safety Team, and the away club. The membership database needed to be checked for irregularities and memberships suspended where necessary.</p> <p>11.2 The Club explained that there was a good relationship with the ticket office.</p> <p><u>Safeguarding</u></p> <p>11.3 AR thanked everyone for the progress made and reiterated the importance of the Safeguarding Officer attending on matchdays to review procedures.</p>	
<p>12. Any Other Business</p> <p>12.1 LBHF intends to recirculate the Match Postponement MOU to reflect changes in contact details.</p> <p>12.2 AR recommended that further scenarios should be considered in the contingency plans. For example, power outages on a matchday leaving fans partly inside and partly outside because of turnstiles being non-operative.</p> <p>12.3 This Season the commentary box has been used as a hospitality space during matches. This resulted in some problems with anti-social behaviour during the Leeds game. The Club noted that to prevent this type of occurrence, additional steward control measures have been put in place.</p>	<p>KA</p> <p>QPR</p>
<p>13. Date and venue of next meeting</p> <p>13.1 The next meeting would be in July 2018, hosted by LBHF, with the time, date, and venue to be confirmed to all parties.</p>	<p>KA</p>