



## Report to Policy Committee

**Author/Lead Officer of Report:**  
 Matt Proctor, Sports Grounds and Events Lead Officer

**Report of:** Ajman Ali, Executive Director Neighbourhood Services

**Report to:** Waste and Street Scene Policy Committee

**Date of Decision:** 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024

**Subject:** Safety Certification / Safety Advisory Group (SAG) Policy – Sports Stadia & Regulated Stands

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given?	Ref: 2637		
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below.			

**Purpose of Report:**

To inform members of the updated Safety Certification / Safety Advisory Group (SAG) Policy in relation to sports grounds.

**Recommendations**

The Waste and Street Scene Policy Committee is recommended to:

Approve the content of the revised Safety Certification / Safety Advisory Group (SAG) Policy Document attached at Appendix A.

**Background Papers:**

Appendix A: Safety Certification / Safety Advisory Group Policy Document.

Appendix B : EIA 2637

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Adrian Hart
		Legal: Rebecca Lambert
		Equalities & Consultation: Ed Sexton
		Climate: N/A
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	<b>SLB member who approved submission:</b>	Ajman Ali
3	<b>Committee Chair consulted:</b>	Councillor Joe Otten
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	<b>Lead Officer Name:</b> Ben Brailsford	<b>Job Title:</b> Head of Street Scene Services
	<b>Date: 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>	

## **1. PROPOSAL**

- 1.1** Following an internal audit in 2023, a recommendation was made to carry out a periodical review of the SAG policy in relation to Sports Grounds.
- 1.2** That review began in the third quarter of 2023.
- 1.3** The current policy was originally devised in 2013 and has been periodically reviewed in the years since.
- 1.4** The policy revisions reflect changes in best practice and implements recommendations contained within the industry accepted document “Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds” together with advice from the Sports Grounds Safety Authority (SGSA) who have responsibility for monitoring both the Council and stadium operators.
- 1.5** In addition to updating titles and clarifying references, notable additions to the policy include;
- Section 2.6 – addition of a dispute resolution procedure following a recommendation by the SGSA.
  - Section 4.8 – addition of a Medical Advisory Group (MAG) section, reflecting updated best practice
  - Section 4.9 – addition of a Supporters Representative section, again reflecting best practice
- 1.6** The policy as originally drafted in 2013 encompassed the SAG processes for events held away from sports stadia. In the intervening years, event assessment has diverged significantly from that of sports stadia and to this end, a separate policy will be devised for these events and will be the subject of a later report. References to such events have been removed from this policy.
- 1.7** The revised policy also reduces the number of during performance inspections to be carried out at each of the two main stadia annually. The previous commitment was 6 per stadium but due to continued compliance at both Bramall Lane and Hillsborough it is proposed to reduce these to four.

To give some context, SGSA guidance allows a local authority to determine the number of during performance inspections it carries out after risk assessing the stadia under its remit, but recommends a minimum of two per season. Anecdotal evidence from the SGSA inspector is that the Council carries out well in excess of the number of inspections of other local authorities.

## **2.0 HOW WILL THE DECISION CONTRIBUTE**

**2.1** The revised policy will contribute to the strategic goals set out in 'Our Sheffield – Delivery Plan'. It will assist SAG partners to perform their duties on the group with clarity.

## **3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?**

**3.1** SAG partners and stadium operators have been consulted throughout the process and appropriate amendments have been made in light of responses received.

**3.2** The SGSA has also been party to the consultation and has indicated that they consider the policy to be thorough and complete.

## **4.0 RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

### **4.1 Equality Implications**

**4.1.1** Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010 contains the 'Public Sector Equality Duty', under which the Council as a public authority must, in exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that connected to protected characteristics and prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not;
- c) foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

**4.1.2** An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken to consider any implications that may arise in respect of the Council's duties under the Act as a public authority.

**4.1.3** The EIA notes that, although the stadium or sports ground management have their own responsibilities in respect of facilities, spectators and other matters, the Council's function of deciding whether to issue safety certificates is applicable to its legal duties under the Equality Act. In other words, the council must, when exercising this function, have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination and meet other requirements.

**4.1.4** The EIA assesses that the updated SAG Policy is fully consistent with the council's duties under the Equality Act and with organisational equality policy. There are no disproportionate impacts arising from the policy.

**4.1.5** Particular consideration has been given to the protected characteristic of Disability. It is noted that the stadium or sports ground management must provide facilities to cater for the needs and wants of disabled supporters. The Safety Advisory Group offers guidance in this respect to both the sports ground and the Council, as the Certifying Authority responsible for

issuing any safety certificate. Such considerations include the accessibility and safety of viewing areas, facilities provided and evacuation procedures.

- 4.1.6** It is considered that this provides assurance and is fully consistent with our Equality Act duties.

## **4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications**

- 4.2.1** There are no financial implications.

## **4.3 Legal Implications**

- 4.3.1** Under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 (1975 Act) the Council is tasked with the responsibility of being the Certifying Authority responsible for issuing a safety certificate and / or a special safety certificate in respect of sports grounds designated by the Secretary of State.

- 4.3.2** The Fire Safety and Safety at Places of Sport Act 1987 (1987 Act) places a similar responsibility upon the local authority in relation to regulated stands at non designated sports grounds.

- 4.3.3** The Council has delegated its powers for the safety certification of sports grounds under the 1975 Act and the 1987 Act to the Director of Streetscene and Regulations Services, and appropriately onwards as defined in the Council Constitution and scheme of delegations.

- 4.3.4** The policy document provides a framework to support the discharge of that duty.

- 4.3.5** The Right Honourable Lord Justice Taylor made the following recommendation in his Final Report following the inquiry into the Hillsborough Stadium Disaster in 1989:

*'To assist the local authority in exercising its functions, it should set up an Advisory Group consisting of appropriate members of its own staff, representatives of the police, of the fire service and ambulance services and of the building authority.'*

## **4.4 Climate Implications**

- 4.4.1** There are no climate implications.

## **4.5 Other Implications**

- 4.5.1** There are no other implications.

## **5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1** The review was carried out to comply with a recommendation by the Councils internal auditors and reflect changes to industry best practice.

**5.2** Failure to review would result in an outdated policy being in force.

**6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

**6.1** Following consultation with relevant partners, comments, suggestions and requests for amendments or additions have been considered and appropriately implemented into the proposed new document.