

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	Licensing Applications Committee		
DATE:	28 September 2016	AGENDA ITEM:	6
TITLE:	Safety at Sports Grounds Policy		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	PAUL GITTINGS	PORTFOLIO:	CULTURE, SPORT & CONSUMER SERVICES
SERVICE:	PLANNING DEVELOPMENT & REGULATORY SERVICES	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the Council's duty to protect Public Safety at Sports Grounds and Regulated Stands. The Sports Grounds Safety Authority regulates local authorities approach to safety and provides comprehensive guidance. The Council does not currently have a written policy and as part of a recent review, a draft Policy is presented to Committee to consider.
- 1.2 The report has already been to Admin briefing.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the "Safety at Sports Ground Policy", as attached at Appendix 1 is formally approved by Licensing Committee and Appendix 2 Terms of Reference to be noted.

3.0 POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 Reading Borough Council has a statutory duty for the safety certification of sports grounds under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 (as amended) and the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987 and has responsibilities for the monitoring and

enforcement of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in respect of sports grounds.

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

4.1 Current Position.

4.1.1 Reading Borough Council has the statutory duty under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 (as amended):

- To issue a General Safety Certificate for each designated sports ground within the Borough, containing “such terms and conditions as the local authority consider necessary or expedient to secure reasonable safety at the sports ground”
- To serve a prohibition notice in respect of a sports ground if the Authority considers that “the admission of spectators to a sports ground involves or will involve a risk to them so serious that, until steps have been taken to reduce it to a reasonable level, admission of spectators to the ground or that part of the ground ought to be prohibited or restricted”. It is important to note that this duty applies to any sports ground, not just those which are designated or have a regulated stand.
- To issue a Special Safety Certificate where required.

4.1.2 The Sports Grounds Safety Authority (SGSA) is the UK expert on safety at sports grounds and carry out a range of statutory functions in relation to football in England and Wales and advisory functions in relation to other sports both within the UK and internationally. The SGSA regulate local authorities in their oversight of safety and as part of their function, set out guidance which local authorities are expected to follow.

4.1.3 Whilst Reading Football Club have a policy which is renewed annually the Council does not have a written policy in place covering Sports Grounds. The Sports Ground Safety Authority audit the Council annually and have recommended a Policy is in place prior to the 16/17 season.

4.2 Option Proposed.

4.2.1 A draft policy has been written and reviewed by members of the Safety Advisory Group. The core members of this group are:

- Reading Borough Council
- Reading Football Club
- London Irish RFU Club
- Thames Valley Police
- South Central Ambulance Service
- STAR supporters group
- Safety at Sports Grounds Association.

The draft Policy is attached in Appendix 1.

4.2.2 In addition to the Policy document, Terms of Reference for the Safety Advisory Group have been revised and these are attached in Appendix 2.

4.2.3 There are 3 options:

4.2.3.1 The preferred option is to approve the policy as set out at appendix 1.

4.2.3.2 Alternatively to approve the policy but modify the policy as set out in Appendix 1.

4.2.3.3 Or to refuse the policy as set out in Appendix 1 because the Committee believes it does not set out how the authority will discharge its responsibilities under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 and the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987 or return the policy to officers for further work to be carried out on it stating the reasons for the further work.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The Policy helps to meet two of the Councils Corporate priorities:

1. Safeguarding and protecting those that are most vulnerable;
2. Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active.

5.2 The Policy also helps to meet the Councils strategic aims by promoting equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 The draft policy was consulted on with members of the Safety Advisory Group.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 An equality impact assessment is not considered necessary for this Policy.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The Policy formalises the approach taken by the Council to ensure compliance with duties under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 (as amended) and guidance provided under the Act.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The commitment to carry out the Councils duties under the Safety at Sports Grounds Act 1975 is covered by existing resources.

10. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Safety at Sports Ground Policy

Appendix 2 - Terms of Reference for the Safety Advisory Group