

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

REGULATORY AND APPEALS COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held at Loxley House, Station Street, NG2 3NG on 16 July 2019 from 1.30 pm - 2.05 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Gul Nawaz Khan (Vice Chair)
Councillor Samuel Gardiner
Councillor Maria Joannou
Councillor Chantal Lee
Councillor Sajid Mohammed
Councillor Shuguftah Quddoos
Councillor Roger Steel (Sub for Cllr Rule)

Absent

Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Councillor Dave Liversidge
Councillor Toby Neal
Councillor Nick Raine
Councillor Mohammed Saghir
Councillor Angela Kandola
Councillor Andrew Rule
Councillor Adele Williams

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Matthew Daft	- Environmental Health Officer)	
Paul Dales	- Operations Manager, Safer Business)	Commercial & Operations
Catrin Styles	- Principal Environmental Officer)	
Mark Huckerby	- Fire & Safety Consultant)	
Dave Langton	- Safety Officer)	Notts County Football Club
Justin Tose	- Commercial Director)	
Richard Bines	- Solicitor to the Committee)	Strategy & Resources
Mark Leavesley	- Governance Officer)	

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Barnard)
Councillor Raine)
Councillor Rule) other City Council business
Councillor Saghir)
Councillor Williams)

Councillor Kandola - no reason given
Councillor Liversidge - personal
Councillor Neal - annual leave

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2018 were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chair of the meeting.

4 ANNUAL REVIEW OF GENERAL SAFETY CERTIFICATE: NOTTS COUNTY FOOTBALL CLUB

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Community Protection.

Councillors on the Committee visited Notts County Football Club sports ground to carry out an inspection, accompanied by colleagues and members of the Safety Advisory Group, including Fire and Ambulance Service representatives.

Justin Tose, Commercial Manager and Holder of the General Safety Certificate at Notts County Football Club, facilitated the visit and attended the meeting to answer questions from the Committee.

Paul Dales, Operations Manager, Safer Business, presented the report, detailing the main issues, such as the change in the Certificate Holder, electrical and fire safety management work, the deviations from the Green Guide and scope of the proposed Certificate.

In so far as the deviations were concerned, Committee were assured as to the suitability of the mitigation measures in place to deal with the lack of a main telephone connection within the First Aid Room, which avoid the risks associated with mobile phone telecommunication networks.

In relation to the 2018/2019 football season, it was noted that a number of matters occurred which are relevant to the Club and safety at the ground, notably:

- Amanda Fletcher, Commercial Director was the holder of the General Safety Certificate until 30 June 2019 when it was transferred to Justin Tose, Commercial Director;
- Justin Tose has confirmed his awareness of the legal and procedural requirements regarding ground safety and he has the full support of the Board to oversee all matters relating to ground and public safety; he is deemed to be a 'qualified person' and in an active managerial position with authority to prevent contraventions of the terms and conditions of the Certificate;
- Notts County Football Club were relegated from the English Football League at the end of the 2018/2019 season and because of this, the Meadow Lane Stadium no longer meets the designation criteria set out in Schedule 2 of the Safety of Sports Grounds (Designation) Order 2015. As the ground has capacity for over 10,000, this means that the formal designation of the Meadow Lane Stadium had been reassigned and designated under Schedule 1 of the Order;
- Three match day inspections took place during the season, undertaken by one or more of the Community Protection, Safer Business team (a combination of an Environmental Health Officer, Principal Environmental Health Officer and the

Safer Business Operations Manager). There have also been a number of non-match day inspections and meetings during the season by Environmental Health Officers to assess and promote safety issues;

- Since the last report to Committee in July 2018, there has been a continuation in the maintenance of match day safety management systems at the Club. The key areas of discussion during Safety Advisory Group (SAG) meetings in the past year are summarised below:
 - i. Fire Safety Management – There has been continuation of implementation of risk assessments and action plans. Progress has continued with the maintenance of fire safety and fire marshals' policy and management plans;
 - ii. Electrical Safety – There has been continued progress implementing the structured approach to maintenance and inspection of the stadium electrical systems. A risk-based approach has been put in place to ensure that the whole electrical installation is inspected in a planned sequential manner over a rolling three-year period;
 - iii. Major Incident Plan – The Club has cooperated fully with the Emergency Services to review and agree the Major Incident Plan, which was updated in June 2019, and to ensure that the Club's own contingency plans are compatible. Aide-memoires were tested during the desktop contingency exercise with good feedback given about the benefits and effectiveness;
 - iv. The Safety Officer is a former Police officer and has experience in running matches with substantial spectator attendance. He has attended the NVQ Level 4 training and will fully achieve the qualification in the next few months. The Deputy Safety Officer is also a former police officer with a specialism in football spectator safety and he is currently attending the taught modules of the NVQ while obtaining the necessary practical training at the Club;

In addition, an experienced senior steward has also passed the NVQ Level 4 safety qualification and can be called upon to assist with appropriate matches. In recent years, good progress has been made to ensure there is resilience in securing business continuity by the use of fully qualified and experienced safety officers from Nottingham Forest and Trent Bridge Cricket Ground. Cooperation between the Clubs is beneficial in ensuring that mutual support is available should there be a need for a Safety Officer to stand in at short notice due to illness etc;

- At last year's committee it was agreed that there would be two 'trigger' levels to ensure that a suitable safety capacity for the Jimmy Sirrel stand was carefully assessed;
 - '1) Where the capacity in the Jimmy Sirrel Stand is proposed to exceed 4,000 spectators, the Holder shall, no later than six days before the Specified Activity, produce and submit an event specific risk assessment and a management plan to the Certifying Authority detailing the measures to be implemented to address overcrowding risks associated with the concourse.

- 2) Where the capacity in the Jimmy Sirrel Stand is proposed to exceed 5,000 spectators, the Holder shall, no later than fourteen days before the Specified Activity, produce an event specific risk assessment and a management plan that details the measures to be implemented to address overcrowding risks associated with the concourse, for discussion at an emergency Safety Advisory Group meeting.'

The proposed certificate replaces the clauses listed above with the following:

- (1) Where the capacity in the Jimmy Sirrel Stand is proposed to exceed 4,400 spectators, the Holder shall, no later than fourteen days before the Specified Activity, produce an event specific risk assessment and a management plan that details the measures to be implemented to address overcrowding risks associated with the concourse, for discussion at an emergency Safety Advisory Group meeting.

These changes will continue to maintain public safety and ensure appropriate assessments are undertaken to control the risks of overcrowding;

- An issue related to the capacity of the Jimmy Sirrel stand is the close proximity of the busy County Road immediately behind the final exit gates, with only a relatively small apron of pathway. It has been noted during match day inspections that a large contingent of away fans does lead to them spilling over into the road with the risk of collision. This matter has been raised at SAG meetings with some concerns for the on-going safety of emerging fans;

There has been positive action in the 2017/18 and 2018/19 season with a number of Temporary Traffic Regulation Order closures put in place for the matches with expected high spectator numbers. A traffic management company has been employed to enable the road closures and diversions to take place in a professional and compliant way. This has delivered a safer environment for spectators and club stewards and it is the intention to carry this through into 2019/20 season;

- Match day inspections have confirmed that the Safety Management Team continue to deliver an effective safety culture in the team and stewards. Pre-match and post-match briefings are delivered in a structured way, sometimes with PowerPoint presentations to illustrate plans for more complex matches to large numbers of stewards. Matters that require improvement are openly discussed within their own team and feedback from Environmental Health Officers and the Sports Ground Safety Authority is acted upon positively to enhance learning and development. This process has been improved through pre and post-match meetings between Environmental Health Officers and the Duty Safety Officer for higher risk matches;
- The management of the physical condition of the stadium has continued, with the maintenance team implementing a structured approach to property maintenance within the limitations of club resources. However, at the time of writing the report there are some current financial barriers at the Club that are restricting the ability to fulfil some of the testing of physical infrastructure within the usual timescales (the High Court Winding Up petition proceedings and the possibility of a sale of

the Club). The Committee were acutely aware of the issues and were assured that the situation would be monitored by the Environmental Health Team and SAG to ensure that timely progress is made to fulfil the requirements of the General Safety Certificate;

- The Police, Ambulance Service, Fire, Community Protection Safer Business Service, Building Control and the Sports Grounds Safety Authority continue to have general confidence in the safety arrangements at the Club and have not expressed objections to the maintenance of the Club's own assessment of the 'S' and 'P' factors at the current level of 1.0;
- For the 2019/20 season, the Club and its contractors are currently completing inspections of various structures, equipment and services in order to comply with a requirement in the present Certificate requiring the annual submission of satisfactory certificates for a range of items. It was noted that was a dynamic process. All certificates and documents required to be submitted to the City Council before the commencement of fixtures at the ground would be submitted. Committee, however, were reminded of the possibility of enforcement action if requirements were not met.

RESOLVED

- (1) to approve the General Safety Certificate detailed at Annex 1 to the report as a replacement for the existing Certificate with effect from 16 July 2019 and acknowledge the appointment of Justin Tose as Holder of the General Safety Certificate;**
- (2) to note the deviations to the 6th edition of the 'Green Guide', as detailed in appendix 4 of the Certificate, which are not considered by the Safety Advisors Group to be of such significance as to jeopardise spectator safety.**