

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET
14 FEBRUARY 2019

REPORT OF STOCKTON'S
INDEPENDENT ADVISORY
GROUP

CABINET DECISION

Arts, Leisure & Culture – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Norma Wilburn

DEBRIEF REPORT – INDEPENDENT SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP 2018/19

1. Summary

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 brings 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.

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

2. Recommendation

1. Cabinet are asked to consider the report and support the 2019/20 Action/Improvement Plan.

3. Reasons for the Recommendation/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. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members) should consider whether they have a personal interest in any item, as defined in **paragraphs 9 and 11** of the Council's code of conduct and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with and/or taking account of **paragraphs 12 - 17** of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 16** of the code, in any business of the Council he/she must then, **in accordance with paragraph 18** of the code, consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so

significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest and the business:-

- affects the members financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code, or
- Relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the member or any person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code.

A Member with a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, may attend the meeting but must not take part in the consideration and voting upon the relevant item of business. However, a member with such an interest may make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to that business before the business is considered or voted on, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under a statutory right or otherwise (**paragraph 19** of the code)

Members may participate in any discussion and vote on a matter in which they have an interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, where that interest relates to functions of the Council detailed in **paragraph 20** of the code.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

It is a criminal offence for a member to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest (and where an appropriate dispensation has not been granted) **paragraph 21** of the code.

Members are required to comply with any procedural rule adopted by the Council which requires a member to leave the meeting room whilst the meeting is discussing a matter in which that member has a disclosable pecuniary interest (**paragraph 22** of the code)

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SUMMARY

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 brings 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.

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

RECOMMENDATION

1. Cabinet are asked to consider the report and support the 2019/20 Action/Improvement Plan.

DETAIL

2. 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
3. ISAG provides 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 scrutinises 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.
4. ISAG will not normally scrutinise small scale events. Organisers of these smaller events will typically receive support and guidance from the Council's Events Team. However,

irrespective of scale, the Events Team can and do involve ISAG where they feel the complexity or character of the event generates a specific risk.

5. The attached report is the 2018 Debrief for Stockton's Independent Safety Advisory Group (ISAG). The report details the number/range of events which ISAG have reviewed over the past 12 months and provides an evaluation of the activities and findings from ISAG in relation to event safety.
6. The report includes specific comments /observations from the newly appointed Independent Chairman, Mr Carl Marshall on a number of issues/concerns that have arisen over the past 12 months and also includes information regarding the support provided to Event Organisers by both ISAG and Stockton Council.
7. ISAG assessed 56 events in 2018 and its report outlines 5 areas of significant concern which warrant further investigation. Of these 5, 3 relate to Yarm Fair and the report calls for the viability of an event of this scale in Yarm High Street to be reviewed.
8. ISAG is not constituted to plan events or design approaches for event organisers that would address the concerns they raise. There is 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 is an advisory body that reviews the plans of other parties.
9. 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 is 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 is appropriate for Stockton Council to facilitate this review. Stockton Council officers will 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.
10. ISAG are mindful of the ongoing terrorist threat that event organisers face when staging public events and public safety remains paramount when event plans are being considered. Terrorist threat intelligence and police liaison over possible threats is continually reviewed.

COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

There are no community impact implications arising from this report. It presents the findings of an independent body whose work reacts to event proposals relating to any community.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

RISK ASSESSMENT

This Independent Safety Advisory Group report is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk. It should be noted that many of the things considered by ISAG represent a higher risk and their

consideration of them is in itself a risk mitigation measure. However, the subject of this report, as a retrospective overview, doesn't imply those risks.

COUNCIL PLAN POLICY PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES

This report relates to a body whose role is to ensure the safety of residents and visitors to the Borough. This may be taken to cut across a number of policy priorities.

CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

Report does not contain corporate parenting implications.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

There has been no consultation regarding the ISAG report per se, though there is systematic consultation by event organisers with Councillors in whose ward events take place.

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