

From: Chris Whyte
Sent: 13 December 2017 17:17
To: Martin Buhagiar
Subject: Information request (ref: 8604897)

Martin Buhagiar

Board Member, Tottenham Hotspur Supporters' Trust

13 December 2017

Dear Mr Buhagiar

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Wembley National Stadium

I refer to your email of 15 November 2017 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) our reference 8604897 regarding the decision to move the Tottenham Hotspur versus West Ham United Premier League match from 30 December to 31 December 2017.

Specifically your request stated:

1. How was the decision made and in what format? For example: did the broadcaster request it and Brent SAG was a party that agreed the game could be moved.
2. What is the usual process for Brent SAG when games are moved for broadcasting – what is its role and what are its priorities? How involved does it usually get?
3. Why is there currently a delay confirming the game and kick off time? Both clubs are currently unable to sell tickets for this match (as of November 15th) as parties including Brent SAG discuss potential issues with the game going ahead on New Year's Eve. What is your understanding and involvement of the current issue and delay?
4. Did Brent SAG have or raise any concerns when the football match was initially moved from 3pm on Dec 30th to Dec 31st?
5. Can any minutes from any meetings regarding this matter and football match (Tottenham versus West Ham at Wembley) be provided?

If it is not possible to provide the information requested due to the information exceeding the cost of compliance limits identified in Section 12, please provide advice and assistance, under your Section 16 obligations, as to how I can refine my request to be included in the scope of the Act.

In any case, if you can identify ways that my request could be refined please provide further advice and assistance to indicate this.

I look forward to your response within 20 working days, as stipulated by the Act.

I will answer your request in order:

1. How was the decision made and in what format? For example: did the broadcaster request it and Brent SAG was a party that agreed the game could be moved.

Brent Council received a request by email from Wembley National Stadium Ltd (WNSL) that the Broadcaster and the Premier League would like to reschedule the Premier League match between THFC and WHUFC from Saturday 30 December 2017 to Sunday 31 December 2017 at 17.00 hours. As the Certifying Authority and Chair of the Safety Advisory Group for WNSL, it is right and proper that the stadium seeks our permission to reschedule the match.

2. What is the usual process for Brent SAG when games are moved for broadcasting – what is its role and what are its priorities? How involved does it usually get?

The protocol is for the Stadium to apply to the Chair of the SAG who then consults the members of the SAG giving a deadline for their agreement or objection to the request. The purpose of the SAG is to advise the Stadium and the Council on measures they should take to ensure the safety of spectators attending events at the stadium. The Chair of the SAG informs the Stadium if the SAG members' collective decision.

3. Why is there currently a delay confirming the game and kick off time? Both clubs are currently unable to sell tickets for this match (as of November 15th) as parties including Brent SAG discuss potential issues with the game going ahead on New Year's Eve. What is your understanding and involvement of the current issue and delay?

Several aspects of safety as well as transportation of spectators to and from the stadium were taken into account. This involved detail investigations, assessments and calculations by the key SAG Members, especially the Metropolitan Police, British Transport Police and the public transport providers, which inevitable took a long time to agree. This was followed by a protracted round of discussions between the stadium, the Premier League and the broadcaster.

4. Did Brent SAG have or raise any concerns when the football match was initially moved from 3pm on Dec 30th to Dec 31st?

Several SAG Members expressed concerns about the proposed rescheduling of the match to New Year's Eve because of the strain that would put on the emergency services and the public transport providers who had already planned their operations for the transportation of thousands of people to the various New Year's Eve celebrations in Central London. On 1 December 2017, the Stadium informed the Chair of the SAG that the Premier League would like to reschedule the match to 4 January 2018. The Chair consulted the SAG Members, none of whom objected. The Chair informed the Stadium that the SAG made no objection to this proposal. He stated that there was a very strong wish to have this matter settled, and a public announcement to that effect would be welcomed. The Premier League later decided to reschedule the match to Thursday 4 January 2018 at 20.00 hours.

5. Can any minutes from any meetings regarding this matter and football match (Tottenham versus West Ham at Wembley) be provided?

Discussions were held both via the telephone and email. Much of this centered on the operational planning of the various SAG members and this information is exempt under Section 16 of the FOIA.

I trust that this information is sufficient for your purposes. If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Tel: 0303 123 1113 Fax: 01625 524 510 Web: www.ico.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Chris Whyte

Operational Director, Environmental Services
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Brent Council

www.brent.gov.uk