

Notes of the Appleby Fair Multi-Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group held on 23 March 2020

Attendance: Les Clark, Eden District Council (Chair)
Councillor Karen Greenwood, Eden District Council
Louise Biggs, Eden District Council
Councillor Phil Dew, Cumbria County Council
Mike Clusker, Cumbria Fire & Rescue
Billy Welch, Gypsy & Traveller Representative
Robert Docherty, Eden District Council
Bill Lloyd, Gypsy & Traveller Representative
Emma Brass, Eden District Council
Steve Wilde, Eden District Council
Kevin Crawley, Cumbria County Council
Councillor Suzie Pye, South Lakeland District Council
John Everingham, Eden District Council
Rob O'Connor, Cumbria Constabulary
Neil Graham, Cumbria Constabulary
Damian Lavictoire, Cumbria Constabulary
Kellie Bradburn-Sims, Cumbria County Council
Rob Melloy, RSPCA
Nick Griggs, North West Ambulance Service

Apologies: Simon Rowley, South Lakeland District Council
Steve Minnikin, Cumbria Constabulary
Nick Wright, Cumbria County Council
Jo Walker, Cumbria Constabulary

1. Coronavirus

LC said that due to the unprecedented position we currently find ourselves in with regard to Coronavirus, that he considered it impossible for this year's Appleby Fair to go ahead and asked for the opinions of MASCG members on this.

BW said that he had expressed the opinion regarding the Fair not going ahead a few weeks ago. He said that he was pleased everyone was "singing from the same hymn sheet", sacrifices had to be made and everyone had to pull together in these uncertain times.

BL was of the same view as BW. He said that in 2001 when the Fair was not held due to foot and mouth only a few people turned up. A clear message needed to be put out to discourage people from attending, not just the Gypsy and Traveller community but also visitors from the settled community.

LC said it was important to get the main points across through various communication channels.

ROC had had discussions with BW regarding the fact that Police staffing levels would be affected due to various factors and the pressure this would have on policing the Fair.

It was suggested that comms would come from BW/BL and a pragmatic approach would stand us in good stead of people listening to the messages being given. PD said that BW/BL leading on this was a good idea going forward.

2. Communications

The message that the Fair would not be happening in 2020 would be led by BW/BL and it was critical that it was done in a strong and robust fashion.

NG said that he had been talking to BW/BL regarding crafting a message to go out.

BL said that the message needed to push the fact that people were to stay at home and not to come at all.

LC said that we needed to craft the message so that it was strong and simple and would be refreshed in the run up to when the Fair would happen.

ROC was in agreement and said that to get the message out further, respective organisation could use their contacts. It was suggested that the licensed site holders were also key people to get the message out to as well as Parish Councils.

KBS said that CCC were working direct with CALC/EALC through the Cumbria Resilience Forum and they could help get the message out direct to Parish Councils.

SP was in agreement which what had been suggested although she was worried that in 9-10 weeks' time and with the uncertainty of where we will be with regarding to Covid-19, that people may think it is ok to come out and that strong messages needed to be put out nearer the time of the Fair.

BL asked whether EDC could withdraw licences for campsites as a deterrent to stop people from coming. EB said that licences are issued with planning permission but if no welfare facilities were in place (ie toilets, water etc) people can't use the sites.

EB also said that food businesses booked to attend via Jimmy Winter so there was a list of contact details. She would make sure that they were contacted.

NG had put something together which he would circulate to the group immediately after the meeting and any comments were to go back to him by 4.00pm so that the message can be put out as soon as possible as people were aware the matter was being discussed at this meeting and were awaiting information.

It was agreed that each agency would do what they can to push the message out using their contacts. LC also asked that each agency think who they were sending the message to and let him know so that a comprehensive list could be put together and any gaps identified. All agreed.

Nick Griggs also asked that something be added into the message regarding the pressure on NWAS/NHS as they were under extreme pressure and would be unable to provide a service to the Fair. This was agreed.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 24 February 2020

These were agreed as a true record.

It was agreed that any actions would be left for the time being as none were pressing at this time.