



Committee and Date

Strategic Licensing
Committee

19th December 2012

Item

7

Public

SAFETY OF SPORTS GROUNDS – ANNUAL REPORT DECEMBER 2012

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Public Protection & Enforcement

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1. Summary

- 1.1 On 15th December 2009 it was agreed 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 Public Protection & Enforcement over the past 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 Protection & Prevention 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 Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975, Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order are enforced by Public Protection & Enforcement.
- 5.2 Under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975, the Council is required to issue Safety Certificates for designated sports 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 in sports grounds that can accommodate more than 10,000 spectators (5000 in the case of Football League grounds) or have a covered stand that holds more than 500 spectators.
- 5.4 The primary purpose of the safety certificate is to calculate and set a limit on the safe capacity of a designated ground or regulated stand at a non-designated ground. The safety certificate will also detail conditions in respect to safety matters with which the certificate holder must comply if that capacity is to be maintained.
- 5.5 A meeting was held with the Safety of Sports Ground Authority to review the councils approach to enforcement of the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975. The outcome of this was to ensure that the authority maintains its regulatory approach and conducts regular inspections of sports grounds to ensure compliance with the conditions of safety certificates.
- 5.6 The venues within Shropshire which have safety certificates are:
- Shrewsbury Town Football Club
 - Ludlow Racecourse
 - New Saints Football Club, Oswestry

6. Shrewsbury Town Football Club (Prostar Stadium)

- 6.1 An annual inspection of the stadium was carried out to verify the safe capacity of the stadium in accordance with national guidance. The capacity of the club has been retained at a maximum of 9875.
- 6.2 A Safety Advisory Group consisting of West Mercia Police, Shropshire Fire and Rescue, West Midlands Ambulance Service, The Safety of Sports Grounds Authority, Emergency Planning and Public Protection & Enforcement has met on a quarterly basis to raise any safety issues associated with football matches at the stadium.
- 6.3 The following match day inspections were carried out by Public Protection and representatives of the Safety Advisory Group to view the clubs operational procedures in action and to assess compliance with the General Safety Certificate.
- 6.4 Shrewsbury Town vs Port Vale (27/03/2012): This included observation of the pre-match safety briefings with stewards and match officials. During the match a fire broke out in an electrical switchgear room controlling the floodlights. This resulted in the match being called off and an evacuation of the stand. The fire service was called to extinguish the fire and the ground was evacuated safely. Following the fire members of the safety advisory group

met to discuss the implications further. As a result of this fire sensors are to be installed in all electrical switchgear rooms and the rooms are monitored by thermal imaging cameras at regular intervals during matches.

- 6.5 Shrewsbury Town vs Coventry (18/09/12): This inspection was for one of the category A (high risk) games. During which the pre-match safety briefings with stewards and match officials was observed as well as crowd control and safe access and egress from the stadium.
- 6.6 Shrewsbury Town vs Walsall (14/10/12): This inspection was to observe the first fully policed match held at the stadium due to local intelligence and the deemed risk.
- 6.7 A special safety certificate has been granted for the annual Carol Service which is held in December.

7. Ludlow Racecourse

- 7.1 The racecourse has a regulated stand in which a safety certificate was granted in 2011. An inspection of the racecourse is now being planned to assess compliance with the safety certificate.

8. New Saints Football Club, Oswestry

- 8.1 The New Saints Football Club was visited in April by Public Protection Officers and safety certificates were granted for two regulated stands.

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)
Councillor Steve Charmley
Local Member
Covers all areas of the Council
Appendices
None