

Safety Advisory Group

Thursday 26 Nov. 09

Annand House, Meadowfield.

Attendees:

| | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Ken Sinclair (KS) | Chair | Durham County Council |
| Suzy O'Hara Sheader (SOHS) | Vice Chair | Durham County Council |
| Sarah Grigor (SG) | Legal | Durham County Council |
| Michael Cain (MC) | H&S | Durham County Council |
| Paul Anderson (PA) | Police | Police |
| Steve Lockwood (SL) | Transport | Durham County Council |
| Maxine Stubbs (MS) | Traffic Management | Police |
| Keith Wood(KW) | Traffic Management | Durham County Council |
| John Dodds (JD) | Environmental Health | Durham County Council |
| Alan Gibson (AG) | Fire | Fire Service |
| Harry Russell | H&S | Durham University |

1. Apologies:

| | |
|--------------|------------------|
| Tracey Scott | NEAS |
| Anne Heywood | Durham Cathedral |

2. Matters Arising

Grey College Fireworks

KS awaiting feedback from organiser of fireworks at Grey College

Filming in the City.

KS felt it was not necessary for filming requests to come through SAG, however the general feeling from the group is that a protocol needs to be established whereby all interested parties have this information sent through to them by the film friendly officer – Sally Dixon.

PA was asked by the Durham Tourist officers to provide details of police costings as these crews often look for security. SOHS suggested a list be compiled of all event security companies used locally and this be provided to the crews too. MS and KW felt that depending on the scale of filming Traffic and Traffic Management needed to be made aware of what was going on. It was also felt that for co-ordination the chair of the SAG should know of any filming happening so he could advise on any clashes in the cultural calendar.

KS will liaise with Sally Dixon.

Durham Johnson School KS has been in touch with contact at Durham Johnson School re: Christmas service at the Cathedral and the location of the drop off point for 600 pupils. A meeting was suggested between SL, KS, MS, KW and the coach company. KS will arrange for next week.

DUCK race reschedule

DUCK race was cancelled due to adverse weather. Proposed reschedule for 6th Dec during Christmas Festival. KS to contact organiser

TUC Reclaim the Night

KS has emailed organiser for a debrief and will feed back once he receives information

Temporary Ice Rink

PA raised some serious concerns about the organiser using SAG support as a tool to gain financial support for the venture.

MC noted there is no Public Liability Insurance details and there has been no application for a licence to occupy the land the ice rink will be built on.

4. Correspondence

Durham Churches Together New Year's Eve March

KS has received a curt email from Kirsty Thomas, organiser of the Durham Churches Together New Year's Eve march. Similar to last year, the SAG cannot support this event due to the Police policy on events on the highway needing a road closure, which the organiser will not do. KS will contact the organiser.

Tour of Britain Debrief 8 December 2009

KS invited all interested/relevant parties to this debrief. Police had some concerns but will be raised at the national debrief. Attendees will feed back to the group.

Sedgefield SAG

Gillian Garrigan has sent through some events to KS as she is now moving on from her role in the SAG. These include:

Michael Wilkes from the AAP would like to set up a temporary ice rink in his locality. KS to follow up.

An application for a Hope Not Hate Festival has been submitted to happen in Trimdon on 27 February 2010. KS to contact organiser due to poor quality of application. MS confirmed organiser needs to discuss his plans with Michael Straugheir and Howard Reed.

KS has received a courtesy letter from Houghall College with details of its annual Christmas Fayre. This is an indoor event.

5. Road Closures

There are no road closure applications.

6. Jan Eskildsen Temporary Ice Rink The Sands

Organiser explained that the ice rink was being built at the moment with an expected opening for 4 Dec.

There will be no alcohol sold and as such no license sought.

Public liability will be auctioned next week and the organiser will send through full details to KS who will disseminate to the relevant parties.

Regarding the licence to occupy, MC gave the organiser full details of the application process to obtain a licence to occupy the land. Up to now the organiser had been liaising with Dave Waifer and Richard Langdon. The organiser will contact the relevant person asap.

The organiser described changes to the site layout which satisfactorily deals with issues raised by SAG regarding the fencing onto the river side. There will now be no public access at that point.

The amount of surface water around the site was noted.

Both hotels in the area, the Premiere Inn and the Raddisson were both contacted and are supportive of the venture.

Freeman's Quay still need to be contacted and KS recommended the organiser contact Kay Smith as some of the ice rink encroaches on the fire assembly point for the leisure centre.

All security arrangements were discussed and are satisfactory.

All catering arrangements were discussed and paperwork is in place.

All docs will be received on Wednesday. Once legal documentation and Public Liability is received then SAG can give its support.

7. Max Coleby -

Durham City Harriers Durham Cathedral Cross Country Relays 2010

The organiser gave a full and detailed brief of the event, which has happened for many years now. Its current location is down by the Race Course and will happen on the 16 January 2010. The organiser described the only change to the route being the start and finish to the University grounds.

Two PCSO will be in attendance.

The SAG advised that the risk assessment be reviewed and updated. Once this documentation is returned and satisfactory the SAG is happy to support this event.

Durham County Schools Cross Country Championships 2010

This will happen on the 17 January 2010. The organiser gave a full brief of this event for 11 – 18 yr olds. It was confirmed all people dealing with children are CRB checked. The event is covered by County Schools and County Council Public Liability Insurance.

An updated risk assessment is required.

Durham County Schools Cross Country Championships 2010/Schools Inter County Match 2010

A full detailed brief of this event is needed along with an updated risk assessment.

Andy Billet is to request for a PCSO to be in attendance.

8. Aykley Heads Fireworks Debrief

KS read out a full debrief of the event.

9. Lumiere Debrief SAG Discussion

Key SAG concerns:

Timescales were very short for such a large event. It was felt the festival was a victim of its own success as the numbers of people who came to Durham to take part exceeded all expectations. This brought many issues to the fore.

There was a discussion around the planning and installations of the inflatable structures which were secured to the roof of the Castle, Gala Theatre, Clayport Library and the Gates Shopping Centre. Particular concerns were raised about issues of working at height, structural calculations regarding the weight loading of the roofs and method statements.

Crowd control/movement was cited as a key concern with numbers exceeding all expectations on all nights.

More buses to park and rides was noted as a key issue as people needed to wait a long time for transport back to the park and rides. Other than this the park and ride facility went very well.

The public bus services suffered over the weekend as no pre planning for alternative routes had been arranged prior to the festival.

A discussion around crowd safety and crushing raised some serious concerns, as the police had received some complaints. The numbers had exceeded police expectations.

Particular concern was raised about the fire parade 'Le Sallamandre'

Lack of emergency lighting on Palace Green was raised as an issue.

Paperwork relating to the CCPL was only received on the first day of the festival. SAG support was only given on this day.

This festival raised the issue that a strategy for crowd management when the City is at its capacity needs to be developed.

The Lumiere Debrief

The festival organisers gave a full debrief of the event.

Attendance was approx 75 000 over the 4 days based on figures by Cathedral. This figure was lower than that given by Police who felt it was a good 20 000 more.

Feedback from the festival website had been mostly positive and the public felt it was a very family friendly event. This was reflected in the dynamic of the audience throughout the weekend, which was very different to the regular Saturday night crowd in Durham.

A lot of national press had been generated, the economic impact is currently being evaluated and all car parks and park and rides were full to capacity on all nights.

Production issues:

The technical issues that surrounded the Airvag roof installations were noted and the organisers felt that the results made it worth the effort.

The SAG raised its concerns about the issues it had regarding these installations;

Working at height: The SAG had received an allegation from the Gala Theatre about the installation of the Airvag structure regarding working at height which is currently being investigated by both the County Council H&S and the Festival Organisers. The organiser felt the lack of contact by the Gala staff to notify them of these concerns during the festival, when action could have been taken was both unhelpful and frustrating. The organiser gave a full description of the action he would have taken had he been made aware of any concern.

Structural calculations of roofs and installations: It was agreed that although these issues needed to be flagged earlier in the development period, the correct process had eventually been gone through and the relevant expertise brought in.

Although the University was very happy with the results, communication with the correct people in the University was cited as an issue, however, it was quickly agreed that internal communication within the University has major issues. the festival organisers had spoken to whoever had been

requested and were not responsible for internal communications within the University. It was suggested that moving forward, a list of key individuals both at a senior level and on the ground be created for both the University and the County Council to assist event organisers in future with communication difficulties. It was also noted that these difficulties in internal communications had been the cause of a clash in programming as a VIP had been programmed to speak at the Debating Chamber on Palace Green one of the nights, which caused access issues.

The adverse weather closed a river installation by Creatmosphere on the Saturday night, this was reopened with provision to mopping rain the following night.

The Pink Ladder installation was damaged due to rain and also the installation under Elvet Bridge, as such constant re evaluation of plans were done throughout the festival as the festival team reacted to issues as they came up.

Crowd Issues

It was agreed that audience figures exceeded all expectations, as such the organisers crowd management strategies had been constantly revised throughout the festival and they felt by the Sunday night they had bottomed many of the issues out.

Key bottleneck areas were identified by the organisers including Saddler St, Palace Green, the Cathedral and Framwellgate Bridge during the fire parade.

The organisers described the one way system created in both Saddler St and the Cathedral and the cloisters, which was managed by stewards and with the addition of a surround sound PA system on Palace Green.

It was agreed that Framwellgate Bridge was not a good location to start this parade due to two different crowds merging from different directions, one stationary, to view the parade and one moving through to North Road to use bus facilities. The key approach to this crowd for the organisers was to keep the crowd moving and they felt the crowd was very amenable to all requests.

The route was renegotiated on the Saturday morning in liaison with the Police and it was decided to stop the parade in the Market Place and not proceed up to Palace Green due to numbers of expected people. Major concerns were raised about this performance by both the Police and Fire. The organisers made it clear that they did not take the responsibility of the safety of the public at their events lightly and had put in place all the provision they felt necessary. It was noted that there was no crushing and no one was injured in any way during the event due to the professionalism of the performers and the crowd management strategy they had in place.

There had been a letter of complaint about this event to the Police which the festival team would respond to.

Saddler Street had become a bottleneck as people tried to move up and down to and from Palace Green. This had been managed through a one way system and the stewards had been briefed on how to handle the moving crowd. It was agreed that it had been exceptionally busy but that the good humour of the family crowd had kept the crowd moving.

Moving forward a PA system running the length of Saddler St could be used for crowd management announcements and that communication with the crowds needed to begin at the Market Place.

The fact that the programme of art works had been spread over the entire City was cited as a key crowd control strategy as it focused on the movement of people around the City however, it was agreed that in Durham crowd management of such large numbers had been a learning curve.

The issue of the lack of a joint event control during the festival was raised by the organisers who felt that this was a big issue and needed to happen. It was suggested that moving forward this could be a mobile unit (Emergency Liaison Team) who were on the ground and were able to react to issues as they saw them as well as when they heard of them. It was agreed that there was a clear need for the SAG and the festival organisers to work much more closely together in future planning of events.

Concerns were raised by the organisers around emergency planning in the City for events of this size. They suggested ~~and~~ a table top exercise focusing on emergency procedures prior to the next festival was suggested.

Stewarding

There was a discussion around stewarding, it was noted that the stewarding plan was refined by the organisers each day and the stewarding capacity was increased each day in direct response to the numbers of people attending. Although there were concerns raised, it was confirmed that there was a stewarding briefing every night at the production meeting.

Millennium Place piece had to have barriers put in place and a in/out system imposed due to numbers.

The Riverbank had a one way system imposed and moving forward the organisers felt that signage would stop people walking a distance only to have to turn back and way around the other way, which caused some frustration.

Transport

AA signs had been bought for the Park and Rides but out of 22 only 7 were permitted to be installed by the County Council ~~installed, this needs some investigation as to why.~~ Reasons why need to be investigated.

It was agreed that pre planning with the public bus service was needed for next time.

Future Plans

It was confirmed that the County Council had asked the festival organisers to come back in both 2011 and 2013 to repeat the festival of lights. This gave the organisers a better opportunity to plan and work much more closely with all the represented organisations of the SAG.

Overall it was agreed that this event was very positive for the City and its bid for City of Culture.

A ~~festival debrief~~ planning meeting for future festivals for a wider circle of interested parties, with a focus on action points ~~and~~ will be hosted in January by the organisers, Kate James will circulate the date, time and venue.

KS will write up a debrief report for this event for SAG records.

