

SPORTS GROUND ADVISORY GROUP MEETING

ABERDEEN, 8 July, 2010. - Minute of Meeting of the SPORTS GROUND ADVISORY GROUP. Present:- Councillor Reynolds, Convener and Councillors Clark, Collie, Corall and Milne.

Also in attendance: - Drew Carr, Scottish Ambulance Service, Kevin Coutts, Grampian Fire and Rescue Service, Arlene Dunbar, Licensing Team, Brenda Flaherty, Licensing Team, David Kidd, Building Standards, Grant Tierney, Building Standards, Caroline Treanor, Licensing Team, Alex Venters, Environmental Health, Adrian Watson, Grampian Police and Salter Watson, Grampian Police.

Apologies for absence: - Ivor Churcher, Environmental Health

1 OVERVIEW OF THE SPORTS GROUND ADVISORY GROUP

Brenda Flaherty, Legal Manager, explained that the Sports Ground Advisory Group was a Sub Committee of the Licensing Committee. She advised that the Group had not met for some considerable time. She further explained that working alongside the Sports Ground Advisory Group is the Sports Ground Advisory Working Group which is an officers' group. The Working Group meets on a quarterly basis and its minutes are reported to the Licensing Committee.

The meeting was called to raise awareness amongst members of the current issues in respect of the safety certificate for Pittodrie Stadium and Aberdeen Football Club.

The purpose of both Groups is to fulfil the local authority's duty under the Safety in Sports Ground Act 1975, where stadia with more than 10,000 seats require a safety certificate. Pittodrie Stadium is currently the only stadium in Aberdeen which requires a certificate.

The content of the certificate is based on the fifth edition of a document referred to as the Green Guide which sets out all the safety requirements for new stadia. For older stadia which cannot comply with the Green Guide, any deviations from it have to be submitted to the Local Authority for approval and details provided as to how the club intends to manage the identified risk.

In terms of the Safety in Sports Ground Act 1975 the local authority are the enforcing authority and it is the club's responsibility to ensure that risks are adequately managed.

It is proposed that the Sports Ground Advisory Group and the Sports Ground Advisory Working Group meet on an annual basis.

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It was agreed that members should be circulated a copy of the current safety certificate for their information.

The Group resolved:-
to note the position.

**2 MINUTE OF MEETING OF SPORTS GROUND ADVISORY WORKING GROUP
- 08 APRIL 2010**

The Group had before it the minute of meeting of 8 April 2010.

Adrian Watson, Grampian Police advised the Group that Grampian Police could not locate the document setting out each agency's roles and identifying which agency was responsible for sections of the Green Guide referred to at paragraph 4 of page 2 of the minute.

David Kidd, Building Standards advised that Building Standards had found a copy of Glasgow City Council's document which is based on the 4th edition of the Green Guide and suggested that this could be a starting point for the development of an Aberdeen City document.

The Group resolved:-

to note the minute subject to the following amendments:

- (1) paragraph 1 at page 2, to add "have Environmental Health involved in inspections as it is considered that this agency have their own legislation"; and
- (2) to remove paragraph 5 on page 3 of the minute.

**3 NOTE OF MEETING BETWEEN GRAMPIAN FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE &
LICENSING - 27 APRIL 2010**

The Group had before it a note of a meeting between Grampian Fire and Rescue Service and Licensing held on 27 April 2010.

The Group resolved:-
to note its contents.

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4 LETTER DATED 29 APRIL 2010 FROM GRAMPIAN FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE REGARDING PITTODRIE SAFETY CERTIFICATE AND RELATED MATTERS

The Group had before it a letter dated 29 April 2010 from Grampian Fire and Rescue Service regarding the Pittodrie Safety Certificate and other related matters.

The Group resolved:-

to note the content of the letter.

5 RESULT OF INSPECTION OF PITTODRIE STADIUM - 05 MAY 2010

Members of the Sports Ground Advisory Working Group visited Pittodrie Stadium on 5 May 2010. All those who attended agreed that the visit had been an extremely worthwhile exercise.

Grant Tierney, Building Standards, advised that during the match day visit officers had attended Police and Club briefings prior to and throughout the game.

Members were circulated with copies of a briefing note and briefing agenda for their information which had been provided to officers at the visit.

Grant Tierney informed the Group of some of his observations from the visit; (a) stewards were briefed in one of the stands and that it was difficult to hear the instructions from the back of the stand. He also considered that it would be useful, for stewards who were not familiar with the stadium, if a layout plan was attached to the briefing agenda.

Salter Watson, Grampian Police advised that the Police also conducts their briefings in one of the stands so that the briefer can point out specifics such as exit points and stand names. He considered that it was beneficial to have the briefings in the stands. He further added it was up to individuals to ensure that they can hear the instructions. An Aberdeen Football Club representative can pick out two stewards at random for a knowledge check to ensure stewards have heard and attended to the briefing.

(b) away support buses are being parked at the rear of the south stand narrowing that escape route.

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Salter Watson, Grampian Police advised that to allow a quick exit the buses are moved during the match and parked in the walkway. He further added that this is only permissible for lower category matches with a low volume of away supporters which would amount to two or three buses maximum.

Grant Tierney considered that as the area was enclosed there may be the potential for crushing and the escape route was being compromised by the buses. He conceded that the issue appears to be adequately assessed and managed, however he considered it would be worthwhile to look at the issue further.

The Group resolved:-

- (i) to note the position; and
- (ii) to write to Aberdeen Football Club regarding the escape route at the South Stand.

6 REVISED SAFETY CERTIFICATE

Caroline Treanor, Licensing advised that a revised certificate dated 8 June, 2010 was now in place. The certificate is revised annually.

David Kidd advised that Building Standards had been working with Aberdeen Football Club on its list of deviations from the Green Guide. He further advised that Building Standards intended to inspect the stadium on 27 July 2010 and requested that a meeting of the Sports Ground Advisory Working Group be set up to discuss the deviations.

The Group resolved:-

to hold a meeting of the Sports Ground Advisory Working Group on Wednesday, 14 July 2010 to discuss the issue of deviations.

7 UEFA DOCUMENT

The Group heard from Brenda Flaherty, Legal Manager that when Pittodrie are hosting international matches they required an additional certificate from UEFA. She advised that Pittodrie were to host an Under-21 Scotland game.

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There had been a few issues with the UEFA document that the Group had wanted to discuss, in particular, the timescales in which the Aberdeen Football Club had wanted the document turned around in.

David Kidd, Building Standards considered that the wording in the UEFA document is vague in places and was lacking in sufficient explanation.

Caroline Treanor advised it was not clear who was responsible for the inspections of the last two items in the UEFA document. David Kidd considered that with regard to spectator accommodation areas and access routes to spectator accommodation areas, input would be required from both Building Standards and the Police. Adrian Watson, Grampian Police, advised that the Police were concerned with law and order and crowd control issues, however the Police did not have technical expertise and could not carry out inspections.

David Kidd considered that the next time the Group were asked to look at the UEFA document that there should be fewer issues as documentation to be provided by Aberdeen Football Club would be provided in advance of the signing of the UEFA document.

8 STRUCTURED TIMETABLE FOR FUTURE INSPECTIONS

1. Brenda Flaherty, Legal Manager advised the Group that the Sports Ground Advisory Working Group had previously agreed to carry out one non-match day & one match day inspection. She further advised that the Working Group would require to devise an inspection sheet and decide if inspections would look at all areas of the stadium or specific areas on a rolling programme.

David Kidd advised that he considered a rolling programme would be the best option.

Salter Watson, Grampian Police requested that inspections take place within one or two weeks of a meeting of the Working Group and that the end of season inspection take place at the end of May rather than closer to the start of the next season.

Brenda advised that members of the Sports Ground Advisory Group were welcome to attend inspections should they so wish.

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9 DATE OF NEXT MEETING OF SPORTS GROUND ADVISORY WORKING GROUP

- 2.** 14 October 2010 at 10.00am.