

Notes of the Appleby Fair Multi-Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group held on 8 July 2019

Attendance: Matthew Neal (MN), Eden District Council (Chair)
Rob O'Connor (ROC), Cumbria Constabulary
Neil Graham (NG), Cumbria Constabulary
Suzie Pye (SP), South Lakeland District Council
Nick Turner (NT), Eden District Council
Trevor Marsh (TM), Environment Agency
Mike Clusker (MC), Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service
Jim Maguire (JM), South Lakeland District Council
Rob Lewis (RL), Cumbria County Council
Kellie Bradburn-Sims (KB), Cumbria County Council
Phil Dew (PD), Cumbria County Council
Karen Greenwood (KG), Eden District Council
Bill Lloyd (BL), Gypsy and Traveller Representative
Andy Millburn (AM), Cumbria Constabulary
Steve Wilde (SW), Eden District Council

Apologies: Robert Docherty, Eden District Council
Nick Wright, Cumbria County Council
Nick Griggs, North West Ambulance Service
Billy Welch, Gypsy & Traveller Representative
Rob Melloy, RSPCA
Emma Brass, Eden District Council

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 20 May 2019

These were agreed save for a minor correction - reference to Mill Street at para 2(a) should be reference to Mill Hill.

Matters arising:

Regarding item 2 and the issue with posing on the A685, County Highways carried out an inspection and found that more areas required posting.

Regarding item 6 and the letter from the Police and Crime Commissioner in relation to Appleby Fair and use of the Warcop Training Camp for a temporary stopping place, a letter in the negative had been received from the MOD.

2. Discussion on Phases 1, 2 and 3 of the Fair

MN gave an overview of the Fair.

Regular Silver Command telephone conferences took place from Tuesday 27 May, moving to physical meetings from 5 June 2019. The numbers in Eden built up quite quickly.

Any encampments were dealt with in accordance with the agreed Enforcement Protocol. He stated that he was pleased with how areas of the A685 identified as particularly unsafe for stopping were clearly marked and strictly enforced.

One of the things that would be discussed over the next few months is the extent to which any further increase of highway protected areas is feasible having regard to the resources of the Police and other agencies.

The opening times for the seven licensed sites in the vicinity of Appleby remained as 4am on Thursday morning. However, in accordance with a MASCG agreed

process, the Police assessment was that the level of traffic congestion caused by vehicles queuing to get onto the sites (including backing onto the A66) was such that it was agreed between MN and ROC, that the 4am opening would no longer be enforced as from circa 6pm on the Wednesday evening. The message was given out to all seven licensed sites.

The trial of the pedestrian crossing at The Sands provided a much safer environment particularly with the Bridge End News operating as on licence rather than an off-licence.

One of the things that MN wished to build upon in next year's Fair is in relation to the response and resources in terms of both on street parking (enforced by the County Council) and off street parking (enforced by the District Council).

It is fair to say that Appleby was very busy on 6 June, through to the Saturday, however there were people leaving on the Saturday and on the Sunday morning. It was quiet on Monday 10 June to the extent that we had the last Silver Command conference on that day.

The river level was high between the Saturday and the Sunday of the Fair. There were regular Silver Command meetings on the Saturday and the Sunday and MN was delighted that The Sands could open at 2.30pm on the Sunday.

ROC stated that there was some crime (some of it serious crime) and the level of crime was similar to last year. He stated that he would not be commenting on the more serious crimes as to do so would prejudice any ongoing investigation and future court proceedings. He stated that there had been 8 arrests compared to 8 in the previous year, 21 crimes compared to 17 in the previous year, 51 Fixed Penalty Notices compared to 22 in the previous year, 3 stop and searches compared to 1 in the previous year, 4 dispersal order compared to 122 in the previous year and 103 calls for incidents compared to 115 in the previous year. He stated that costs were likely to be £130k for the Police this year. He stated that he had received positive feedback from the Town and Parish Councils of Kirkby Stephen, Kirkby Lonsdale and Sedbergh and other areas. He stated that he had received positive feedback from members of the public, at MASCG from elected officials and via CAG at Appleby.

ROC indicated that Public Spaces Protection Order powers worked well regarding on street drinking and diplomacy rather than issuing tickets worked well (with Fixed Penalty Notices as a backup if required).

TRO stopping not tolerated on two sections of A685 - worked well, challenge to Police but no significant issues. Overall, he stated that he was pleased with the way the policing operation had gone.

PD indicated that it would be appropriate to seek to obtain an economic impact assessment of Appleby Fair. It may be possible to seek the assistance of academic researchers from local universities. He also indicated that there may be ways to get some funding for this. Another aspect that he indicated should be looked into achieving some income from Appleby Fair. The RSPCA had made a good contribution and the town was keen to raise funds for them. He referred to the possibility of setting up a community company which could be tasked with raising funds and potentially commissioning an economic study of the effects of Appleby Fair.

3. Horse Passports/Microchipping

ROC introduced this item indicating that under new legislation every horse should have a passport and be microchipped. Responsibility for enforcement is for the County Council.

A discussion ensued and it was agreed that there were issues in terms of resources and for proportionality. It was agreed that the welfare of horses is the main issue and enforcement of legislation in terms of horse passports and microchipping was a matter for the County Council to consider having regard to its enforcement protocols.

Action: That the update be noted.

4. Operational Working Group

a) Highways

RL indicated that the highway barricading went well. There was a lot calmer environment around The Sands. He stated that the Royal Oak had complained that they had lost trade and they might not open next year. He confirmed that adjustment had been made to the strategy in terms of access to Jubilee Ford closure to enable people to wash their horses without using the river as a thoroughfare in that location. His view was that arising from the results of the trial, the barricading of the level crossing should be repeated for next year.

RL confirmed that the Police did a really good job in terms of enforcing the highway safety areas. ROC stated that there ought to be serious discussion about whether it would be possible to extend the level of prohibited parking areas on the A685 and the necessary additional extra resources would be very difficult to procure.

RL indicated that the ditching and bunding along the A685 in relevant areas would be technically feasible but would come at a cost.

RL indicated that there had been a request for an additional road closure at Market Place, Appleby which would be considered in due course.

He indicated that the additional signage at the Kirkby Lonsdale loop road had worked fairly well.

Any lessons learnt will be to review the Traffic Management Plan for next year.

KG raised concerns about crossing at The Sands and indicated that people were allowed to congregate inside the barriers. RL stated that he had observed interaction around The Sands and there was no significant issue in this regard in his view.

KG also referred to issues in terms of communicating the change from the two way to one way traffic along Garths Head. Certain residents were angered by the late notification causing them to have to revise their management plans when they were turned round by the Police. RL indicated that he would look to improve communications with residents in this regard for next year. KG also stated that there was aggravation towards PSCOs at Garths Head and RL agreed there was the need for some further additional infrastructure there.

PD stated that the Police did an excellent job in terms of enforcing highway restrictions.

ROC stated that as the barriers worked well there were a number of difficult conversations with Gypsies and Travellers who wished to get around the highway barrier at the level crossing near The Sands.

PD stated that one detail the needed to be improved upon was in terms of the highways designated areas and did not see why horses could not be allowed to eat grass. RL indicated there had been signs put there prohibiting this but caused no real issue from a highways point of view.

ROC referred to sulkies on Battlebarrow ridden by young children with no restraints. He did also indicate that there had been one instance where he wished to congratulate the parent whose children were wearing helmets and seat restraints. There was a discussion about the fact that there were 20-30 people given advice about using seat belts whilst driving around Appleby. The preference was to provide advice rather than proceed to enforcement.

b) Parish Engagement

AM indicated that feedback was generally positive. There were issues in terms of Scroggs Bank where the sign providing information about appropriate early arrival time having been removed.

PD and BL suggested concern about the potential sale of Watty Yat and the potential advantage of a purchase of it by the Council.

c) Licensing

SW stated that overall, licensees did a really good job. There was one issue at the Kings Head where there was an outbreak of disorder which the Police did very well to deal with expeditiously. There was another issue at the Crown & Cushion with infrastructure encroaching too much onto the pavement. This appears to have been previously approved by a Licensing Officer and therefore, not much could be done about it during the Fair.

He confirmed that it was busy at Nateby at the Black Bull to the extent that door staff would have been appropriate.

SW stated that there was an issue that there was no more funding for door staff from the Community Safety Partnership. There would be a strong case for requiring door staff as part of the Appleby Charter as from Thursday due to the early opening of the seven licensed sites was very busy.

d) South Lakeland

JM stated that there had been very little feedback from their CAG meetings.

5. Communications and Engagement

NG stated that in terms of the messages to not arrive too soon, this had clearly not been heeded and this needed to be pushed out more strongly next year. He stated that more social media had been used to report incidents. There needs to be a caveat that anything mentioned in social media should be followed up by separate contacts to the relevant authorities.

He stated that the Community Forums happened at 2.00pm and the Facebook community forum happened early in the afternoon and they were useful but there was some teething problems in terms of be resourced by all agencies. The Police message about a firm but fair approach went out and was well received.

There was discussion about the serious alleged crime which was reported on the Friday before the Fair. The message had not got out to the public. NG stated that this was due to the print deadlines of the Herald. ROC however stated that any social media/press statement about alleged crime should be dealt with in exactly the same way as it would be at any other time of the year.

7. Any Other Business

TM stated that he had no concerns about pollution. Whilst there was some littering, the Environment Agency were content with issues in terms of prevention of pollution with regard to local watercourses.

SW stated that the PSPO's enforcement went very well and whilst there were no fixed penalty notices issues, the threat of fixed penalty notices meant that drinking outside premises could be dealt with fully by the Police.

KG raised the issue about enforcement of car parking. MN stated that he would certainly look to address this in the future to ensure that parking was enforced throughout the Fair in the same way as it is enforced at any other time of year.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 23 September 2019 at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Penrith.