

**STOCKTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
INDEPENDENT SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP**

DE-BRIEF REPORT 2019/20

OVERVIEW 2019/20

On a general note, ISAG have paid particular focus on Event Organiser’s Incident Management Processes/Systems during 2019/20. ISAG have reviewed event management plans carefully challenging event planners on their safeguards for public safety, during both normal operations and also in an emergency situations. Further support work will be provided by ISAG during 2020/21, including facilitating free ‘Prevent’ workshops for all Event Organisers.

Specifically to Yarm High Street and following a decision by Cabinet on 14th February 2019, a Task and Finish Group was set up to carry out an event space assessment, reviewing optimum usage of space for fairground rides/event that could be safely accommodated in Yarm High Street. Areas of consideration included spectator safety, audience sizes, crowd flow, traffic management and other specific challenges and limitations associated with the High Street.

Led by ISAG’s Chairman, Carl Marshall, a number of recommendations/restrictions of use have now been identified aimed at improving and strengthening crowd flow processes, evacuation routes and traffic management systems. ISAG have worked closely with the Showman’s Guild this year to start to implement some of these changes.

ISAG note and welcome the work that the Council has completed in terms of its ground penetration processes, risk assessments and safe systems of work. These new procedures follow a cable strike incident at the 2018 Cycling Festival.

Further to the above and highlighted below, are some specific areas of note/concern regarding event management/safety systems. In addition ISAG have made a number of recommendations to the Local Authority to improve public safety/health and safety arrangements for events on their land.

EVENTS REVIEWED BY ISAG 2019/20

The number of events reviewed by ISAG has remained fairly constant over the past 5 years, with a total of 51 events reviewed this year. There has however been a slight shift in the ratio of SBC/Other event management plans being submitted for review to the group. ISAG are aware that the Council has reduced its specialist market programme and number of events being delivered at Preston Park which has impacted its overall event numbers.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019				
SBC	24	SBC	22	SBC	26	SBC	27	SBC	19
Other	23	Other	28	Other	28	Other	29	Other	32
Total	47	Total	50	Total	54	Total	56	Total	51

ISAG met on 9 separate occasions during 2019, between March – November. The majority of meetings were held at Council Offices and ran to time.

It is the practice of Stockton’s ISAG to ensure all event organisers are given the opportunity to attend meetings and present their plans in person. The attendance of Event Organisers during 2019 has worked well, with the majority of organisers wanting to meet the group and discuss their plans. ISAG have noted that this face to face approach has been beneficial in terms of understanding safety arrangements, providing direct and instant feedback to events leads and also in building relationships with Event Organisers.

Meeting times have needed to be extended to accommodate this change in process and all meetings are now two hours in duration.

ISAG reviewed 5 event management plans which was not included as part of the original 2019/20 schedule. Additional events, including a late submission from Stockton's BID Team, (Courtyard Socials), 3 events from the Council's Preston Park Team (Nightfall, Bridal Party and Viafest) and a late submission from Norton Grange Community (Summer fete). Late submissions do place added pressures for ISAG to review, however we try to ensure there is some flexibility/capacity to accommodate late submission. All 5 events mentioned above were reviewed/actioned accordingly.

MEMBERSHIP

There have been a number of changes to ISAG membership during 2019/20 including new representatives for Fire, Environmental Health and Licensing. To support the new members and the Independent Chair, a two day 'Working In Safety Advisory Groups' training was delivered by the Emergency Planning College in October 2019.

Core Members

Carl Marshall	- Independent, Chairman
Tara Connor	- SBC, Secretariat
Angela Cooper/Becky Nelson	- SBC, Administration
Joanne Roberts	- SBC, Highways & Network Safety Representative
Raymond Sullivan	- SBC, Building Representative
Stephen Donaghy	- SBC, Environmental Health
Polly Edwards	- SBC, Licensing
Chief Inspector Marc Anderson	- Cleveland Police
Martin Miley	- Cleveland Fire Brigade
Tracy Scott/Alan Potts	- NEAS

Non-Core Members

Tim Shurmer	- Emergency Planning Unit
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It is noted that the attendance of group members has significantly increased, with an average of 80% attendance at meetings. The consistent attendance from Police and Fire representatives has been particularly beneficial, allowing ISAG to provide a full range of support and advice to Event Organisers. Unfortunately, although ISAG have two named representatives from NEAS, plans are still not being reviewed or comments received, which is problematic for Event Organisers. ISAG Chair will pick this issue up during 2020/21.

It is acknowledged that the high volume of event applications is a significant draw on individual member's time and resources, not only in attending meetings but also in reviewing health and safety documentation and responding/assisting event organisers. The continued commitment of the individual members is noted and appreciated.

EVENT APPLICATIONS, INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

Deadlines:

Of the 51 Event Management Plans (EMPs) that were submitted to ISAG, only 30 were received within agreed timescales, which is 59%. This is a considerable drop from 2018, where 75% of EMPs were received on time.

Of the 22 EMPs that were submitted past the deadline in 2019, nearly half were submitted between 3 days – 2 weeks late. The late receipt of EMPs is a significant issue for ISAG and

one which puts pressure on members to review and provide meaningful comments on a timely basis. Further work will be led by the ISAG chair to informed Event Organisers that plans must be submitted on time.

Knowledge Hub:

The Knowledge Hub online resource is used to share information between group members, and continues to work well. It is particularly useful for large scale events which have high volumes of documentation. Membership to the group is by invite only, and is restricted to core members and some selected non-core members.

Incident Management and Counter-Terrorism Awareness/Measures

ISAG continues to request evidence of incident planning arrangements, CT awareness training and threat risk assessment processes from Event Organisers in relation to their event planning/safety systems. Incident Management processes are

Although identified as a key Action for 2019, ISAG has not yet managed to organise Prevent Training for Event Organisers. This type of support is important for Event Organiser, particular for those who run community and charitable events who may not always be aware of the training/support that is available in relation to Terrorist Activities.

ISAG notes that the threat level has recently been reduce to substantial and continues to include Counter Terrorism/Risk as a standard agenda item for ISAG.

Support to External Event Organisers

ISAG note that the Council has continued to provide substantial support to a number of external Event Organisers in developing their event safety plans and arrangements. Organisations include

- Yarm Town Council
- Billingham Town Council
- Thornaby Town Council
- Friends of Ropner Park
- Butterwick Hospice
- Showmen's Guild
- BIFF

Three events required detailed work as a consequence of their complexity, scale or risk, including Yarm Fair which was the subject of a recommendation from the previous year, as referred to in the introduction. The conclusions and recommendations associated with these three events are provided for information and for the recommendations to be noted.

Yarm Fair - Yarm High Street

(Note that additional ISAG comments are pending a formal debrief meeting of the Yarm Fair).

ISAG were encouraged to see some improvements in the arrival process of the Fair and in particular the site layout of fairground rides. It is acknowledged that the majority of rides were positioned within the new restrictions/parameters detailed in the Event Space Assessment and this was achieved through the efforts of the Chairman and Senior Committee men within the Guild. There are still some areas of concern which will be addressed during the Event Debrief meeting which will be scheduled in early 2020. Early closing times of 10:00pm were reported to have had a positive impact/reduction on ASB incidents.

On a less positive note, there are significant ongoing difficulties relating to Traffic Management plans and control at this event. Despite ISAG highlighting issues in 2018, which included the

management of the hard road closures, further breaches have occurred at the 2019 event. The Council's Enforcement Team have footage of 13 breaches of the traffic safety barriers which were lifted by the Stewarding company deployed by the Showman's Guild. Two of these breaches actually happened when the fairground was in full operation which is extremely dangerous and the remaining 11 breaches occurred before the road closure had been lifted, when members of the public were still on the carriageway. This is unacceptable and shows a disregard to public safety.

- 1. ISAG recommends that the Local Authority continue to work with the Event Organiser of Yarm Fair, including the urgent review of Traffic Management/Control systems for any future event***

BIFF – Sidlaw Road/Billingham Town Centre

Although Event Management Plans were received and assured for the artist rehearsal/catering space at Sidlaw Road, ISAG want to highlight that despite requests to the Event Organiser, the group did not receive information relating to the BIFF show-site event. This meant that BIFF show event was delivered without appropriate review/comment (from ISAG) regarding their safe system of working/health and safety arrangements. This potentially leaves the Event Organiser/Landowner exposed in terms of public safety/inadequate health and safety systems in place. ISAG are aware that this event is supported by the Local Authority and as such the Council has a vested interest to help the Event Organiser understand its legal and moral obligations in relation to public safety/wellbeing.

- 2. ISAG recommends that the Local Authority works with the BIFF Event Organisers to raise their understanding of effective event planning, including appropriate assurance processes being undertaken.***

Fireworks, Stockton Riverside and Stockton High Street

(Note that ISAG comments are pending a formal debrief meeting of the Fireworks event).

ISAG support the continued delivery of the Council's large scale community Firework event, which is held in a central location, with good road access/parking facilities. The approach to hold the event on the closest Sunday to the 5th November seems to be working well, given the high attendance numbers. ISAG Police colleagues have however reported that the fairground element, which was relocated to the High Street, did attract considerable numbers of Anti-Social Behaviour incidents, particularly later in the evening, after 8:00pm

- 3. ISAG recommends that the Local Authority, working with Police colleagues review the fairground operations, including types of rides, timings and location.***

COMPLAINTS/COMMENTS

The number of complaints received in comparison to the number of events held on Council Land tend to be relatively low and in 2019/20 ISAG are unaware of any formal complaints made by members of the public.

There were however a number of comments received regarding communications, messaging and signage. These included concerns about the signage of bus stop relocation and temporary stops and subjective issues of interpretation in relation to the use of pyrotechnics within SIRF shows. The points raised will be taken into account in the planning of each event in subsequent years.

IMPROVEMENT PLANS

EMERGENCY PLANNING AUDIT/RECOMMENDATIONS

The table below details progress against a number of recommendations made following an audit by the Emergency Planning College. Outstanding actions will be rolled forward into 2020

EPC Recommendation	Action/Progress
Consider amending the roles and responsibilities of the Chair of the ISAG to bring them in line with the UK Good Practice Guide to Working in Safety Advisory Groups	<i>Completed</i>
Consider amending the terms of reference to include keeping abreast of current legislation	<i>Completed and new protocols are in place</i>
Strengthen efforts at a strategic level to ensure NEAS are aware of the importance of their role as part of ISAG.	<i>On going Challenges – Chair to Progress</i>
Revisit the roles and responsibilities of core members of the ISAG; specifically with regard to the role and responsibility of the emergency services	<i>Completed</i>
The recording of the 'trigger' factors for ISAG review of an event	<i>This is being considered as part of review of the events application process.</i>
Clarification of the word 'application' when organisers submit documentation for events-	<i>This is being reviewed as part of the streamlined event request, application, review and assurance process.</i>

ISAG IMPROVEMENT PLANS 2020/21

Progress against the ISAG Improvement Plan has been limited during 2019/20. Focus on the Event Space Assessment for Yarm High Street has taken priority over some other actions, which will be rolled forward into 2020/21

Actions	Date	Progress
ISAG Chair to formally write to those Event Organisers who are submitting Late EMPs	January 2020	New for 2020
Develop a series of event workshop sessions for External Event Organisers	March 20	TC/BN to develop model
'Prevent' Training – Counter Terrorism Legislation	June 20	Roll out to all event organisers

Research other Safety Advisory Groups, with a view to strengthening working practices and building networks	Dec 20	Chair & Secretariat to attend/observe an external ISAG meeting
Review Web Guidance	Jan 19	Completed
Continue to review Group Membership, and induction process	Feb 19	Completed

2020/21 ISAG MEETING DATES

Tuesday 10th March 2020
 Tuesday 7th April 2020
 Tuesday 19th May 2020
 Tuesday 16th June 2020
 Tuesday 7th July 2020
 Tuesday 11th August 2020
 Tuesday 15th September 2020
 Tuesday 13th October 2020
 Tuesday 10th November 2020

Event Organisers will be contacted in January 2020, informing them of their allocated ISAG date and deadlines for submitting event applications. Organisers are reminded of the purpose/role of ISAG and given further information about the type of information that the group expect to receive.