

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report To: Licensing and Appeals Committee – 11 January 2016

Subject: Annual report from the Interim Chair of the Safety Advisory Group

Report of: Head of Planning, Building Control and Licensing

Summary

This report provides an overview of the key issues considered by the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) in respect of football matches at the Etihad Stadium during the 2014/2015 football season.

Recommendations

That the Committee note the report

Wards Affected:

Community Strategy Spine	Summary of the contribution to the strategy
Performance of the economy of the region and sub region	
Reaching full potential in education and employment	
Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect	
Neighbourhoods of Choice	

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
 - Risk Management
 - Legal Considerations
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Financial Consequences – Revenue

None – no fees or charges are payable in respect of the role of the Safety Advisory Group

Financial Consequences – Capital

None

Contact Officers:

Name: Julie Roscoe
Position: Head of Planning, Licensing and Building Control
Telephone: 0161 234 4552
E-mail: j.roscoe@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Warren Hope
Position: Business Manager, Building Control
Telephone: 0161 234 4410
E-mail: w.hope@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Fraser Swift
Position: Principal Licensing Officer
Telephone: 0161 234 1176
E-mail: f.swift@manchester.gov.uk

Background documents (available for public inspection):

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

Minutes of Safety Advisory group 2014/15

1990 Report of Lord Justice Taylor – Hillsborough Stadium Disaster Inquiry Report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.2 This report provides an overview of the activities of the SAG in relation to football matches at the Etihad Stadium and the new Academy Stadium.
- 1.3 The building work for the Academy Stadium was completed during the course of the 2014/15 season. As a result safety advisory matters have been incorporated as part of the established Etihad Stadium SAG.
- 1.4 Other SAG meetings not included within the scope of this report are:
 - Events not connected with the Etihad Stadium
 - Events connected with the Etihad Stadium but which are subject to special safety certificates, e.g. concerts.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The legal framework for Safety Advisory Group was established in the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975.
- 2.2 This framework was strengthened following the input of Lord Justice Taylor in his report, which recommended amendment to the 1975 act to make it a mandatory requirement for Terms and Conditions to be specified in a Sports Clubs Safety Certificate. The Safety Certificate is issued by the Local Authority.
- 2.3 In his written report, Lord Justice Taylor recommended the following (recommendation 31): “To assist the local authority in exercising its functions it should set up an Advisory Group consisting of appropriate members of both its own staff, representatives of the police, fire and ambulance services, and the building authority. The advisory group should consult representatives of the club and recognised supporters’ organisations on a regular basis”
- 2.4 Lord Taylor also advised The Advisory Groups terms of reference should encompass all matters concerned with crowd safety and should require regular visits to the ground and attendance at matches. The Advisory Group should have a Chair from the local authority and an effective procedure. Its resolutions should be recorded and it should be required to produce regular written reports for consideration by the local authority.
- 2.5 The SAG does not have any power to make decisions on behalf of the City Council, who have delegated such powers to the Licensing and Appeals Committee and the Head of Planning, Building Control and Licensing
- 2.6 The Safety Certificate for Manchester City Football Club is issued by the Head of Planning, Building Control and Licensing and is reviewed on a regular basis.

3.0 Report of SAG 2014/2015 football season

- 3.2 The continued success of MCFC has given rise to an increase in spectator supporters and the continuation of European club competition football matches held at the Etihad Stadium.
- 3.3 The expansion of the South Stand, as approved by the City Council in its capacity as the Planning Authority, was completed during the close of the 2014/15 season in readiness for the 2015/16 season.

Meeting Schedule

- 3.4 During the 2014/15 football season the following SAG meetings took place
- 19 August 2014
 - 29 January 2015
 - 14 May 2015

Membership of the SAG

- 3.5 In 2014/15 the Etihad Stadium SAG had a core membership as follows:
- Licensing Manager – Manchester City Council (Chair, Aug)
 - Building Control officers – Manchester City Council (Chair, Jan & May)
 - Etihad Campus Estate Manager – Manchester City Council
 - Specialist Police / Football liaison – Greater Manchester Police
 - Head of Safety and Security – Manchester City Football Club
 - Safety Officer – Manchester City Football Club
 - Medical provision – North West Ambulance Service
 - Manchester City Football Club – Supporters' Club
 - Sports Grounds Safety Inspector – Sports Ground Safety Authority (SGSA)
 - Fire Officer - Greater Manchester County Fire & Rescue Service
- 3.6 Invited attendees at specific meetings:
- Head of Infrastructure – Manchester City Football Club
 - Command and Control Leader – Greater Manchester Police
 - Design & Build Team - Laing O Rourke
- 3.7 In addition to the above meetings there were several smaller meetings with selected members of the Safety Advisory Group to review the position of the building site hoardings on match days. This smaller group always included the Club, Building Control, Police and the Design & Build team.

Key Issues Considered by the SAG

- 3.8 There were some major challenges during the 2014/15 season as a result of the building work for the South stand extension, which occurred on the forecourt, outside the South stand and within the stand itself. Additionally, alterations to the lower tier, to add an additional 3 extra rows of seats adjacent the pitch at the front of the terrace, had led to an increase in SAG involvement.

The frequency of the sub group meetings had also increased as a result of the safety management issues associated with the ongoing building work. The erection of the South stand extension, the constant use of builders hoardings around the various parts of the construction site, and the building work that was carried out at the front of the lower tier created challenges to the safety of football supporters:

- Safe management of football supporters movements, home and away, prior to games.
 - The impact on the turnstile usage in terms of reasonable ingress times affecting both sets of supporters.
 - The need to ensure adequate measures are in place to ensure safe ingress and egress from the stadium including emergency evacuation if required through the live building site.
 - Safe accommodation of football supporters using the lower tier adjacent building works next to the pitch.
- 3.9 Similar to the 2013/14 season, the above factors have been regularly reviewed as a result of the constant changes occurring both outside and inside the ground. Particularly to hoarding and barrier positions needed to provide safe passage and accommodation through an ever-changing construction site. Also, as a result of the differing away fan allocation associated with FA Cup and Premier League matches, consideration of the varying segregation arrangements was necessary. This resulted in a slight reduction in spectator capacity, following the loss of the back row of seats of the South stand at level 2. Assessments of spectator movement and the minimum ingress, egress and emergency evacuation widths required for the various site configurations have been subject to verification from the City Councils Building Control Officers.
- 3.10 Construction operations on the level 2 concourses to the South stand and the South West and South East corners caused a reduction in concourse space and services for both home and away spectators. Regular checks of the proposals for each phase of the construction works were carried out by Building Control, to ensure compliance with stadium safety standards was maintained and then reported to the SAG. An internal training event was also carried out by the Club, in order to keep key staff informed of the changes and up-to-date with the issues as a result of the construction work.
- 3.11 Each change of configuration of the entrances due to changes in the stages of construction work resulted in a review of the major external spectator direction signage, lighting and external stewarding operation involving and SAG input and review. The external changes also caused the SAG to review the

- alternative arrangements for the GMC Fire and Rescue Service to be able to access fire hose connection points into the stadium, resulting in visits from the local brigade.
- 3.12 Access for transferring stretchers at the pitch side areas had to be reviewed as a result of the additional work to the 3 seating rows and the installation of a new LED display board. NWS carried out a mock stretcher run to ensure access hadn't been impeded.
- 3.13 The SAG has received no notifications of any significant incidents regarding smoking within the stadium. MCFC has continued to target smoking hot-spots, typically within the different toilet areas, and respond to feedback from the public. Reports of smoking incidents were substantially low during the season.
- 3.14 Metrolink tram was fully operational throughout the season. Reports from the Etihad Campus Estate Manager informed the SAG that the system appeared to be running smoothly and well managed and appeared to be well used on match days. Regular updates on the events planned for the whole of the Etihad Campus are provided by the Etihad Campus Estate Manager to ensure there is sufficient notice to put plans in place where major events clash.
- 3.15 The Club provided updates to the group in respect of match days with the majority of games passing without significant incident. Issues raised to the group and which were all dealt with satisfactorily by the club include:
- Large groups of away supporters gathering around the ground at a European fixture following open sale to home fans. This resulted in blocks of away supporters being ejected.
 - Three arrests at a Premier league fixture, following the ignition of three smoke bombs.
 - One arrest outside the stadium following the use of a drone over one of the stands at a Premier league fixture.
- 3.16 The Club continues to work closely with GMP to identify any persons using smoke bombs/flares etc. within the stadium. Systems are in place to minimise opportunities for supporters to bring such devices into the stadium.
- 3.17 Injury statistics have been provided and were reviewed for each match. No common themes emerged and the reports of scalding injuries to catering staff that occurred in 2013/14 have not recurred.
- 3.18 The status of Historic Building Regulations applications relating to the Etihad was brought to the attention of the SAG. Several applications had not received Building Regulations Completion Certificates, although the construction works had been inspected and effectively completed. In the main this identified as being due to the various contractors not arranging final inspections with Building Control. Ultimately the responsibility for this rests with the Club and they have given a commitment to arrange completion visits to ensure they have completion certificates for all construction projects carried

out at the stadium in future.

4.0 Revised General Safety Certificate

- 4.1 Local authorities are expected to undertake an annual review of the safety certificates they issue. Where a significant alteration of the ground and spectator capacity occurs then a full review of Schedule 2 of the current safety certificate issued on 24th April 2014, which covers the capacity of the stadium, is required.
- 4.2 A full review of Schedule 2 will be carried out by Building Control Officers on final completion of the building works to the South stand extension and the additional 3 rows to the bottom of the lower tier around the ground.

Confirmation of the capacity of the stadium and a revised Schedule 2 to the safety certificate will then be formally issued to the Club prior to the first official event or test event of the 2015/16 season.

5.0 During Performance Inspections – 2014/2015

- 5.1 Building Control Officers carried out 4 during performance inspections during the 2014/15 season. Records of the clubs pre game checks and sign-offs had been witnessed and this was consistently applied.

Spectator movement prior to, during and after games was generally free flowing and without delays or obstructions. Circulation routes were all generally well managed and clear.

Specific issues identified from the inspections were raised with the safety management team at the time of inspection and at the SAG meetings for action by the club. Matters reported included:

- Cooking on the concourse on the hot dog stand is not permitted, only a hot water warm up facility should be used. All other cooking should be in the purpose built concessions behind automatic fire shutters.
- Food storage/packaging should also only be within the concession units and not adjacent to the hot dog stands.
- Standing supporters continues to be a problem at the Etihad and throughout the country and measures for dealing with this continue by way of effective management and physical restriction to seating allocations.
- Flares used in the away section, continued efforts to search on entry required.

- 5.2 The Sports Ground Safety Authority also undertook two visits during performance inspections during the 2014/15 season.

6.0 Safety Certificate Annual Inspection

- 6.1 The annual inspection was carried out by Building Control Officers, which included inspections of the safety management documentation, ground

records and tests certificates. All matters highlighted in the various test certificates and reports were items of a minor nature and typically maintenance and repair. All matters raised are being dealt with and managed by the club on an ongoing basis. The Club are also allocating resources to deal with the maintenance issue highlighted in the two structural reports including the recoating of the cable and mast support system, to ensure the affects of any corrosion are minimal.

7.0 Minutes of SAG meetings

7.1 Minutes are taken for each SAG meeting.

8.0 Future Policy Issues

8.1 It is expected that the SAG meetings of the 2015/2016 will continue to focus on issues that arise from the general operation as a football ground and additionally the use of the new areas of the ground once all the construction work is complete. Feedback from staff and the general public will be used to inform the SAG of any areas of concern as the new configuration and systems bed in.

9.0 Conclusion

9.1 The report provides the background framework in relation to the role of the SAG in respect of a football stadium. The report provides details of issues monitored via the SAG and circumstances where specific advice has been given to MCFC. The Committee are asked to note the report.