

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: TUESDAY, 26 JULY 2011
title: REPORT ON EVENT SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP
submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: JAMES RUSSELL, HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
CHRIS SHUTTLEWORTH, EMERGENCY PLANNING OFFICER/ESAG

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To clarify the role and confirm the enforcement powers of the Council's 'Event Safety Advisory Group'.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Council Ambitions – to help make peoples' lives safer and healthier.
- Community Objectives – Ribble Valley will be an area with exceptional environment and quality of life for all; sustained by vital and vibrant market towns and villages acting as thriving service centres meeting the needs of residents, businesses and visitors; and
 - to protect and enhance the existing environmental quality of our area;
- Corporate Priorities – Provide quality services efficiently & effectively.
- Other Considerations – to review the workings of the Event Safety Advisory Group is important to ensure understanding of the work undertaken by this group and the joined up multi agency approach to dealing with large outdoor events and ensuring their effective control within the Borough.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 At the March 2011 meeting of this committee a detailed report was presented that outlined the work of the Council's Event Safety Advisory Group [ESAG] and the findings and recommendations of a detailed review carried out by the Chief Executive with regard to recommendations of a related complaint panel, which concluded the following:

- That ESAG has broadly been successful and has an important and ongoing role to co-ordinate multi-agency response and resources to deal with large events.
- That ESAG is there to provide 'advice & guidance' to ensure events take place successfully and safely. It has been reported that 'at times' ESAG has been perceived as being heavy handed and bureaucratic.
- That the event organisers remain ultimately responsible for event planning, and health & safety including public safety.
- That the Local Authority (Environmental Health) is the enforcing authority for work activities where the main activity includes cultural, entertainment or sporting activities.

- That the local authority has a duty to enforce the relevant statutory provisions to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees, members of the public and any other person affected by a work activity. This includes outdoor public events including the erection and dismantling of any structures and equipment used in the event.
- 2.2 However, Committee considered the report and asked officers prepare a further report to the next meeting of this Committee, specifically addressing the following issues, namely:
- identify the role and responsibility of the ESAG;
 - clarify what authority ESAG has in enforcing matters of concern particularly in relation to the authority of other agencies such as Police of LCC Highways;
 - whether ESAG should involve themselves in every outdoor event, whether large or small.
- 2.3 The principal roles and responsibilities and enforcement powers of ESAG are set out in detail in the Council's adopted 'Safer Events Policy' and is précis as follows;
- 2.4 The Event Safety Advisory Group (ESAG) was created to provide a 'one stop shop' or 'single point of contact' for event organisers to meet all relevant agencies under one roof and at one time, to assist and simplify the necessary contact and advisory consultation process with organisers.
- 3 ISSUES
- 3.1 Following the last report to and resolution by this Committee in March 2011, the role of ESAG was considered again by the Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT) on the 18 May in light of Committee's concerns and to establish a better understanding and direction.
- 3.2 At this meeting a number of options were considered as to how best to implement Committee's direction. In addition, reference was also made to earlier advice received from Legal Services at the initial internal review process.
- 3.3 It is now proposed to proceed as follows:
- No direct involvement by ESAG with events of a collective capacity below 5,000 unless a significant impact upon the local community has been identified. Should any issues or complaints arise in respect of events these will be dealt with by the appropriate Enforcing Agency under their normal service request procedures.
 - Where we have received notification/information from event organisations, a list of these events to be compiled this will be circulated to all ESAG member agencies for their information and involvement, as they deem appropriate.
 - A meeting of ESAG will only be convened for events above 5,000 (this being participants and/or spectators) or at the specific request of a ESAG member agency.

- Where we have received notification information from event organisations, the list of events, will be ~~maintained~~ entered on the website for Members, residents and event organisers to refer to.
- Where information relating to a new event is identified (exceeding 5000), the Ward Members will be informed and be invited to be involved.

3.4 Committee is asked to recognise that ESAG was introduced in response to the rapid increase in large outdoor events and associated problems with their lack of regulation. The considerable work undertaken over the past 4 years has resulted in unregulated events moving away and remaining events improving to a good level of understanding and compliance. As such it is now felt that to a large extent the work of ESAG is accomplished and therefore a more detached advisory and information role can be adopted.

3.5 As explained previously ESAG has no legal standing or powers itself other than what is set out in the Council's approved Event Safety Policy. Each participating agency has its own powers of enforcement that it can choose to implement either individually or collectively. In relation to the question of enforcement, Committee should note that the future role of ESAG will be to:

- advise and support event organisers;
- act as a single point of contact for the collation and dissemination of information to member agencies; and
- develop policy for the improvement of standards and co-ordination of approach of large events.

Any action on these decisions for the implementation of standards or request for improvement will be for action by the individual agencies through their duly authorised officers only, this will include inspection and review.

3.6 It should be noted that other agencies have also indicated that they are under increasing resource pressure and may not be able to fully commit to these activities as was previously. This was highlighted in the recent "Exercise Watergate" where they ambulance service could only support on a limited time basis. Similarly, the fire and rescue and police services are having to be very careful as to how much support they can provide. As you will remember, the police last year informed event organisers that they can no longer provide traffic management measures without recovering associated costs.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – None. (It is anticipated that the adoption of these recommendations will improve the efficiency of dealing with future events);
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – There are considered to be no technical, environmental or legal implications.
- Political and Reputation – The implementation of these recommendations should achieve a more transparent and consistent approach when dealing with large

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 5.1 Approve the recommendations for implementation as set out in paragraphs 3.3 and 3.5.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

For further information please ask for James Russell, 01200 414466 or Chris Shuttleworth on 414510.