

SPORTS GROUND ADVISORY WORKING GROUP

ABERDEEN, 8 April, 2010. - Minute of Meeting of the SPORTS GROUND ADVISORY WORKING GROUP. Present:- Ivor Churcher, Environmental Health, Kevin Coutts, Grampian Fire and Rescue Service, Brenda Flaherty, Licensing, Keith Jensen, Scottish Ambulance Service, David Kidd, Building Standards, Grant Tierney, Building Standards, Caroline Treanor, Licensing, Alex Venters, Environmental Health and Adrian Watson, Grampian Police.

Apologies for Absence: Drew Carr, Scottish Ambulance Service and Salter Watson, Grampian Police.

MINUTE OF MEETING OF 14 JANUARY 2010

1. The Group had before it the minute of meeting on 14 January 2010.

The Group resolved:-

to approve the minute subject to an amendment at item 5 – Contingency Exercise, second paragraph to read “at Clause 15, paragraph c”.

SAFETY TEAM VISITS

2. Caroline Treanor advised the Group that she had contacted Christina Taylor at Glasgow City Council regarding safety visits to football stadia in Glasgow.

Ms. Taylor advised that Glasgow City Council Safety Team carry out a minimum of two inspections at each stadium per year, one match day visit and one non-match day visit.

The non-match day inspection checked stadium structure and safety facilities required by the Green Guide including documentation, records and certification.

The match day inspection monitors the operation of the stadium to ensure management compliance with the Green Guide and also to observe crowd dynamics and use of the stadium. The Safety Team comprises of Glasgow City Council Legal Services, Building Standards and Public Safety, Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Service, Strathclyde Police and the Scottish Ambulance Service.

Each agency has noted the clauses of the Green Guide for which they have an interest and this has been documented in the Green Guide Responsibilities Document.

Glasgow have developed checklists for the inspections which include the items recommended by the Home Office Circular 72/1987.

Ivor Churcher noted that Environmental Health are not a member of the Safety Team in Glasgow. He also advised that he had contacted Highland, Ayrshire and Perth & Kinross Councils who advised that Environmental Health are not involved in inspection visits at stadiums.

Grant Tierney advised that none of the local authorities who issue safety certificate to the twelve SPL Football Clubs having designated sports grounds,

Kevin Coutts informed the Group that Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Service are no longer participating in inspections at stadia. There is currently a debate on who should be enforcing legislation with the respect to stadia, Mr. Coutts indicated that the Fire Safety Act 2005 provides that local authorities are the enforcing authority under that Act. In Lothian and Borders and Tayside the Fire and Rescue Service is not present on match days.

He further advised that Grampian Fire and Rescue Service would be taking a view regarding their involvement in inspections at Pittodrie stadium and that the Service was looking for a meeting with the Council to formalise the process with a view to adopting a Memorandum of Understanding.

Grant Tierney suggested that it would be useful to define each of the agency's roles and identify which agency is responsible for sections of the Green Guide. David Kidd advised that at one time Grampian Police held such a document. Adrian Watson agreed to look for the document at Police Headquarters. It was also noted that with a new guide and safety certificate in place this document would be used as a "starting point" and that all members of group should input to a review and updating of the document.

AMENDMENT OF CLAUSE 15

3. Caroline Treanor advised that at its last meeting the Group had resolved to amend Clause 15 at paragraph C. However, as the current certificate expires on 7 June 2010, it was decided that no specific amendment would be made to Clause 15 until after 7 June when a new certificate would be in place. Meanwhile Caroline Treanor would send a letter to Pittodrie advising them of this.

Brenda Flaherty confirmed that Licensing would carry out an annual review of the certificate and asked for any amendments or comments by members of the Group to be forwarded to Caroline Treanor by 30 April 2010.

The Group resolved:-

that Ms. Treanor would invite the Club to submit suggested amendments to the current safety certificate with a view to possible incorporation into the new certificate, should they wish to do so.

DEVIATIONS

4. David Kidd informed the Group that Building Standards had met with Aberdeen Football Club and their architect to discuss deviations from the Green Guide.

Following this meeting Building Standards forwarded for guidance purposes a list of clauses that the Club should particularly review and where it is possible that deviations may be present.

5. Grant Tierney commented that Building Standards appeared to be the only Service raising issues with deviations, however, all Services should have an input into the deviation list.

There followed a general discussion about what constituted a deviation from the Guide. Caroline Treanor informed the Group that a deviation was defined in Clause 4 of the Safety Certificate.

MEDIA PROVISION

5. David Kidd advised that Aberdeen Football Club were providing information regarding media provision from various media companies on a match by match basis. Building Standards feel that an annual submission from the Club would meet the needs of the safety certificate rather than receiving a submission from individual television operators. The annual submission should cover all related guidance from the Green Guide and thus encompass the requirements of individual provision

FEEDBACK FROM BUILDINGS STANDARD MEETING – GLASGOW, 8 MARCH, 2010

6. David Kidd and Grant Tierney attended a meeting in Glasgow on 8th March 2010 with colleagues from Building Standards from authorities who have Premier League stadia. There was a total of fourteen authorities present.

A presentation on the Review of Police Resources Deployed at Football, was given to the group from Drew Innes, Chief Inspector, at Strathclyde Police.

Seventeen recommendations have been made as a result of the review, essentially there will be a transfer of responsibility from the Police to the Safety Certificate holder, in accordance with the Safety of Sports Grounds ACT 1975.

Prior to every game, the level of risk will be determined and the game will be categorised. A predetermined Police presence has been given to each category of game, at all times the safety of the spectators will be the responsibility of the of the Safety Certificate Holder.

One of the issues to come out of the meeting was that there is a review of policing at football matches currently underway. Each match will be categorised and the category will determine the level of policing at the match.

Grant Tierney considered that this would place more responsibility on the management of Aberdeen Football Club, as the Safety Certificate Holder, and the role of the Sports Ground Advisory Working Group would become critical for the implementation and enforcement of the Safety at Sports Grounds Act 1975, in accordance with the guidance set out in the 5th Edition of the Green Guide.. It would be important to be able to justify decisions of the Group and have a clear audit trail of decisions.

Grant Tierney confirmed that the other relevant topic raised at the meeting in Glasgow was the involvement of the members of the Sports Ground Advisory Working Group. Every member of the Group is responsible for every decision that the group makes.

Adrian Watson advised the Group that at the next match at Pittodrie there would be a Police Sergeant and four Constables present. He commented that typically the police are seen to run the event and this should not be the case as it is the Club's responsibility.

Brenda Flaherty suggested that members of the Group visit the stadium to establish a baseline. Grant Tierney said that the Group need to consider what it expects to happen and then visit the stadium to see that it is happening.

Brenda Flaherty considered that Members on the Sports Ground Advisory Group changes should be kept informed of the current issues.

The Group resolved:-

- (i) to visit Pittodrie on a match before the end of the season;
- (ii) that Caroline Treanor would send a letter to Aberdeen Football Club advising them that both match day and non match day inspections would be undertaken by officers of the Group in the future; and
- (iii) to convene a meeting of the Sports Ground Advisory Group before the vacation period.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

7. David Kidd enquired about whether Dave McIntosh, Emergency Planner, was a member of the Working Group.

The Group resolved:-

to invite him to future meetings of the Group.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

8. 8 July 2010 at 10am.