

Wolverhampton City Council

**OPEN DECISION ITEM**

Committee / Panel	<b>LICENSING COMMITTEE</b>	Date	<b>12 SEPTEMBER 2012</b>
Originating Service Group(s)	<b>EDUCATION AND ENTERPRISE</b>		
Contact Officer(s)/ Telephone Number(s)	<b>DAN O'BRIEN 4381</b>		
Title/Subject Matter	<b><u>MOLINEUX STADIUM SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP MINUTES</u></b>		

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**Recommendation**

Members are recommended to note and endorse the minutes of the Molineux Stadium Safety Advisory (MSSAG) Group meetings of 6.3.12 and 15.5.12

# **MOLINEUX STADIUM SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP MINUTES**

## **1.0 Purpose of Report**

1.1 To provide Members with the minutes of the Molineux Stadium Safety Advisory Group

## **2.0 Background**

2.1 The safety of the larger sports grounds within the City is the responsibility of the Licensing Committee. Accordingly, on 5 May 2004 Members approved proposals relating to the future arrangements for the discharge of the Council's function in respect of the regulation of the four sports grounds within the City i.e.

- Molineux Stadium, Waterloo Road
- Dunstall Racecourse, Dunstall Park
- Aldersley Leisure Village, Aldersley Road
- Monmore Green Stadium, Sutherland Avenue

2.2 Members also agreed that in addition to the existing Molineux Stadium Safety Advisory Group, a second SAG would be created to administer the certification issues relating to Dunstall Racecourse, Monmore Green Stadium and Aldersley Leisure Village. This is known as the Wolverhampton Sports Stadia Safety Advisory Group (WSSSAG).

2.3 The responsibilities of the Safety Advisory Groups are:

- Assisting the Council, through Regulatory Services, to issue and enforce the conditions of the safety certificate.
- Coordinating and consulting with the Police, Fire Service and the building authority and Ambulance Service in respect of the identified stadia.
- Assisting the Council with the placing of conditions on the safety certificate to ensure the safety of those using the stadium.
- Identifying maximum stadia capacities and the areas of the stadia to which visitors have access.
- Providing specialist advice to the Licensing Committee on sports ground safety matters.

2.4 Members agreed to receive minutes of all Safety Advisory Group (SAG) meetings and requested that the Officer who had attended the SAG meeting, is available to present the minutes to Licensing Committee.

2.5 The minutes of the following Molineux Stadium Safety Advisory Group (MSSAG) meetings held on the dates below are attached as Appendices A and B

- 6 March 2012
- 15 May 2012

2.6 Members may be aware of a third SAG convened by the Licensing Service to deal with various outdoor events, this "Events SAG" has no statutory status and is intended to act as a forum of agencies who might have an interest in a particular event in order that the organiser has a single point of contact with authorities.

- 2.7 The HSE advises caution in dealing with organisers as occasionally SAGs can be implicated in the decision making process of an event. An example of this was “Dreamscape” where there were two fatalities when an attraction became airborne. The Safety Advisory Group was prosecuted.
- 2.8 The Wolverhampton Events SAG is administered and managed in such a way as to ensure the appropriate public safety advice is made available but also that in providing advice none of the agencies forming the group are exposing either themselves or their employing organisations to a risk of proceedings.
- 2.9 The Licensing Committee has no functional or strategic responsibility for the Events SAG and would therefore be protected from liability in the event of an incident.

### **3.0 Financial Implications**

- 3.1 There are no financial implications in this report [TK/30082012/LI]

### **4.0 Equalities Implications**

- 4.1 There are no equalities implications in this report.

### **5.0 Environmental Implications**

- 5.1 This report has no direct environmental implications

### **6.0 Legal Implications**

- 6.1 This report concerns the Council's duty in discharging its responsibilities to Designated Sports Grounds and Regulated Stands. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. LC/04092012/A

**Wolverhampton City Council**

**Molineux Stadium Safety Advisory Group**

**Minutes of Meeting held on 6 March 2012**

**Present**

Wolverhampton City Council

Andy Jervis	Regulatory Services (Chair)
Dan O'Brien,	Regulatory Services (Sec)
Steve Burson	Building Control

Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club

Steve Sutton	Wolverhampton Wanderers FC
Richard Skirrow	Wolverhampton Wanderers FC

West Midlands Police

Dave Hulson	Force Football Unit
Donna Jones	Force Football Unit

West Midlands Fire Service

Pardeep Raw	WMFS
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West Midlands Ambulance Service

Not represented

Sports Grounds Safety Authority

Mark Smith

**1. Apologies**

Mark Chapman, Jez Moxey Martin Girvan Howard Lewis-Jones Sean Churchill

**2. Minutes/ matters arising following the meeting of the 13 December 2011**

SS reported that there had been no more card blocks for persistent standing.

**3. Contract Update**

SS reported that the roof had now been completed and the capacity of the lower tier was now near the holding capacity. The upper tier was progressing well although there had been some delay due to weather. The contractors were confident that they would meet

the completion deadline. SS reported that matchday planning was now well versed and the construction site has no impact on match days. There were no plans to bring the upper tier into use before the end of the season. SS reported that he was in the process of drafting new operational plans for the new stand. SB enquired about the moving of the temporary exit, SB, DO, SS would check the exit on Friday. PR enquired about the issue of the means of escape through the Club shop, the Club agreed that this could be an issue.

#### 4. **Manchester Utd 18 March**

SS referred to his report concerning the Safety Management Plan for the Manchester Utd fixture. SS explained that Man U had been trialling a new approach with its own supporters whilst asking other clubs to reduce the number of seat kills. The approach would involve a more welcoming brand of the concourse, a letter to all visitors from Alex Fergusson, a redesign of the approach to the turnstile block and kiosk staff to wear Man U branded baseball caps. SS reported that additional SIA staff would be available and the radials would be robustly policed. RS reported that the approach had shown improvement at Aston Villa and Anfield, also that Brighton change the appearance of the away concourse for every set of visitors.

#### 5. **Report of Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club**

##### **Matchday reports**

##### **Stoke – 17/01/12, 15:00 kick off**

Category – C  
Lower)

Attendance: 24684 (22480), Away 2175 (SB

Ejections – 1 Away

Arrests – 3 Away

No pre match issues with all arriving safety and without incident. The vast majority of the visitors stood throughout. The fact that no alcohol was sold to the visitors caused no issues. Generally the visitors were well behaved, other than one arrest for pitch incursion and one for public order during. All left together without incident within the vicinity of the stadium.

##### **Norwich – 20/01/12, 19:45 kick off**

Category – A (Reduced resources)  
2406 (SB Lower)

Attendance: 27067 (24438), Away

Ejections – None

Arrests – None

The Norwich supporters arrived by coach (23 due to free travel offer) early and entered the ground without issue. During the game the vast majority of the visitors stood but complied with stewards to keep the gangways clear. Overall they were a credit to their club. All left together without issue.

##### **Chelsea - 02/01/2012, 15:00 kick off**

Category – A  
Lower)

Attendance: 27049 (25335), Away 2186 (SB

Ejections – None

Arrests – None

The event passed off with everyone leaving the stadium safely. The Chelsea supporters stood throughout the game but kept the gangways clear. The Chelsea supporters were generally very easy to manage and caused no issues of note.

**Birmingham City – 18/01/2012, 20:00 kick off**

Category – C Attendance: 10153 (9617), Away 2305 (SB Lower)  
Ejections – 5 Home Arrests – 1 Away

Pre match a group of 25/30 away risk supporters appeared unexpectedly in the vicinity of the stadium prior to ko. Following a stand off there was a brief period of disorder on the area adjacent to the subway. Two police spotters arrived and intervened. There were no other issues on entry. Generally inside the stadium the majority of the away fans were reasonable, they stood throughout and there was some vandalism in the toilets. The home ejections were for smoking or Foul & Abusive/Threatening behaviour. Post match the police created a filter cordon to direct the departing visitors toward the coach park, this worked well with one very brief period where the away risk stopped to confront home supporters, police intervened and kept the away fans moving.

**Aston Villa - 21/01/2012, 15:00 kick off**

Category – B Attendance: 27084 (25540), Away 2382 (SB Lower)  
Ejections – 2 Home Arrests – 4 Home, 3 Away

Based on previous good behaviour and few issues this fixture was downgraded to a Cat B. There were no real issues on ingress. The Villa supporters stood throughout the game and 1 was arrested for jumping the wall when they scored. No issues on exit with all leaving together.

**Liverpool – 31/01/2012, 19:45 kick off**

Category – B Attendance: 27447 (25311), Away 2343 (SB Lower)  
Ejections – 1 Home, 4 Away Arrests – None

Overall a relatively problem free evening. The ingress went well, all away supporters arrived in good time. The Liverpool fans were excellent, there were no issues at the turnstiles and inside the stadium, with the exception of persistent standing, they were very well behaved. There was some obstruction of gangways but they complied with stewards and responded well to their instructions. Four away in home areas were ejected. Post match all left together without incident.

**WBA – 12/02/2012, 13:30 kick off**

Category – Cir Attendance: 27031 (25456), Away 2309 (SB Lower)  
Ejections – 4 Home, 1 Away Arrests – 2 Home, 2 Away

The ingress passed off relatively smoothly. The visitors that travelled via coach arrived simultaneously an hour before kick off. At approximately 13:15, a second group of more vociferous away fans were escorted to the ground by police, this was well controlled and there were no issues arising. The introduction of a new barrier system at the away turnstiles was positive and worked well.

**First Half:** During the game the WBA fans all stood but gangways were kept clear due to aisle seat restrictions. Following the first away goal a smoke grenade was discharged in the away section.

**Half time:**

There were three home ejections for smoking.

**Second half:** A further smoke grenade was discharged following a WBA goal. Both this and the previous device were quickly removed from the stands by safety team in

accordance with procedures. There were two supporters arrested for jumping the perimeter wall of the stand, one home and one away.

One other away supporter was ejected for the same offence. A steward was injured by a coin thrown towards the field of play from behind the goal. Stewards detained one other offender who was positively identified for throwing towards the visitors and he was held in the steward's room for arrest. Just prior to the final whistle an away fan was arrested for racially abusing a player.

**End of game/Post Match:** The egress went well with police cordons/road blocks in place. There were no issues within the vicinity of the stadium, however there was some vandalism in the away section,

There was a small demonstration aimed at the Manager and Board outside the main reception, police were called to disperse them. The visiting players coach was located in this area however the coach departed without incident.

SS reported that he had been working with Prof Steve Frosdick on developing the Operations Manual and Risk Assessments. SS reported the work was 95% complete and would provide the basis for the future Safety Certificate.

## **6. Report of West Midlands Police**

DH reported that Stoke had gone well with few incidents, however after the game all the Stoke risk left individually, then regrouped intent on gaining access to The Moon Under Water, disorder was prevented. DH reported that an alliance had been formed between Stoke risk and West Brom.

Birmingham City resulted in the arrest of 5 prominent Wolves risk. DH reported that there was £1000 damage to a train.

Aston Villa resulted in a turn out of Wolves youth mostly as a response to the arrests at the Birmingham game. The match was downgraded to a Cat B. DH reported that the club bans were also having some success.

WBA, DH reported a considerable reduction in Wolves risk, approximately 40 as opposed to 150 - 200 the previous year. Most disorder was as a result of frustration owing to the score.

SS reported on an incident with a home supporter where the police had suggested a Community Resolution Order in preference to a criminal record.

## **6. Report of West Midlands Ambulance Service**

No report was submitted

## **7. Report of West Midlands Fire Service**

PR had nothing to report further to matters mentioned.

## **8. Report of Wolverhampton City Council**

Nothing to report from either service other than matters already raised.

**9. Report of the Football Licensing Authority**

MS reported that Keith Sears had been approached by a Sun Journalist investigating why the club had replaced the Stan Cullis. The rumour circulating was that it was for structural reasons.

**12. Date of Next Meeting**

15 May 2012  
10.30 am start



**Wolverhampton City Council**

**Molineux Stadium Safety Advisory Group**

**Minutes of Meeting held on 15 May 2012**

**Present**

**Wolverhampton City Council**

Dan O'Brien,	Environmental Health (Sec) (Chair)
Steve Burson	Building Control
Sean Churchill	Building Control

**Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club**

Steve Sutton	Wolverhampton Wanderers FC
Richard Skirrow	Wolverhampton Wanderers FC
Jez Moxey	Wolverhampton Wanderers FC

**West Midlands Police**

Dave Hulson	Force Football Unit
Donna Jones	Force Football Unit

**West Midlands Fire Service**

Martin Hayward	WMFS
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**West Midlands Ambulance Service**

Not represented

**Sports Grounds Safety Authority**

Not represented

**1. Apologies**

Mark Chapman, Martin Girvan, Mark Smith, Howard Lewis-Jones, Dave John

**2. Minutes/ matters arising following the meeting of the 6 March 2012**

DO reported back on the SMP employed for the Man U game and indicated that there was a greater level of compliance than in past years when aisle and double aisle seat reductions were in place, he reported that this was due in no small part to the time of kick off though and lack of alcohol.

RS reported that the board had met to discuss away fans location for the forthcoming season following the completion of the Stan Cullis, RS circulated a paper detailing the various options available to the club for the 3 potential locations, the permutations could accommodate approximate cohorts of 1000, 2000, 2600 and 4600 away support through combinations of the upper and lower north east quadrant and the lower Steve Bull. The Jack Harris would no longer be used for away support. DO reported that his concerns surrounded the management impact of the use of two locations and the impact standing away support would have on the Cullis potentially resulting in standing throughout half of the ground. The SAG agreed that it would be necessary to see how the ground performs and what works best. There followed a discussion on Championship visitors and the aspiration to return to normality with Cardiff.

DO enquired about the means of obscuring the doors within the hospitality suite of the Stan Cullis, SS confirmed they would be using blinds.

### **3. Report of Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club**

#### **Blackburn – 10/03/2012, 15:00 kick off**

Category – A  
Flank)

Attendance: 26121 (23968), Away 1315 (JH

Ejections – 4 Away

Arrests – 1 Home, 1 Away

There were no issues pre match, however there was a slight delay due to the away turnstiles not reading the bar-coded tickets, a system reboot resolved this. The 4 away arrests were alcohol related. The visitors were very lively and vociferous in their support. The majority of the visitors stood, the home supporters were negative and there were minor scuffles in home areas, quickly dealt with by stewards. There was a brief period of disorder on the external concourse by the entrance to the subway, this was unknown Wolves fans reacting adversely to the departing visitors who were celebrating, the matter was dealt with swiftly by the Police. Following the game there was a demonstration outside the main reception area, initially there were around 300 supporters involved but this dwindled to 20 or so. Police and stewards remained on duty in this area for the duration.

#### **Manchester United – 18/03/2012, 13:30 kick off**

Category – C  
Lower)

Attendance: 27494 (24947), Away 2499 (SB

Ejections – 3 Away, 1 Home

Arrests – 3 Away

Traditionally this is a fixture that requires aisle seat restrictions due to persistent standing and blocking of gangways. However, following the successful management initiatives used elsewhere the Club agreed a management plan with the MSSAG to remove seat any restrictions. The management plan included: Leaflets seeking cooperation, DVD of Manchester United games played on concourse TVs, better signage and queuing systems to prevent issues at the stiles.

The control measures put into place, together with positive proactive policing and stewarding, proved to be generally successful. The gangways were generally kept clear with staff only having to work hard in a couple of areas, all supporters used the correct blocks and there was no evidence of migration.

The away fans stood for the duration of the game and were very vocal. The arrests were for alcohol and ticketing offences, ejections were also made for away in home areas.

The new initiatives did contribute to a better general level of behaviour by the visitors and there were fewer issues for Club stewards than in the previous two seasons (both Friday 5:30 kick off). However this was only partially due to the management plan and also due

to score, the early Sunday kick off and no alcohol sales. Overall this event concluded with everyone leaving the stadium safely.

**Bolton Wanderers – 31/03/2012, 15:00 kick off**

Category – B Attendance: 25215 (22638), Away 1303 (JH Flank)

Ejections – 4 Away

Arrests – 1 Home, 1 Away

All supporters entered without incident. The visitors did stand for most of the game, however all stairways and exits were kept clear at all times. The first half was very quiet, but as we had expected at half time the Bolton supporters were very boisterous on the concourse areas, jumping around throwing food and drink everywhere. One male Bolton supporter was ejected for using foul and abusive language and another was ejected for drinking in view of the playing area, he was subsequently arrested. Three other away fans were ejected from a home area. There was a small demonstration outside the stadium post-match, one supporter was arrested to prevent a breach of the peace.

**Arsenal – 11/04/2012, 19:45 kick off**

Category – A Attendance: 25815 (22555), Away 2390 (SB Lower)

Ejections – 1 Away

Arrests – 1 Home

There were no issues on ingress. The visitors were very well behaved and we had no reason to intervene or respond to any incidents. The vast majority stood but all gangways were kept clear at all times. The away ejection was for being in a home area. Post-match all left together and mixed well without incident.

**Manchester City - 22/04/2012, 16:00 kick off**

Category – B Attendance: 24576 (21213), Away 2439 (SB Lower)

Ejections – 2 Home, 3 Away

Arrests – 1 Home, 2 Away

Generally the ingress went well with all in well before kick-off. Approximately an hour before kick-off it became apparent that there was a problem with the seats in the North stand. The Club closed the vomitories to supporters while stewards investigated and checked the seats. Approximately 35 seats were identified that snapped off the supporting rail when sat on. Spare brackets were fitted from the stock in the upper tier. When the visitors scored the first goal there was coin throwing reported coming from the away fans into the upper tier, unfortunately a young child was hit in the face, he was treated by a first aider and relocated for the remainder of the game. One away supporter was arrested for jumping over the trackside wall. Two away fans were ejected from a home area. At half time the away fans were observed throwing beer around in the concourse, this was monitored by CCTV. One away supporter was arrested for drinking in view of the pitch. Overall the visitors were reasonable; they kept the gangways clear but did stand for the duration. Post-match all left together however due to very heavy rain the egress was very slow! There were no issues in the vicinity of the stadium.

**Everton – 06/05/2012, 14:00 kick off**

Category – B Attendance: 25446 (21435), Away 2531 (SB Lower)

Ejections – None

Arrests – 2 Away

Overall this fixture passed off safely. Pre match the Club had to reconfigure the away queuing arrangements due to a broken window above the turnstiles. The visitors responded well to this and organised themselves into a very orderly queue. Overall their

behaviour was very good, the vast majority sat down and we had no issues at all with alcohol related behaviour. Unfortunately two away fans managed to get onto the pitch during the second half. Both were apprehended by stewards and arrested by police. Post-match all left together without incident.

## **1) General Update**

The Club currently has 336 operational stewards. 232 of these are qualified to NVQ level 2, 14 are currently enrolled and progressing toward their NVQ level 2. Following a recruitment process during March the Club employed 98 new stewards, partly to offset leavers and partly in preparation for the opening of the new stand next season. All new stewards have completed four games and 90 of these will be enrolled for training during the summer, 8 of them are already qualified to NVQ level. SS reported that he would like to thank everyone who had contributed to a successful season. JM reported that he would like to echo those sentiments and add that; given the season the standard of behaviour had been reasonably good. SS further reported that there had been a total of 44 ejections of which 21 were home and a total of 52 arrests of which only 17 were home.

## **4. Report of West Midlands Police**

DH reinforced the previous comments regarding arrests and ejections.

DH reported that Blackburn presented minor issues outside and were always problematic in the Jack Harris. Man U were reported as being the best DH had ever seen. Arsenal was particularly well behaved, DH reported that a window was broken in Walkabout by Man City fans disappointed by a Man U score, following the Everton game 30 Everton fans returned to Walkabout after the game and 25 masked wolves risk turned up. DH reported that figures had improved significantly this season in no small part to banning orders, BTP arrests had decreased from 55 last season to 12 this season and away arrests from 42 to 27 this season. A total of 10 banning orders had been made with a further 7 to be heard. DH reported an instance where a defendant with a banning order had pleaded not guilty and resulted in the magistrate removing some of the conditions. JM enquired as to the total number of banning orders. DH reported 70 with 7 to be spent. JM reported that they are an effective deterrent and requested that it be minuted that the police have the full support of the club for following this policy. DH reported that he had noted that 14B orders were being given less readily and to counter this, the police had appointed a single point of contact to strengthen the message. JM reported that the club often have an evidence trail of warnings if it would assist.

## **5. Report of West Midlands Ambulance Service**

No report was submitted

## **6. Report of West Midlands Fire Service**

MH had nothing to report further to matters mentioned.

## **7. Report of Wolverhampton City Council**

SB raised the evacuation strategy and the issue over push bars and maglocks and the need to resolve the matter. SS confirmed the matter had been raised some time ago by SF. SS reported that the matter would be raised at the contractor meeting on Thursday.

**8. Report of the Sports Grounds Safety Authority**

DO confirmed that nothing had been raised by the SGSA

**9. AOB**

RS reported that he was to make a licensing application for the rest of the Stan Cullis in early July. RS reported that there would be a pre season friendly against Aston Villa on August 11. The fixtures were to be made public on 18 June, the SAG agreed to provisionally book a meeting for the 3<sup>rd</sup> July should there be any early season games that require Safety Management Planning.

**12. Date of Next Meeting**

TBC 2012  
10.30 am start