

Notes of the Appleby Fair Multi-Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group held on Monday 24 October 2022

Attendance: Les Clark, Eden District Council (Chair)
Louise Biggs, Eden District Council
Matthew Kennerley, Cumbria Constabulary
Councillor Phil Dew, Cumbria County Council
Councillor Graham Simpkins, Eden District Council
Councillor Suzie Pye, South Lakeland District Council
Emma Brass, Eden District Council
Neil Buck, Eden District Council
Laura McClellan, Cumbria County Council Highways
Sue Gilbertson, Appleby Town Council
Bill Lloyd, Gypsy & Traveller Representative
Sue Warner, South Lakeland District Council
Dan McAulay, Eden District Council
Kellie Bradburn-Sims, Cumbria County Council
Rob Melloy, RSPCA
Katie Callon, Cumbria Constabulary
Neil Graham, Cumbria Constabulary
Lee Skelton, Cumbria Constabulary
Alistair McCaig, Cumbria Constabulary

1. Apologies

Steve Wilde, Eden District Council
Billy Welch, Gypsy & Traveller Representative
Amanda McKirdy, Cumbria Constabulary

2. Minutes of MASCG held on held on 29 September 2022

These were agreed as a true record.

3. LGR and how it impacts MASCG

LC gave an update on informal discussions with the Interim Head of Paid Service for the new Westmorland & Furness Council on the importance of the continuation of MASCG. Due to the management structure, there may be a change in officer representation and new Members of Westmorland & Furness would be nominated. The chairmanship also needed to be clearly identified against the new Senior Leadership Team. BL said that the continuity of officers needed to be kept as far as possible due to the key experience they had.

PD asked when it was likely that senior appointments would be made as it was important that the chair had the confidence of local residents. LC said that the current intention was for senior recruitment to be completed by the end of November although this was not firm. He would seek to get an update on the timetable for the next meeting.

4. Update on Work of Consultants

As the group were aware, a commitment had been made at the Post Fair meeting to look at the organisation of Appleby Fair; especially in relation to the Fair becoming an organised event and addressing the adequacy of stopping/transit places for Phase 1. Following a procurement process, one very strong submission had been received which had been evaluated and formally appointed to start work. A timetable still needed to be discussed with the Consultants. LC would circulate

the tender submission to the group for information. The most important part was the consultation and engagement with the impacted communities in and around Appleby.

The intention was to set up Steering Groups to work with the consultants on the planning for the two pieces of work and everyone was asked to consider whether they would be willing to take part and let LB know which group they would like to sit on.

PD commented that it would be better for the work to be thoroughly done rather than rushing, as it would inform future Fairs to come. He urged that elected MASCG members were included as a balanced view would be needed.

This would also become a standing item on the agenda.

5. Evaluation Report 2022

Baseline information was still awaited from agencies – LC hoped to have a draft of the report ready for Christmas (workload pending) so asked that all outstanding information was sent to LB by the end of November.

Each agency was also asked to report any key issues/observations on any learning from this year to apply to future years. Narrative on the way the Fair is policed will also be worked into the draft.

6. Implications of the Police & Crime Bill

MK gave an update on key changes to current legislation – new criminal offences has been introduced to Section 60c of the Criminal Justice & Public Order Act. It says where significant damage, disruption or distress is caused it gives the Police some additional powers. Significant is the key word – it means significant in the eyes of the Police, not of MASCG or individuals. When threshold is hit, it gives additional powers around requiring people to leave immediately or as soon as reasonably practicable and directing them to do so – where they don't leave vehicles can be ceased. There are some implications to this in that some vehicles that are potentially ceased may be people's homes and the Local Authority would have to provide suitable accommodation etc.

Whilst it does give some new powers, it wouldn't particularly change the way the Fair will be policed. Issues that have arisen in previous years would not have not met the threshold of these powers.

BL asked if was possible to put out reassurance statements reflecting the main points, possibly as part of the evaluation report text.

MK said the Police have reviewed their wider encampment policy for the county and have put forward BL as a contact for any consultation and to expect contact shortly. The MASCG Encampment Strategy for Appleby will now need to be reviewed in line with the changes to the legislation.

EB said that at Great Asby, a group of local residents were gathering opinion of residents with the intention of going back to the Parish Council.

7. Update on Children being in charge of Sulkies

MK said that the information was with the legal team to look over. He would update at the next meeting.

8. Communications and Engagement Update

It was noted that the King's Coronation was due to take place on 6 May 2023 so would not affect Appleby Fair. KBS said that the pre and post Fair notes had not been published on the Appleby Fair website – upon checking it was noted that they had been published.

9. Operational Working Group Update

a) Highways

Nothing to raise – getting ready for next year.

b) Parish Engagement

EB/AMcK were attending meetings as and when requested. A discussion would take place at the next Ops Group meeting on setting up sub-groups for the Encampment Protocol – impact of new legislation will need to go into this. LGR meetings also taking place in relation to Gypsy & Traveller encampments, in relation to the overall countywide protocol.

BL asked if any decisions had been made by Great Asby. EB said that they were looking at opinions of residents asking about their experiences during the Fair and whether they should continue to provide the services they do and whether they should still be considered as a tolerated stopping place.

c) Licensing

LS gave an update on early concerns in relation to the licensee of the Kings Heads as it had now closed. There was no news on whether a new DPS would take it on. The Grapes was currently closed but it was the intention of the premises owner to open for the 2023 Fair.

Concerns were still around the capacity issues of licensed premises and it was felt strong consideration should be given to using the road closure on The Sands and consult with the community as soon as possible. Doing this would make policing easier to manage the consumption of alcohol. A watching brief would be kept on this.

BL said it would be helpful if indication could be given from the Police/Licensing on whether an application for additional licensed premises in some of the fields around Appleby. An implication of the closure of the pubs would be in relation toilets – BL had been in discussion with a benefactor and asked to make an application to them for funding to provide additional toilets in the town and cleaning of them. BL/NB would discuss this further. SG would also like to be involved in this discussion to cover the public toilets in Appleby – she would send costing info to BL.

In relation to the additional licensed premises, LS said that although the mobile bar had been a success, it had not been in a good location. There was scope to look at alternative placement – from a policing perspective; they would be supportive of an application being put forward and assessing on its own merits etc.

d) South Lakeland

SW raised the issue of the possibility of not putting boulders in the lay-bys at Sedbergh She would discuss this further with LM.

10. Any Other Business

LS said that Trading Standards were looking to reinstate joint operations on the Market Field. He would speak to BL/BW for their views on this.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 5 December 2022 at 2.00pm.