

**TRAFFORD COUNCIL**

**Report to:** Safety at Sports Grounds Sub Committee.  
**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020  
**Report for:** Information.  
**Report of:** Corporate Director, Place

**Report Title**

**Report on the Safety Advisory Group Meeting for Manchester United Football Club held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2019.**

**Summary**

**Report summarising the discussions and outcomes of the Safety Advisory Group Meeting.**

**Recommendation**

**That the report be noted.**

**Contact person for access to background papers and further information:**

**Name:** Tony Bibi (Team Leader) Regulatory Services  
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**Background Papers:** None

# **SAFETY AT SPORTS GROUNDS ADVISORY GROUP**

## **Report on the Safety at Sports Grounds Advisory Group Meeting for Manchester United Football Club held on 27<sup>th</sup> September.**

### **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. The purpose of the Safety Advisory Group (SAG) is to advise the local authority in respect of safety management to ensure and promote high standards of safety and security at a sports stadium. Meetings of the SAG are held several times a year as and when necessary; and in particular to review annually a stadium's General Safety Certificate. This is done using a consistent and co-ordinated multi-agency partnership approach. The SAG also advises the local authority in respect of relevant legislation and guidance whereby reports and debriefs relevant to site visits and / or inspections are presented to the SAG in relation to the issue of a General Safety Certificate.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1. In attendance at the meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2019 were representatives from Manchester United Football Club (MUFC), Greater Manchester Police (GMP), Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMF&R), North West Ambulance Service (NWS), Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), Sports Grounds Safety Authority (SGSA), Trafford Council Services (TMBC) including: Sports Grounds and Regulatory Services, Emergency Planning, Highways and Legal and Democratic Services.
- 2.2. A Counter Terrorism (CT) update was provided by the Emergency Planning Manager advising that tenders had been prepared for a feasibility study to commission a consultancy company to advise on hostile vehicle mitigation in the civic quarter, including extending the scope along Sir Alex Ferguson Way to the planned Trafford Park tram stops. The findings of the study will be reported back to Trafford's Security Review Group prior to arranging further discussions with relevant partners to secure necessary funding.
- 2.3. MUFC presented the Club's Annual Safety Report for the 2018-19 Season. This report will be similarly presented to Members of the Sub-Committee since it is an item on the agenda.
- 2.4. MUFC updated the SAG on the building works that are currently being carried out at the stadium to enable the Club to offer additional accessible seats distributed around the stadium. Work is ongoing and will continue throughout the season with construction work areas being suitably sectioned off during match days; supported by an additional increase in the number of Stewards deployed in the building work areas to ensure match day safety.

- 2.5 The Club provided an update on safety and security of recent fixtures, as well as the challenges of future fixtures for the new 2019-20 season, up to December 2019. The Atmosphere Section has been relocated on a trial basis from lower NE Quadrant to the West Stand. The trial will review crowd behaviour and spectator flow rates on the concourses. GMP reported that it appeared to be a positive move with no detrimental impact on police deployments. The use of netting that had been used last season for high profile European games was still an option, however it would only be used by exception, and would be risk assessed on a match by match basis.
- 2.6 In addition, the Club advised that they were looking more closely at the issue of persistent standing, following advice from the SGSA. In this regard, the Club have drafted a policy that will be considered by both TMBC and the SAG in terms of the Clubs planned operational procedures to tackle those people who persistently stand. The Club agreed that information and evidence captured on persistent standing will be available to the SAG for review.
- 2.7 The SAG was informed by the Club of the progress with the enhanced bag drop operation. Changes have been made to the locations of the bag drops resulting with a bag drop being based on the outer perimeter of the stadium footprint. Unfortunately this has caused a few complaints from members of the public due to issues with persons accessing the stadium footprint across the public right of way during a match day operation. The club has approximately 1500 bags deposited in the bag drops and they are always seeking ways to reduce this number. The SAG discussed the procedures that had been implemented and it was agreed the Club would need to have further discussions with the Council's Highways team around the public right of way at the end of Sir Matt Busby Way and the potential use of a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO).
- 2.8 Greater Manchester Police review / update reported that there had been no significant issues this season and most games had been considered as a low key category risk to date. Arrest numbers had been low and there had been no disorder. Planning was currently underway for the planned Liverpool fixture in October. GMP also confirmed that they had no issues with the proposed renewal of the General Safety Certificate that had been drafted.
- 2.9 Trafford Council review / update advised the SAG that a 'P' & 'S' factor audit had been carried out in May 2019 that looked at the scheduled maintenance of structures and facilities at the ground. The work on the safety procedures manual is continuing and the club have employed a consultant to revise the match day risk assessments and bring the manual in line with the changes introduced in the Green Guide 6<sup>th</sup> Edition (November 2018).
- 2.10 A new style General Safety Certificate is being issued and work has been carried out with the club to ensure that they are able to meet the conditions which have been set out in the new certificate. The Club have agreed to make changes to the safety procedures manual to enable improved integration of their existing safety management systems. This work is on-going.

- 2.11 Work has also been carried out with MUFC to enable them to upload their safety procedures manual online to 'Resilience Direct'. The online platform is a national system used by the emergency services. Access will be given to key members of the SAG to enable them to view documents securely.
- 2.12 TMBC further reported that an audit of the Council's safety certification procedures had recently been carried out by the Sports Grounds Safety Authority.
- 2.13 Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service Review / Update raised no concerns but commented that the SAG should be reminded that major incidents can occur outside the stadium footprint which could potentially cause a significant impact on a match day.
- 2.14 North West Ambulance Service Review / Update raised no concerns other than to advise the SAG that there was to be development of the medical facilities at the stadium.
- 2.15 Transport for Greater Manchester Review / Update commented regarding the importance of engagement between all parties in the review of the traffic management plan. In addition, it was reported that there may be some traffic issues in future months on match days as a result of road works which were being carried out in Salford.
- 2.16 The Sports Grounds Safety Authority commented they had carried out a match day visit to Manchester United Football Club which focused on persistent standing. The SAG was informed that they were currently reviewing the Clubs policy in this regard.
- 2.17 It was agreed that the General Safety Certificate should be renewed and issued for the 2019-20 season.

### **3. RECOMMENDATION.**

- 3.1 That the report be noted.