

Notes of the Appleby Fair Multi-Agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group held on Monday 22 May 2023

Attendance: Steph Cordon, Westmorland & Furness Council (Chair)
Councillor Phil Dew, Westmorland & Furness Council
Councillor Graham Simpkins, Westmorland & Furness Council
Councillor John Murray, Westmorland & Furness
Matthew Kennerley, Cumbria Constabulary
Emma Brass, Westmorland & Furness Council
Neil Buck, Westmorland & Furness Council
Laura McClellan, Westmorland & Furness Council Highways
Bill Lloyd, Gypsy & Traveller Representative
Billy Welch, Gypsy & Traveller Representative
Kellie Bradburn-Sims, Westmorland & Furness Council
Amanda McKirdy, Cumbria Constabulary
Neil Aitken, Cumbria Fire & Rescue Service
Steve Wilde, Westmorland & Furness Council
John Banks, Westmorland & Furness Council Highways
Sue Gilbertson, Appleby Town Council
Nick Wright, Westmorland & Furness Council
Richard Batham, Highways England
Nick Griggs, North West Ambulance Service
Rob Melloy, RSPCA
Dan McAulay, Westmorland & Furness Council
Sue Warner, Westmorland & Furness Council
Neil Graham, Cumbria Constabulary
Lee Skelton, Cumbria Constabulary
Andrew Lowes, Cumbria Fire and Rescue
Christopher Winter, Cumbria Constabulary
Trevor Marsh, Environment Agency
Paul Goddard, North West Ambulance Service

1. Apologies

Louise Biggs, Westmorland & Furness Council

2. Minutes of MASCG held on 24 April 2023

These were agreed as a true record.

3. Communications and Engagement Update

NG: Communication relating to not arriving too soon has been shared in conjunction with stopping places. This information has been picked up widely. More social media messaging is scheduled for the coming weeks around stopping places and road safety, as well as licencing arrangements for phase one and two. Also working with officers on the amended arrangements for the CAG meetings.

PD: An article was published in the Cumberland and Westmorland Herald last week from Appleby Fair Communities Group which mentioned a residents perception survey which had in excess of 500 responses. Cllr Dew asked if MASCG had any information on this survey, which would be useful to have ahead of the public meeting. NG advised there was no information relating to the survey.

SC: Advised that most of the enquiries received via the Appleby Fair website were requests for minutes of MASCG meetings, and comments from residents relating to the work of the consultants undertaking the feasibility study.

BL: Asked if all meeting minutes for MASCG are publicly available on the website. SC confirmed that those which are publicly available will be on the website however the more operational meeting notes are not.

Cllr John Murray requested the agenda and minutes for the meeting be sent to him as not previously received. KBS sent these by email during the meeting.

4. Operational Working Group Update

a) Highways

LM: Liasing with Police on the A685 TRO. All traffic management is now in place and ready to start.

Additional resource required at Brampton village were discussed. LM to check resources and confirm with Cumbria Police.

A query was raised over the boulders in the layby at Cautley and if they are now in place? LM to check with South Lakes Highways colleague and confirm.

PD: Advised that Westmorland and Furness Council's Eden Locality Board have to approve the Highways budget for Appleby Horse Fair. LM advised that there is no specific budget in relation to Appleby Fair and that the entire Highway budget was still to be approved as a result of the Local Government Reorganisation and the New Authority just recently being formed, however as the Highways Authority there is a requirement to ensure the network is safe for all its users and therefore are required to implement the restrictions as detailed within the Traffic Management Plan accordingly. SC to confirm governance of budgets with John Banks, Area Network Manager.

b) Parish Engagement

An update on Great Asby encampment restrictions and how the village will manage arrivals took place. If restrictions are not clearly communicated this could cause issues with people arriving. EB advised the village will install their own posts on the village green. They have received guidance on this and importance of not cause any obstruction to highway or access to public land.

A discussion took place around barriers and access to land at Watter-Yat from 2022. Boulders were put in place by the land owner. There were no complaints or issues raised following this.

LS: Agreed to look further into the legal implications relating to blocking access to public land, and will update relevant officers.

PD: Advised that MASCG need to demonstrate they are aware of the implications relating to the changes at Great Asby. Families will arrive at the village to allow horses to rest on route to the fair. Cllr Dew also pointed out that Jubilee Park layby in Kirkby Stephen will also be bouldered off, an alternative layby has been requested for bowtops, they will need somewhere to stop at this point in their journey, we need to know if there is another provision.

EB: Advised that there is a layby at the top of Midland Hill, if this layby is available, arrangements for a toilet and signage will be actioned.

LM: Confirmed that the decision re Midland Hill layby will be finalised by close of play today, signage will be addressed.

c) Licensing

The list of phase one and phase two licenced premises opening has been sent to MASCG reps. In addition the Co-op and Spa shops in Kirkby Stephen and Appleby have agreed to sell cans rather than bottles of beer to keep glass waste down during the fair. The Mango Tree Indian Restaurant in Kirkby Stephen will be opening during phase one under the timing restrictions of the fair. The New Inn at Brampton has agreed to open under fair timings. A meeting on Friday with officers to provide information on opening times and other aspects of AHF licencing agreements has been arranged with the New Inn. Officers discussed opening arrangements of other premises inc China Moon and Santorinit Takeaway, all will be confirmed and reps updated.

This year's fair will also have a mobile bar and the Travelling Man festival, both will be located near Salt Tip Corner and will help to ease pressure on the town and displaced footfall. The travelling man festival will have a capacity for 2500 and no entry fee.

Neil Graham MASCG Comms lead will release the licenced premises opening information publicly and share with all MASCG reps for onward sharing.

SW: All key officers will be updated after the New Inn meeting on Friday.

d) South Lakeland

All utilities for AHF 2023 will be arriving across the five key encampment sites on Friday 26 May. There have been reports of bowtop in Kirkby Lonsdale on the loop road. Officers will be driving to North Yorkshire to meet travellers on site and hand out information on stopping places and other sites along the route. Two large bonfires have been built as part of hedge cutting in preparation for the fair. The fires will be lit before travellers are allowed on site. Bill Lloyd requested the fires are lit well in advance of arrivals to ensure heat, ash and residue has cleared in time.

5. Any Other Business

a) Access for Kirkby Stephen School Bus

Cllr Dew raised the details of this issue in which school children were dropped off in the town during busy periods of the fair arrivals, during the 2022 fair. Amanda McKirdy from Cumbria Police confirmed that they have addressed the matter with Appleby school, arrangements are underway for a walking bus to support unsupervised children. This approach will be suggested with Kirkby Stephen School where a similar issue occurred last year.

b) Update on Consultant Work

Emma Brass and Steph Cordon had met with the consultant to check on progress. MASCG were reminded of the purpose of the work which was a strategic evaluation of the practicalities of the fair becoming an organised event, and the review of transit sites. The consultants will be visiting this year's fair, and their focus will be to experience the fair and take an informed view which will include talking to travellers about stopping places. The consultants will attend the post fair public meeting via Teams. The report will not be available until the summer and post Fair.

Bill Lloyd requested information on the arrival of the consultants at the fair and advised that Friday will be a busy time with the arrival of the Archbishop. Emma Brass is liaising with the consultants on their arrival and will feedback to reps.

Steph Cordon agreed the outcome needs to provide a thorough evidence based report of the work completed with practical and legal supporting evidence. Steph Cordon agreed to keep all MASCG reps updated with progress on the consultants work.

c) Closure of The Sands to 9:30pm

The usual re-opening time for The Sands closure is 6pm, this is when the main clean up starts. In 2022 the closure was extended to 9.30pm, so far this hasn't been requested for this year. The Working Time Directive creates a challenge to resource a later opening and clean up with extended hours for staff required. Officers agreed an extended closure would probably not be required for this year's fair based on the plans for additional provisions away from The Sands.

The Grapes will be opening inside only from 7pm, and will not be allowing the public to use their toilets during the day when serving outside only.

d) Access to Fire Hydrant

Cllr Simpkin raised the issue of travellers blocking access to the Fire Hydrant at The Punch Bowl, and the need to ensure access to the hydrant is maintained at all times. Emma agreed to speak with Andrew Lowes, Cumbria Fire and Rescue and take the issue to the operational group to resolve.

Emma updated MASCG on the issues raised at the previous meeting relating to an outbreak for Measles. The appropriate communication has been shared relating to this issue, no further action is needed.

Emma discussed a query that had been raised relating to land not being used for events or camping where animals have been grazing within a 3 week period prior to the event, due to risks of ecoli. Emma advised this is guidance and not legislative, and will respond to the query on behalf of MASCG.

Appleby Town Clerk confirmed there would not be any livestock on Fair Hill 3 weeks prior to the fair.

A discussion on the replacement format for the CAG meetings took place. Amanda McKirdy advised that the logistics of the most suitable platform to

manage this is being looked into. All MASCG reps will be updated on the new format as soon as it is finalised.

Bill Lloyd requested an update on the information that will be available for car parks. Amanda McKirdy confirmed the Police will be managing this with support from Highways. A map has been created with all parking available. All car park contacts will be asked to provide regular updates on parking availability to manage flow of arrivals. The platform for this information and signage are being prepared.

Cllr John Murray introduced himself to the MASCG as the newly elected representative for Westmorland and Furness Council Locality Board for Eden.

The daily MASCG conferences are due to start on 31 May. Due to the bank holiday and early arrivals in the area, police activity will start on Friday 26 May. It is anticipated that there will be more arrivals for the fair over the bank holiday weekend. All agreed to starting the daily conferences earlier this year, to ensure a multiagency response is available. Daily morning conference calls will stand up on 26 and 29 May, chaired by Steph Cordon and Matthew Kennerley, alternately due to Bank holiday and then revert to daily from 31 May 2023.

Action; Louise Biggs to book the daily MASCG meetings from 26 May and send invitation to all reps.

6. Confirm Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 26 June 2023 at 2.00pm.