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**Report to:** Licensing and Regulatory Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 2 November 2015

**Subject:**

- Revocation of General Safety Certificates for:
  - Southport Football Club (entire designated sports ground)
  
- Granting of General Safety Certificate for:
  - Main Grandstand (a regulated stand)
  - Jack Carr Stand (a regulated stand)

**Report of:** The Head of Planning Services      **Wards Affected:** Kew

**Is this a Key Decision?** No                      **Is it included in the Forward Plan?** No

**Exempt/Confidential ?** No

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**Purpose/Summary**

To inform the Licensing and Regulatory Committee that from 1 October 2015, Southport Football Club's Haig Avenue stadium will no longer be 'designated' under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 and as a consequence, the existing Safety Certificate for the stadium is to be revoked. Members will also be requested to grant new individual Safety Certificates for the Main Grandstand and for the Jack Carr Stand.

A plan of the Southport Football Club grounds is attached as an annex to the report.

**Recommendations**

**Members are requested to**

- i) Note the report
  
- ii) Agree to revoke the General Safety Certificate for Southport Football Club's entire Haig Avenue stadium.
  
- iii) Agree to grant new General Safety Certificates for the Main Grandstand and for the Jack Carr Stand at Southport Football Club's Haig Avenue stadium.

**How does the decision contribute to the Council’s Corporate Objectives?**

<u>Corporate Objective</u>		<u>Positive Impact</u>	<u>Neutral Impact</u>	<u>Negative Impact</u>
1	Creating a Learning Community		√	
2	Jobs and Prosperity		√	
3	Environmental Sustainability		√	
4	Health and Well-Being		√	
5	Children and Young People		√	
6	Creating Safe Communities	√		
7	Creating Inclusive Communities		√	
8	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening Local Democracy		√	

**Reasons for the Recommendation:**

Legislative requirement.

**What will it cost and how will it be financed?**

(A) **Revenue Costs** - none

(B) **Capital Costs** - none

**Implications:**

The following implications of this proposal have been considered and where there are specific implications, these are set out below:

<b>Legal</b>		
<b>Human Resources</b>		
<b>Equality</b>		
1.	No Equality Implication	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.	Equality Implications identified and mitigated	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Equality Implication identified and risk remains	<input type="checkbox"/>

**What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?**

The Chief Finance Officer has been consulted and notes the report indicates no direct financial implications for the Council’s budget. (FD 3834/15).

The Head of Regulation and Compliance has been consulted and has no comments to make. (LD 3117/15).

**Other options.**

None.

## **Implementation Date for the Decision**

Immediately following the Committee meeting.

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## **Background Papers:**

The following background papers can be viewed by clicking on the links:

- Main Grandstand Draft - General Safety Certificate – Issue 1

<http://modgov.sefton.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s63745/MainGrandstandGeneralSafetyCertificateIssue1Oct2015.doc.pdf>

- Jack Carr Stand Draft General Safety Certificate – Issue 1

<http://modgov.sefton.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s63746/JackCarrStandGeneralSafetyCertificateIssue1Oct2015.doc.pdf>

## **1.0 Introduction/Background**

- 1.1 Under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975, clubs who were members of the Football League (such as Southport FC), automatically received 'designated' status and as such, had to obtain a Safety Certificate from their local council to prove their ground was 'fit for purpose'- in terms of structural integrity, fire safety and means of escape in case of an emergency etc.
- 1.2 Once issued, Safety Certificates remain in place until such time as there is a material alteration requiring them to be re-issued, e.g. a change in legislation, a significant physical alteration to the stadium, a change to the named certificate holder etc.
- 1.3 Since 1975, the Safety Certificate for Southport FC's stadium has been re-issued by the Licencing and Regulatory Committee on a number of occasions, the latest being in October 2014, following a review of access for emergency vehicles.

## **2.0 Current position**

- 2.1 In the Autumn of 2014, the Government carried out a review of 'designated' sports grounds across England and Wales, in order to assess whether or not all of those stadiums needed to maintain their 'designated' status.
- 2.2 As a result of the review, the Government published The Safety of Sports Grounds (Designation) Order 2015, which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015. This legislation confirmed that non-league football clubs (with ground capacities of less than 10,000) were no longer required to hold a Safety Certificate for their stadiums. Southport FC's stadium currently has a maximum capacity of 5,414.
- 2.3 Therefore, given the change in legislation, the current Safety Certificate for Southport FC's stadium is no longer deemed valid and will need to be revoked by the Licencing and Regulatory Committee.
- 2.4 However, under the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987, clubs with non-designated sports grounds that have individual grandstands holding 500 or more spectators, are still required to obtain a Safety Certificate for each stand. Southport FC's Haig Avenue stadium contains two such grandstands, namely, the Main Grandstand and the Jack Carr Stand.
- 2.5 On 21 September 2015, Officers from the Council inspected both the Main Grandstand and the Jack Carr Grandstand, in order to assess their condition and suitability. The inspection found a number of items requiring attention - such as the replacement of a number of timber steps, repainting of nosings to gangway steps, replacement of a number of seating brackets, etc. In addition, the Club was asked to produce test certificates for the annual testing of crush barriers, emergency lighting and the public address system etc.
- 2.6 A further inspection was carried out by Officers on 12 October 2015 and all of the items referred to in paragraph 2.5 above were found to be satisfactory.

2.7 Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service and North West Ambulance Service, have all been consulted and they have no objection to new Safety Certificates being issued for the Main Grandstand and the Jack Carr Stand.

### **3.0 Future actions**

3.1 Draft Safety Certificates for the Main Grandstand and the Jack Carr Stand have been prepared and with agreement from Members of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee, both Certificates will be issued to Southport Football Club's named certificate holder.

3.1 Should Members agree to issue the new Safety Certificates, Officers from the Council will undertake annual, statutory inspections of both stands, in order to verify that the contents, requirements and conditions contained within the issued Safety Certificates are being met. These inspections will be carried out jointly with the emergency services.