

Midlothian Safety Advisory Group Policy

Report by Kevin Anderson, Executive Director Place

Report for Decision

1 Recommendation

- 1.1 It is recommended that Midlothian Council approves the Midlothian Safety Advisory Group Policy.

2 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 Within Scottish local authorities, there is no standardised approach to event planning. Many local authorities manage the coordination of event planning in their area on an ad hoc basis. Midlothian Council has a system in place to cover large events; however, ad hoc arrangements are put in place for other events that are brought to the Council's attention. The approval of the Midlothian Safety Advisory Group Policy will create a transparent process, implement a single point of contact for organisers and multi-agency partners, and ensure a standardisation and consistency to event planning arrangements across all events, with the aim of improving public safety and communication.

Date: 15th September 2020

Report Contact:

Derek Oliver, Chief Officer Place

Derek.Oliver@midlothian.gov.uk

0131 271 3418

3 Background

- 3.1 A spectator and child were tragically killed at the Highland Snowman Rally in 2013. Just over a year later, during the Jim Clark Rally on Saturday, 31st May 2014, two separate incidents left 3 people dead and another 6 injured. This prompted discussion on whether a common approach was required to improve safety at events held within Scotland.
- 3.2 CoSLA chaired a Safety at Public Events Working Group with representation from key professional networks and agencies (including Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Event Scotland) to look at developing a standard national approach to event safety.
- 3.3 A number of recommendations were developed and agreed, following a series of Working Group meetings. The Working Group strongly recommended that these are accepted by local authorities and other agencies working at a local level, unless local processes are deemed to be adequate:

Recommendations of the CoSLA Safety at Public Events Working Group

- i. Each local authority should establish a system for planning events which should be referred to as the Safety Advisory Group (SAG).
- ii. Each SAG process will be compatible with the needs of national partner agencies.
- iii. The primary focus of each SAG will be the safety of all people participating in an event; however, consideration will also be given to the safety of members of the general public who could be affected by the event.
- iv. All SAG meetings will be chaired by a local authority officer. Administrative support at SAG meetings should be provided by the local authority, where possible.
- v. Senior officers from the local authority, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Scottish Ambulance Service are encouraged to meet annually (the 'Core Group') to determine which regular events will be required to come under the scrutiny of the SAG process. Extraordinary meetings may be required to allow for new events to be identified and included as appropriate.
- vi. To assist in the process described at point 5, a risk profile should be developed for all of the events that will be considered.
- vii. Following the annual meeting of the Core Group, regular SAG meetings will take place to manage multi-agency and multi-departmental oversight of events.
- viii. Local authorities, in consultation with partner agencies, will produce a SAG policy document to provide clarity on the structure and

purpose of the SAG group in each local authority area. This will include a section on debriefs following event completion.

- ix. Local authorities are also encouraged to implement the SAG process for events where they are recognised as the event organiser.
- 3.4 The Safety Advisory Group process is a multi-agency approach aimed at ensuring the organisers of significant events plan for and then execute their events in a manner which is safe for both participants and for members of the public.
 - 3.5 The recommendations assume that Local Authorities will themselves adopt the same approach where they are organising significant events.
 - 3.6 It is recognised that ensuring safety at an event is ultimately the legal responsibility of the event organiser.
 - 3.7 There are clear multi-agency benefits from having a uniform approach to the planning and execution of events in Scotland. These include standardised terminology and processes. More importantly, there are several benefits of having a SAG process in place in each local authority area:
 - It ensures that there is a consistent approach to safety at all of the events which come under the scrutiny of the SAG process
 - Safety Advisory Groups directly benefit event organisers by providing a 'one stop shop' for discussing their proposals and seeking advice from partner agencies
 - It limits the number of interactions between event organisers and partner agencies, therefore potentially reducing workload.

4 Midlothian Safety Advisory Group

- 4.1 Having engaged with internal services and multi-agency partners, it is proposed to formalise and approve a policy for events held in Midlothian and incorporate the CoSLA working group recommendations, as specified at paragraph 3.3.
- 4.2 The guiding principle for determining which events will be invited to attend the Safety Advisory Group process is determined by the Strategic Event Safety Group (SESG) and is as detailed within 4.3 of the Policy. This includes events where Midlothian Council is recognised as the event organiser.
- 4.3 The SESG will be chaired by the Chief Officer – Place, or nominee, and attended by Council services and partner agencies identified in the membership list.
- 4.4 The SESG core members will develop and maintain an events risk register and, so far as is reasonably practicable, through the provision of specialist advice, ensure that event organisers instructed to attend

the SAG process uphold the highest standards of public safety at public events.

- 4.5 The SESG objectives will be achieved through the formation of a Safety Advisory Group (SAG) for each event instructed to attend the SAG process. A specific SAG will be chaired and administered by Midlothian Council.
- 4.6 The arrangements for the operation of the Safety Advisory Groups are detailed in the Policy.
- 4.7 Multi-Agency Partners, including Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Scottish Ambulance Service, have been consulted on the draft Policy and are in agreement with the proposal.
- 4.8 It is the responsibility of Midlothian Council and all members of the Midlothian Safety Advisory Group to ensure that event organisers uphold a suitable and sufficient standard of public safety that ensures compliance with legislative obligations and promotes safety for/of the public, event staff and event participants. The Policy confirms and ensures delivery of that responsibility when implemented.

5 Report Implications (Resource, Digital and Risk)

5.1 Resource

Preparation of the Policy has been managed within existing resources. However, in order to successfully implement this Policy, there is an importance of allocating sufficient resources. A dedicated resource will be necessary to create a single point of contact and to coordinate all Midlothian events, along with augmenting wider public safety and resilience activities. This will be met within current budgets.

5.2 Digital

In order to facilitate a “Digital by Default” approach, and the Council’s transition to net zero carbon working practices, the appropriate corresponding computer hardware, software, online access and back office permissions will need to be in place in order to support remote working. A dedicated events mailbox will be created: events@midlothian.gov.uk to provide a single point of contact for public events communications.

5.3 Risk

There is no perceived risk with the approval and implementation of the Policy. Failure to have a Policy in place opens the Council to potential reputational and financial risks should an incident occur at a Midlothian event.

5.4 Ensuring Equalities

The Midlothian Safety Advisory Group Policy has been prepared following an internal consultation across Council services and key partner agencies.

The subject of this report has a positive impact in the environment and as such does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant detrimental impact on equality, the environment or economy.

5.5 Additional Report Implications (See Appendix A)

Appendices

Appendix A – Additional Report Implications

Appendix B – Midlothian Safety Advisory Group Policy

APPENDIX A – Report Implications

A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Not applicable

A.2 Key Drivers for Change

Key drivers addressed in this report:

- ☒ Holistic Working
- ☐ Hub and Spoke
- ☐ Modern
- ☐ Sustainable
- ☒ Transformational
- ☒ Preventative
- ☐ Asset-based
- ☐ Continuous Improvement
- ☐ One size fits one
- ☐ None of the above

A.3 Key Delivery Streams

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

- ☒ One Council Working with you, for you
- ☒ Preventative and Sustainable
- ☒ Efficient and Modern
- ☐ Innovative and Ambitious
- ☐ None of the above

A.4 Delivering Best Value

The report does not directly impact on Delivering Best Value

A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The report does not directly relate to involving communities

A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The report does not directly impact on Midlothian Council's performance and outcomes

A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Through the SAG process, there is a preventative approach towards community safety issues, as they relate to events.

A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

Not applicable

APPENDIX B

Background Papers