

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting14th February 2019

1. Title of Item/Report

Debrief report - Independent Safety Advisory Group

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report on the Debrief report - Independent Safety Advisory Group.

Stockton's Independent Advisory Group (ISAG) was established in 2010 to help the Local Authority uphold good standards of safety at public events in the Borough. ISAG brought together a range of Council Officers and representatives of the emergency services. The role of Chair of ISAG was enhanced during 2018 through the recruitment and appointment of an independent individual with relevant skills and experience, to provide challenge and objectivity in the consideration of all events of significant scale.

The report outlined the work of ISAG in 2018 and highlighted relevant concerns of the Board and its Chair, Carl Marshal. The report showed how ISAG had continued to strengthen its procedures to provide assurance across an increasing number of events and includes an improvement plan for its further development.

Stockton's Independent Advisory Group (ISAG) was established in 2010 to help the Local Authority uphold reasonable standards of safety at public events in the Borough, with the following specific responsibilities:

- Provide specialist advice to the Local Authority to help it discharge its functions under public event legislation
- Provide an overarching role in enhancing safety at public events by providing advice and assistance to event planners, organisers and licensees
- Provide a forum within which the Council and other agencies may develop a joint approach to crowd safety
- Promote high levels of safety and welfare at all public events

ISAG provided advice and guidance to Event Planners and Event Organisers in staging their events, helping them understand their

individual responsibilities and those of other agencies involved. ISAG scrutinised safety plans for events staged in a public place, on a public highway and on private land open to the public in the Borough of Stockton.

ISAG would not normally scrutinise small scale events. Organisers of these smaller events would typically receive support and guidance from the Council's Events Team. However, irrespective of scale, the Events Team could and did involve ISAG where they felt the complexity or character of the event generated a specific risk.

The 2018 Debrief for Stockton's Independent Safety Advisory Group (ISAG) report detailed the number/range of events which ISAG had reviewed over the past 12 months and provided an evaluation of the activities and findings from ISAG in relation to event safety.

The report included specific comments / observations from the newly appointed Independent Chairman, Mr Carl Marshall on a number of issues / concerns that had arisen over the past 12 months and also included information regarding the support provided to Event Organisers by both ISAG and Stockton Council.

ISAG assessed 56 events in 2018 and its report outlined 5 areas of significant concern which warrant further investigation. Of these 5, 3 relate to Yarm Fair and the report called for the viability of an event of this scale in Yarm High Street to be reviewed.

ISAG was not constituted to plan events or design approaches for event organisers that would address the concerns they raise. There was a danger that in so doing they, ISAG, may be seen as having assumed responsibility for the safety of attenders of the event in question. ISAG was an advisory body that reviewed the plans of other parties.

However, the ISAG Chair could utilise his independence and draw upon expert input from the ISAG membership to support a review of the potential future of the Yarm Fair. Whilst it was not Stockton Councils intent to dictate the form and content of any event organised by a third party, as the landowner with potential liability for incidents occurring during any such event, it was appropriate for Stockton Council to facilitate this review. Stockton Council officers would invite the key partners in that event; Yarm Town Council, Yarm Business Forum and the Showman's Guild, to participate in a review at the earliest opportunity.

ISAG were mindful of the ongoing terrorist threat that event organisers faced when staging public events and public safety remains paramount when event plans are being considered. Terrorist threat intelligence and

police liaison over possible threats was continually reviewed.

RESOLVED that the report and support the 2019/20 Action / Improvement Plan be noted.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To allow Cabinet to review the effectiveness of ISAG and ensure that it is discharging its relevant responsibilities in relation to the protection of the public at events in the Borough, including its responsibilities as land owner where events are staged on Council land.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None.

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight, 23 February 2019

Proper Officer
19 February 2019