

Reading Football Club Ltd -

Terms of Reference for the Safety Advisory Group



Prepared by:
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1.0 Policy statement

It is the policy of Reading Borough Council to uphold reasonable standards of public safety and to encourage the well being of the public, operatives and competitors at Reading Football Club. To enable this, Reading Borough Council maintains a Safety Advisory Group (SAG) in partnership with selected agencies who offer specialist advice to the Council.

2.0 Main role of SAG

2.1 The main role of the SAG is to provide specialist advice to the council to help them discharge their statutory functions under sports grounds and public events legislation.

2.2 The SAG will operate in accordance with agreed terms of reference, and keep and make available as appropriate records of its activities in order that it effectively carries out this function and to ensure transparency of decision making.

2.3 Specific terms of reference

- (a) To advise on the event, venues and its immediate environs as required
- (b) To advise on the exercise of the powers under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 and the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987 in respect of the safety certification for the event and venues.
- (c) To advise the local authority as the enforcing authority as defined in the Regulatory Reform Order (Fire Safety) 2005 for enforcement of the relevant statutory provisions.
- (d) To advise on the exercise of the powers under the Licensing Act 2003 for the event and venues
- (e) To advise on the enforcing actions of the council as defined in the Health and Safety (Enforcing Authority) Regulations 1998 for enforcement of the relevant statutory provisions for the event and venues
- (f) To provide a forum within which the council and other agencies may develop a co-ordinated approach to crowd and spectator safety
- (g) To take on other safety and public protection functions as agreed
- (h) To monitor the implementation of the General Safety Certificate and give relevant advice.
- (i) To receive and review relevant reports or details of matters found during inspections/visits to the stadium by SAG members.
- (j) To consider any proposed alterations or additions to the stadium.
- (k) To participate in discussions and respond to consultation on any decision to be taken affecting the provisions of the General Safety Certificate.

2.4 Status of SAG and conflicts of interest

2.4.1 The SAG cannot take any decisions on behalf of the council: its role is advisory. The Chairman of the SAG will be a senior officer from Reading Borough Council, Regulatory Services with delegated authority to take decisions on behalf of the Council. The Chair will ensure that all SAG representatives views are taken into account to ensure a reasonable final decision is made before making recommendations to the Group.

2.4.2 Core members of the SAG must declare any material conflict of interest in relation to any item put before the SAG, prior to any discussion on that matter. If the interest could be considered prejudicial, then that person should consider if they should withdraw and be replaced by an appropriate party agreed with the SAG.

3.0 Composition of the SAG

3.1 The SAG shall consist of persons with sufficient seniority, experience, competency and knowledge on their services strategic/policy/practical issues to be able to take operational decisions on behalf of their service/body, save where these raise new policy issues.

3.2 The SAG will be constituted in the manner outlined below; however it is the prerogative of the council to determine the specific constitution of its SAG:

- (a) Core members
- (b) Invited representation

3.3 Core members

3.3.1 The core members are defined as those authorities whom the council is required to consult under sports ground/licensing legislation and as recommended in Paragraph 31 of the Final Report into the Hillsborough Stadium Disaster. Each such member/function shall be represented by a single person or his/her deputy.

3.3.2 Core membership:

- RBC Regulatory Services Manager (Chair)
- Lead officer(s) for health safety, licensing and Environmental health.
- RFC Stadium Manager
- RFC Safety Officer
- Thames Valley Police
- South Central Ambulance Service
- STAR supporters Group
- Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service
- London Irish RFC Operations Manager

3.4 Invited representation

3.4.1 Those persons/services/bodies who are invited to the SAG meetings to make a presentation or offer advice to the SAG cannot be party to the decision making process of the SAG. However, they will be allowed to freely contribute to any meeting to which they are invited and will have their view considered, reported/recorded.

3.4.2 The following may be invited either to all SAG meetings, or to a particular meeting as considered appropriate:

- Sports Ground Safety Authority
- NHS Trust
- Legal service representation (the relevant solicitor for the council with the remit of sports grounds legislation)
- Voluntary first aid services
- RBC Transport services
- RBC Building Control
- RBC Emergency Planning

3.4.3 The Chair may invite such other specialist as the Chair feels appropriate to assist the SAG fully consider any issue.

4.0 Administration and responsibilities of the SAG

4.1 Chair:

The Chair will be the Regulatory Services Manager or other Senior officer designated by the Head of Planning, Development & Regulatory Services.

4.2 Secretariat:

The council will provide the administrative support to the SAG and sub-groups or as agreed locally.

4.3 Consultation:

The SAG will consult all core members of the SAG, invited representation, other council services and national bodies as considered appropriate.

4.4 Frequency of meetings of the SAG

4.4.1 The SAG shall meet a minimum of two times at scheduled meetings in October and March each year. However, the number of SAG meetings in any year can be flexible and responsive to particular circumstances and will be event specific. Any core member may request an additional special meeting or series of meetings; such requests shall be considered by the Chair.

4.4.2 It will be within the remit of the SAG to constitute smaller working parties to address specific issues relating to the event and venues. The outcome of any such groups will be reported to the next available SAG.

4.5 SAG Minutes

4.5.1 Each meeting of the SAG will be prearranged to an agenda published in advance of the meeting with minutes recorded.

4.5.2 The minutes of the meetings will be circulated to all SAG members, and to such other parties as may be determined by the Chair.

4.5.3 A summary of meetings of the SAG will be held by council as a public record and be subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Data Protection Act 1998.

4.5.4 The FOIA Inter-Agency protocol adopted by local authorities and other public authorities will operate where information is requested from the SAG's records and the involvement of another public authority is necessary prior to the decision about the disclosure or non-disclosure of information.

5.0 Roles and responsibilities of the core members of SAG

5.1 Role of the Chair of the SAG

5.1.1 The Chair of the SAG must have the appropriate status, authority and time to commit to the role, to ensure that the SAG properly discharges its responsibilities; to ensure that the membership of the SAG reflects the ethos of the recommendations in the Final Report on the Hillsborough Stadium Disaster and to ensure that due account is taken of the views of all members of the SAG, including those attending by invitation.

5.2 Role of the Environmental Health/Health Safety and Licensing Officers

5.2.1 The service will be represented by an officer or his/her appointed deputy who will attend all meetings of the SAG:

- (a) To act in a co-ordinating role to the SAG on all matters relating to the council in the production of any items or reports to be placed on the agenda for the meetings.
- (b) To provide technical advice and appraisal of published documents relating to safety of sports grounds/public events and inform on any implications arising.
- (c) To provide technical support to the SAG in relation to all matters concerning sports grounds/licensing legislation and allied legislation.
- (d) To prepare, monitor, enforce, review and amend as necessary the general/special safety certificates/licences and conditions on a regular basis following consultation with members of the SAG.

5.3 Role of the Building Control Service on the SAG

5.3.1 The service will be represented by an officer or his/her appointed deputy who will attend meetings of the SAG as required and advise on all technical/legal aspects of legislation within the remit of the service as they relate to sports grounds/ public events.

5.4 Role of the emergency services on the SAG

5.4.1 Each service will be represented by a person of appropriate experience/ competency (or his/her appointed deputy) who has the full authority of the relevant service to give advice and guidance and make recommendations on safety issues and advise on:

- (a) All technical/legal aspects of legislation within the remit of the service as they relate to sports grounds/ public events.
- (b) Public safety and crowd management matters referred to in the Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds/The Event Safety Guide, A Guide to Health Safety and Welfare at Music or Similar Events and other relevant publications.