

## SAFETY OF SPORTS GROUNDS – ANNUAL REPORT DECEMBER 2014

**Responsible Officer** Matthew Aldridge - Health Protection and Prevention Team Manager

Email: Email: [matthew.aldridge@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.aldridge@shropshire.gov.uk) Tel: 01743 251700

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### 1. Summary

- 1.1 On 15<sup>th</sup> December 2009 it was agreed that an annual report be given to members of the Strategic Licencing Committee detailing the exercise of delegated functions in respect of the safety of sports grounds, undertaken by the Public Protection service over the past year.
- 1.2 There are no financial, environmental or health and safety implications associated with this report.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Strategic Licencing Committee note the activities in respect of safety of sports grounds at designated sports grounds and regulated stands in Shropshire.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 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.

- 3.4 The primary purpose of the safety certificate is to set a limit on the safe capacity of a designated ground or regulated stand. The capacity of a sports ground or stadium is calculated on the physical condition of the stadium (the P factor) and the level of safety management (the S factor).
- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 The venues within Shropshire which hold safety certificates are:
- Shrewsbury Town Football Club
  - Ludlow Racecourse
  - New Saints Football Club, Park Hall, Oswestry.

#### **4. Shrewsbury Town Football Club (Greenhous Meadow)**

- 4.1 Inspections have been conducted to verify the safe capacity of the stadium taking account of the physical condition of the stadium and the safety management operations in place (P and S factors). The calculations have been verified and the capacity of the club has been retained at a maximum of 9875 people.
- 4.2 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 has met twice to routinely address any safety issues associated with football matches at the stadium.
- 4.3 The following official 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:
- 4.4 Shrewsbury Town vs. Bradford (22/03/2014). An assessment of the safety management operation was held during a high risk police free game. High standards of safety management were seen where stewards were able to contain a safe operation throughout the match.
- 4.5 A special safety certificate was granted for the Capital One cup game between Shrewsbury Town FC and Premier League team Chelsea FC on the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2014. The club requested that temporary stands be placed in the South East and South West corners of the ground to seat an extra 560 home supporters in the ground. Extraordinary Safety Advisory Group meetings were held and it was agreed that the club had in place appropriate safety management procedures to allow the erection of temporary stands.
- 4.6 Shrewsbury Town vs. Chelsea (28/10/2014). A match-day inspection took place of the extra capacity game. This was a policed game and the safety operations were monitored to ensure the safety of the general public. A high

standard of safety management was seen throughout the match including the safe access and egress of supporters.

- 4.7 Special safety certificates were granted for the following events over the past twelve months:
- RAF vs Navy (26<sup>th</sup> March 2014).
  - England vs Ukraine Ladies (8<sup>th</sup> May 2014).

## **5. Ludlow Racecourse**

- 5.1 The racecourse has a regulated stand in which a safety certificate was granted in 2011. Inspections of the racecourse have been undertaken and revised P and S factor assessments have been completed and all site certification has been updated and verified. A new safety certificate is currently being issued.

## **6. New Saints Football Club, Oswestry**

- 6.1 The New Saints (TNS) Football Club was visited in September by Public Protection Officers and a new general safety certificate was granted.
- 6.2 A match day inspection was carried out during the New Saints v Bangor City game on the 05/03/2014. Recommendations were made regarding the formal training and qualification of stewards. A training programme is in place to satisfy this requirement.

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