

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

**Monday, 2nd July 2018, 10.00am
Hammersmith Town Hall, Courtyard Room**

MINUTES OF MEETING

Name	Initials	Organisation
Alex Fish	AF	Deputy Safety Officer (QPR)
Ann Ramage (Chairman)	AR	Head of Environmental Health Commercial (LBHF)
Geraldine O'Grady	GO	Commercial Services Acting Lead Officer (LBHF)
Lysander Strong	LS	Chief Inspector (MPS)
Jim McNeill	JM	Safety Officer (QPR)
John Gerard	JG	Dedicated Football Officer (MPS)
Josh Scott	JS	Facilities Manager (QPR)
Karen Ashdown	KA	Commercial Services Lead Officer (LBHF)
Keith Stevenson	KS	Information & Special Events (LBHF)
Mark Donnelly	MD	Chief Operating Officer (QPR)
Mark Gibson	MG	Operations Manager (QPR)
Mark Whitten	MW	Chief Inspector (MPS)
Richard Acholowino	RA	Public Protection & Safety (LBHF)
Tony Pegrum	TP	Highways Network Manager (LBHF/RBKC)
Paul Humphreys	PH	Fulham Station Manager (LFB)
Andy Robinson	ARo	Regional Inspector Sports Ground Safety Authority (SGSA)

ITEM	ACTION
<p>1 Welcome from the Chairman</p> <p>The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. She explained that an important change for today's SAG and for future meetings is that sensitive matters relating to counter terrorism and security will be discussed in a separate sub-group. This sub-group 'Part 2' was held earlier this morning. The minutes will not be published and will be circulated to attendees only.</p>	
<p>2 Apologies/Introductions</p> <p>Apologies were received from: Chief Inspector James Brockway, Stephanie Needham Commercial Services Manager, Lee Currie Highways, Geoff Galilee SGSA, Dawn Rabin St John Ambulance (SJA), Peter Hollely SJA, Matt Shute London Ambulance Service.</p> <p>Round table introductions were made for those who have not attended before including the London Fire Brigade Station Manager at Fulham Paul Humphreys.</p>	
<p>3 Confirmation of previous minutes and matters arising</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 2nd February 2018 were approved as an accurate record. An amendment to Jim Driscoll's name has been made and is included in the minutes circulated with the agenda. All actions have been completed or are being progressed and are on the agenda.</p>	
<p>4 Notable Fixture: QPR v Birmingham 28th April 2018</p> <p>4.1 The match against Birmingham was identified as risk category B but with risk enhanced potential due to it being the last match of the season. It was felt the appropriate level of planning was devoted to this fixture.</p> <p>4.2. A mass pitch incursion at the final whistle was anticipated and QPR initiated the following measures to prevent this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional match day response stewards • Enhanced planning and pitch side steward deployment at full time – rope barrier used at pitch side • Communications campaign requesting fans not to enter the pitch 	

coupled with a reminder of the possible consequences using posters, leaflets, big screen, programme notes, social medial and digital messages to fans

- Manager, players and CEO reinforced campaign messages.

The post match plan implementation was excellent and a real success and it is likely that the resources and approach will be repeated in future years.

4.3 A summary of the main issues in the Birmingham fixture is as follows:

- Whilst a major pitch incursion did not occur 4 individuals managed to get on the pitch. Three were detained and the Club is dealing with them.
- There were some issues around the arrival of Birmingham fans to the School Lower. There was a build-up of the queue, a late walk up by a large group and some crowd surges which created issues with the barriers.
- Whilst there were issues and learning points there were no significant altercations, no arrests nor any reported injuries.

4.4 A full debrief was held by the Club with the Police and the LA and the main findings and points to action were:

- Consider an alternative and more robust barrier system for higher risk fixtures
- Implement clear on the ground senior management structure (agreed that the DSO was appropriate for this role for high risk fixtures)
- Police should only intervene on the express request of QPR ground command or if there is significant public order risk
- Review the search operation to allow for greater flow of customers, considering moving it closer to the turnstiles
- Removal of a fan from the search area could be via gate 4 or gate 6 to prevent interference with the flow of the queue
- Ongoing management and briefing of ticket and search teams to keep a steady flow of fans through the turnstiles and to prevent a build-up and congestion which can lead to increased agitation and confrontation in the queue
- A decision to change the search protocol will only be given by the Safety Officer
- Any request to close gates or to hold fans will only be given by the Safety Officer.

QPR

5 QPR Safety/ Security Management Season End Review

Management/Operational Changes

- 5.1 MD confirmed that Richard Turner has left and his role has now been taken on by Josh Scott. Paul Sutton had been recruited to take on JS's previous position. There was now a full-strength team.

Stewarding/ security arrangements

- 5.2 MD advised there were additional response team resources at the Birmingham fixture which worked well. The in-house stewarding team was the same. There might be a change to the deputy chief steward role next season.

Crowd behaviour (Home and Away supporters)

- 5.3 MG advised that there had been nothing major to report but there were 3 stand out games where significant ejection of away fans had taken place. These were MK Dons – 12 ejections, Aston Villa – 9 ejections and Sheffield United - 14 ejections.

Any matchday incidents including flares, smoke devices, pitch incursions, persistent standing, smoking.

- 5.4 MG indicated there had been 4 matches with pitch incursions during the 2017/18 season. The matches these occurred at were:
- Game for Grenfell 2/9/17 – 1 but as this was a special match it did not result in an ejection
 - Burton Albion 23/9/17 – 1 ejection and arrest
 - Middlesbrough 20/1/18 – 1 ejection, not arrested
 - Nottingham Forest 22/2/18 – 1 ejection and arrest
- 5.5 Smoke devices were ignited at 3 matches during the 2017/18 season. These were:
- Ipswich 9/9/17 –unable to identify any person involved
 - Cardiff 1/1/18 – 3 arrests – great work by the Control Room and concourse stewards
 - Birmingham City 28/4/18 –unable to identify any person involved in ignition on the concourse before kick off or where the device was discarded in WCs.

- 5.6 JMcN confirmed that they had a dedicated Fire Marshall team and the process worked well. MD emphasised fans were aware through the Club's Communications Campaign that involvement in pyrotechnics carried an automatic 3-year ban.
- 5.7 Missiles were detected as being thrown at the following matches: Sheffield United 31/10/17 (Away fan), Leeds 9/12/17 (Home fan) Birmingham 28/4/18 (1 Home fan arrested).
- 5.8 JMcN acknowledged that CCTV is always reviewed but it was very difficult to trace the culprits because the action of throwing is very quick and not obvious in a busy crowd.
- 5.9 Persistent Standing – MG advised that Section 27 of the Operations Manual detailed the Club's updated approach. There continues to be issues with standing, mainly at the away end and some limited home areas. There have been no recorded injuries due to persistent standing but the Club recognises that standing in seated areas could be potentially dangerous. Issues arise when standing has spilled into vomitories and stairwells but supervisors and stewards are briefed every match to prevent this happening. Games where this was notable included MK Dons and Birmingham and these fixtures will be reviewed in the coming season as part of the planning process.
- 5.10 Safe Standing Debate – Andy Robinson, SGSA, indicated that the Government was currently gathering evidence on this but felt this process was not an indication that there will be a swift move away from the principle of all seater stadiums.
- 5.11 AR indicated that she was comfortable with the Club's risk assessment but with a small number of fixtures an enhanced ticketing and stewarding approach should be considered and adopted as appropriate.

Refusals and ejections

- 5.12 MG reported that there had been 43 refused entries for 2017/18; 41 Away fans and 2 Home supporters the majority of which was for drunkenness. This compared with 39 refusals for 2016/17. There were 89 ejections in total for 2017/18, 74 Away fans and 15 Home. This compared with 105 for 2016/17. The majority of the ejections in 2017/18 were for drunkenness.

Customer Feedback – Praise and complaint

- 5.13 41 complaints were received for 2017/18 season. Two of which went

<p>to the Ombudsman and have been dealt with. There were no discernible trends. Some feedback was received from Birmingham fans praising the ability of the stewards and St John ambulance staff. It was noted that QPR had gained an EFL Gold Award for Steward Participation and a Family Excellence Award.</p> <p><u>Supporter Group Liaison and feedback</u></p> <p>5.14 The Club holds a Fans Forum and 2 supporter consultation meetings each season. MD to forward AR an invitation to attend one of these future meetings.</p>	MD
<p>6. Metropolitan Police Season-end Review</p> <p><u>Operational arrangements</u></p> <p>6.1 MH advised that due to cuts in funding, resulting in a loss of 160 Police Officers, management structural changes have been made and there were now more front-line officers. H&F, RBKC, and WCC teams are now joint. He felt they should be able to continue to deliver consistent command teams. Community policing required the right level of expertise and the loss in numbers entailed a different way of working. The intention was to go live with the new structures in February 2019. LS is to lead on events, including football.</p> <p>6.2 AR acknowledged how consistent policing has been. JMcN praised the level of support and experience provided by the police.</p> <p><u>Crowd behaviour (Home and Away supporters) including anti-social behaviour, hate incidents, notable fixtures</u></p> <p>6.3 Notable fixtures had been Birmingham and Millwall and QPR had already provided comment on these. There had been no instances of anti-social behaviour or hate crimes for Home fans but there was one arrest of an Away fan at the Nottingham Forest game for a racially aggravated incident.</p> <p><u>QPR supporter behaviour at away fixtures</u></p> <p>6.4 Noted that QPR away fan support was generally well behaved.</p> <p><u>Matchday observations of entry and egress</u></p> <p>6.5 JG indicated that problems in relation to entry were largely due to late walk ups and the police were trying to encourage fans at pubs to</p>	

<p>leave early.</p> <p><u>Arrests and outcomes statistics</u></p> <p>6.6 There had been 26 fixtures at Loftus Road; 5 were policed as 'spotters only', 12 as risk category A, 8 as risk category B and 1 at the higher risk category C. There had been 21 arrests resulting in 13 persons being charged and 2 cautioned. 6 of these arrests were for incidents outside the ground and 15 inside the ground. 7 arrested were QPR fans and 14 were Away fans. This represented a 23% reduction in arrests compared with the previous season.</p> <p>6.7 AR complimented the figures provided which had been well summarised. The document is referenced as an MPS document for Freedom Of Information Act purposes. The figures appeared to be going in the right direction and the momentum should be continued.</p> <p>AR thanked JG for his hard work during the season.</p>	
<p>7. Medical Provision</p> <p><u>Accident and Injury statistics</u></p> <p>7.1 MG reported there were 37 injuries for the 2017/18 season compared to 29 in 2016/17. These were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 staff members • 13 slips, trips or falls (no specific recurring location or trend) • 5 burns (hot drinks) • 4 cuts • 3 hit by a ball • 3 fighting • 2 pushing during entry • 1 minor injury caused by a roller shutter • 1 insect sting <p>7.2 There were 23 reported illnesses for 2017/18 as compared with 26 in 2016/17. These were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 staff (4 pre-existing conditions) • 18 supporters (15 pre-existing conditions) 	

<p><u>Medical Plan</u></p> <p>7.3 The updated version is in the Operations Manual and has been signed off by everyone except St John Ambulance. MG will chase this.</p> <p><u>Operational Arrangements</u></p> <p><u>London Ambulance Service (LAS)</u></p> <p>7.4 No report provided.</p> <p><u>St John Ambulance</u></p> <p>7.5 Injury and illness statistics reported by MG in 7.1 and 7.2.</p> <p><u>NHS England</u></p> <p>7.6 Since the last meeting Rachel Eggar advised she would be handing over to Sophie Walmsley. No report was received for this meeting.</p>	<p>MG</p>
<p>8. Local Authority Review</p> <p><u>Matchday planning</u></p> <p>8.1 KA indicated that the regular partnership meetings are comprehensive and match specific, and continue to be a valuable exchange of information between the Club, MPS and H&F.</p> <p><u>Matchday inspections including entry, stewarding, stadium infrastructure</u></p> <p>8.2 KA/GO/AR had attended on 16 matchdays. Many of these inspections were focussed on the Away entry arrangements at the School Upper turnstiles. Generally activities checked were satisfactory with the following observations of note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stewarding standards are generally improved as experience increases, with comprehensive match specific briefings to supervisors which are cascaded to all stewards • Persistent standing remains an issue at some matches with vomitories and aisles being blocked at times 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff smoking has recently been compliant after repeated Club interventions • Some issues were observed with Steward welfare provisions during last winter's extreme cold weather. <p><u>Safety Certificate</u></p>	
<p>8.3 The Safety Certificate will be reissued due to the modification of the media box to permit use as a hospitality suite. All information has been submitted by the Club.</p>	KA
<p><u>Operations Manual</u></p> <p>8.4 KA reported that she has reviewed the revised documents presented by MG on 12/6/18 and noted those documents that still need to be completed. It was noted that all actions from the stadium 2017/18 access audit have been implemented. The capacity calculations are dated 2009 and a full review has been recommended to ensure that all stadium alterations over recent years have been properly included. MG agreed that this would be carried out.</p>	MG
<p><u>Customer Feedback - Praise and complaints</u></p> <p>8.5 KA reported that nothing had been received directly but the LA had been copied into one complaint but were not required to intervene in the correspondence as the matter was resolved by the Club.</p>	
<p><u>Supporters Groups Liaison</u></p> <p>8.6 AR to attend a future Supporters Group meeting.</p>	AR
<p><u>Building Control</u></p> <p>8.7 No Comment.</p>	
<p><u>Licensing</u></p> <p>8.8 KA read out a report from Adrian Overton, Licensing Officer. A full licensing inspection was carried out at the Bolton match on 20/2/18 No issues were identified and it was noted that the new conditions attached to the premises licence were working well.</p>	

9. Outside the Stadium

TMO operation

9.1 The Traffic Management Order was signed off on 22/3/18 after two years work. This may need to be updated depending on the counter-terror measures agreed upon. AR indicated that an early meeting between Highways and the Club was required to consider the options for placing permanent/semi-permanent bollards on roads around the stadium. TP advised that generally the Council prefers semi-permanent solutions, as used for the Fever Tree Championship at Queen's Club recently. It is open to the Club to propose alternatives supported by a good business case. Gary Noble was identified as the relevant Council contact. AR agreed to speak to him so as to progress this.

QPR

AR

Licensing

9.2 KA read out a report from Adrian Overton, Licensing Officer. Visits were undertaken to a number of pubs in the surrounding area and all the match day conditions were being complied with at the time of the inspections. However, the Queens Tavern, South Africa Road was found to be trading whilst its licence was suspended for non-payment of the annual fee. This issue was quickly rectified when raised and the premises traded in compliance with its conditions for the remainder of the fixtures. Further inspections will take place with Police licensing officers next season.

Highways

9.3 TP advised of the following planned works:

- Gas main replacement in Du Cane Road 23/7/18 to Mid October
- Removal of elevated walkway in Wood Lane and installation of pedestrian crossings from mid-August for 3-4 weeks
- HS2 works at Old Oak Lane beginning August 2018

Parking Services

9.4 KS confirmed that all the new meters were now installed. Across the Borough there is a reduction in number, but 85% of transactions are now completed via mobile phone. The Club queried the result of the recent consultation in relation to J / JJ parking areas. KS advised the report is still being produced. The Club reported that a resident had complained that they had not seen the parking suspension notices

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birmingham 9/2/19 <p>11.2 The Club would continue to focus and develop Away entry options and confirmed that Counter Terror and Security plans were on track.</p> <p><u>Planned Stadium Works</u></p> <p>11.3 WC refurbishment programme continues. MG advised that nothing else substantive was planned which would require building control or planning.</p> <p><u>Planned management/operational changes</u></p> <p>11.4 Nothing as yet.</p> <p><u>Annual Inspection</u></p> <p>11.5 Date to be set. Emergency Table Top Exercise is taking place on 17/7/18.</p> <p><u>Highways Planned Works</u></p> <p>11.6 Detailed under 9.3. above.</p>	
<p>12. Sports Ground Safety Authority</p> <p>12.1 Andy Robinson advised that the SGSA now request more information from Clubs in the new licence application form. The Club agreed to share this information.</p> <p>12.2 Following a query from the Chairman, ARo confirmed that the detailed security plans should be held securely by the Club but the LA should be able to review them.</p> <p><u>Observations following inspections</u></p> <p>12.3 ARo advised that Geoff Gallilee had conducted a match day inspection but he did not have any updates to share.</p> <p><u>Green Guide Consultation update</u></p> <p>12.4 ARo anticipated the new edition of the Green Guide would be published by early October 2018. Key additional information has</p>	<p>QPR</p>

<p>been added to the fire safety, new build and medical provision chapters.</p> <p><u>SGSA joint consultation – future steps</u></p> <p>12.5 ARo confirmed that the Club had the basis of a policy and he would be more involved later. The SGSA assessment for the Club was that it should have a basic counter terrorism plan. It should detail the safety and security approach and briefings that take place with the police and partners both prior to and on match day.</p> <p><u>Persistent Standing/Rails seating progress</u></p> <p>12.6 The Parliamentary Committee debate in response to a petition promoting ‘safe standing’ was on June 25th. It recommended a government report to move this option forward.</p>	
<p>13. Wider Understanding of Safety Progress</p> <p>13.1 KA advised that the SGSA has formed the view that reasonable safety is a broad term which means that <i>all people present</i> at a sports ground during an event are protected against the dangers of physical harm or injury arising from being present. <i>Any danger</i> which could cause physical harm or injury can come within the scope of a local authority’s powers under the Safety at Sports Grounds Act 1975. This change covers risks from terrorist activity, crowd disorder and anti-social behaviour. It also includes ensuring that all people at a sports ground are protected and not just the spectators.</p> <p><u>Local Authority response</u></p> <p>13.2 AR/KA advised that a letter was sent out in May 2018 to all 3 clubs in the Borough setting out the scope and proposed timetable for implementing the SGSA revised guidance. Progress has been made towards this detailed and wide-ranging piece of work. We have discussed the potential implications with other London LAs.</p> <p><u>Club response</u></p> <p>13.3 [note received after the meeting] QPR have taken on the advice on proposed changes to the Green Guide to include the wider definition of safety of all persons present at a sports ground. With this the Club has produced additional documentation within the Clubs Operations manual, including:</p>	

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Streamlining future meetings and Terms of Reference</u></p> <p>14.2 It is proposed that in future meetings, to reduce the time impact on colleagues, who currently attend and often make contributions on one area, that those members can provide a written submission if they have anything to report. Of course, if there is a specific piece of work up for discussion relevant members will be notified to attend. We do not propose to restrict the circulation of the agenda. All who wish to can continue to report to the meetings.</p> <p>14.3 AR looked forward to the summary of the Emergency Exercise Table Top on 17/7/18.</p>	
<p>15. Any Other Business</p> <p>15.1 Saudi Super Cup 2018 – MD advised that details were being finalised but it was likely that QPR would be hosting this at Loftus Road on Sunday 19th August 2018. [Post meeting note: Match confirmed for Saturday 18th August 6:30pm kick off] It was acknowledged that this would be operationally challenging and there would be issues in relation to crowd control so it was imperative that all agencies were aware and the pre planning was robust learning from this event in previous years.</p>	
<p>16. Date and venue of next meeting</p> <p>16.1 AR thanked everyone for attending and wished QPR all the best for the forthcoming season. It was confirmed that the next meeting, the mid-season review would be in January 2019, hosted by QPR, with the time, date, and venue to be confirmed to all parties.</p>	