



Committee and date

Strategic Licensing
Committee

1st December 2011

Item

9

Public

SAFETY AT SPORTS GROUNDS – ANNUAL REPORT DECEMBER 2011

Responsible Officer

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1. Summary

- 1.1 On 15 December 2009 it was resolved that an annual report be given to Members of the Strategic Licensing Committee detailing the exercise of delegated functions in respect of the safety of sports grounds, undertaken by officers throughout the year.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Strategic Licensing Committee note the activities in respect of Sports Grounds Safety at designated sports grounds in Shropshire.

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 This is an information report giving Members information on the work undertaken by the Health, Safety and Promotions team and therefore a risk assessment and opportunities appraisal has not been carried out.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

5. Background

- 5.1 The Health, Safety and Promotions team situated within Environmental Health is responsible for the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975, Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987, and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 5.2 Under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975, the Council is required to issue Safety Certificates for 'designated sport grounds' which are defined as:-
'A place where sports or other competitive activities take place in the open air and where accommodation has been provided for spectators,

consisting of artificial structures or of natural structures artificially modified for the purpose.

- 5.3 Safety certificates are required for sports grounds that can accommodate more than 10,000 spectators (5,000 in the case of Football League grounds) or have a covered stand that holds 500 or more spectators.
- 5.4 The primary purpose of a safety certificate is to set the safe capacity of a designated ground or of a regulated stand at a non-designated ground. In addition to setting the safe capacity the safety certificate will set out the detailed terms and conditions with which the certificate holder must comply if that capacity is to be maintained
- 5.5 Three venues within Shropshire have Safety Certificates these are:-
Shrewsbury Town Football Club.
New Saints Football Club, Oswestry.
Ludlow Racecourse.

6. Shrewsbury Town Football Club (Greenhouse Meadow)

- 6.1 As an important step to achieving the reasonable safety of a sports ground a calculation has to be made to establish a safe capacity. An annual inspection was carried out by the Health and Safety Officers in June 2011 to assess each part of the ground's viewing accommodation according to its physical condition and the quality of the safety management of that area.
- 6.2 The criteria set out in the national guidance document, 'The Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds' enabled the capacity for the Greenhouse Meadow Stadium to remain at 9,875.
- 6.3 A Safety Advisory Group comprising of West Mercia Police, West Midlands Ambulance Service, Shropshire Fire and Rescue and the Football Licensing Authority now meets with representatives of Shrewsbury Town F.C. management team on a quarterly basis. Meetings were held in March, June and September of this year.
- 6.4 The Shrewsbury Town v Gillingham match held in February 2011 was attended by Safety Advisory Group members to view the football club's operational procedures in action. This included observation of the pre-match safety briefings with the stewards and match officials and a partial emergency evacuation exercise for away supporters. This exercise is to be extended to all stands on a rolling programme throughout the year.
- 6.5 The highly successful Elton John concert took place in June 2011, and we are pleased to note that no serious or significant incidents were reported. The Safety Advisory Group met with the event organisers on a number of occasions throughout the early part of the year, a Special Safety Certificate was drawn up for the event in May, followed by a useful de-brief shortly after the concert itself.

7. New Saints Football Club, Oswestry

7.1 The New Saints Football Club does not presently fall within the definition of a sports ground of sufficient capacity or with a regulated stand, to necessitate the need for a safety certificate. However, when UEFA games are held at the club, UEFA require them to have a Safety Certificate. Following inspection a new safety certificate was given to the club in October 2011.

8. Ludlow Racecourse

8.1 The racecourse has a regulated stand which was extended last year. A number of inspections were carried out, resulting in the issue of an inaugural general safety certificate in September 2011.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Councillor Steve Charmley

Local Member

Covers all area of the Council

Appendices

None