

Report

Report to:	Finance and Corporate Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	27 September 2023
Report by:	Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	Safety at Sports Grounds – Re-issue of General Safety Certificate for the ZLX Stadium
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ advise of the action taken, in terms of Standing Order No 37(c) because of the timescales involved, to re-issue the reviewed General Safety Certificate for the North and West Stands, Hamilton Academical Football Club, ZLX Stadium, Cadzow Avenue, Hamilton

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the action taken, in terms of Standing Order No 37(c) by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources), in consultation with the Chair and an ex officio member, to re-issue the General Safety Certificate for the North and West Stands, Hamilton Academical Football Club, ZLX Stadium, Cadzow Avenue, Hamilton, be noted.

3. Background

3.1. In terms of the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987, a General Safety Certificate is required for a stand at a sports ground which can accommodate at least 500 spectators under cover to view the activities at the ground. A stand which falls within this classification is referred to as a “regulated stand”. The ZLX Stadium (formerly known as New Douglas Park) had previously been identified as a sports ground with regulated stands.

3.2. The revised format of the General Safety Certificates for the North and West Stands at New Douglas Park was approved by this Committee at its meeting on 11 December 2013. A single Certificate, in the same format, covering both Stands was approved by this Committee at its meeting held on 10 November 2021. The Certificate requires to be reviewed and re-issued annually.

4. Re-issue of the General Safety Certificate

4.1. At the annual safety inspection which took place on 18 July 2023, the North and West Stands at the ZLX Stadium were found to be well maintained.

- 4.2. All of the relevant inspection certificates and test records were available for inspection with the exception of the following:-
- ◆ turnstile inspection certificate
 - ◆ fire fighting equipment inspection certificate
 - ◆ fire fighting equipment in-house inspection records
- 4.3. The fire fighting equipment inspection certificate and in-house inspection records have since been copied to the Council. Sports ground management have also advised that the inspection of the turnstiles has been undertaken and the certificate will be copied to the Council as soon as it is available.
- 4.4. The engineer's structural inspection report stated that there was no evidence of primary structural defects. A number of observations and comments on minor defects were included in the report and stadium management have since advised that all the identified actions have been completed.
- 4.5. In addition to the actions identified in the engineer's report, 2 further actions had been identified during the inspection, 1 of which was completed prior to the General Safety Certificate being re-issued and the other has been completed since its re-issue.
- 4.6. Stadium management and the South Lanarkshire Sports Grounds Safety Advisory Group had reviewed the General Safety Certificate and the safety management arrangements at the ZLX Stadium and the following changes had been made to the Certificate:-
- ◆ Holder is asked to inform the Council of the name of the person at senior level in the organisation who is responsible for safety policy and its implementation
 - ◆ Holder is asked to produce an event safety policy
 - ◆ Holder is asked to produce a Fire Safety Plan
 - ◆ Holder is asked to ensure that all directly employed in-house stewards are trained, assessed and have achieved a Level 2 spectator safety qualification
 - ◆ Holder is asked to check that agency stewards undertaking licensable activities hold a valid and appropriate SIA licence
 - ◆ Holder is asked to invite as opposed to notify the Council, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and the Scottish Ambulance Service to exercises carried out at least annually to ensure the emergency procedures set out in the contingency plans operate correctly
 - ◆ Holder is asked to liaise with emergency services and other relevant agencies to ensure the contingency plans are compatible with the emergency or major incident plans of those other agencies
 - ◆ Holder is asked to produce a written Crowd Disorder and Anti-Social Behaviour Plan
 - ◆ Holder is asked to produce a security assessment to include the risk of a terrorist incident and develop a written Security and Counter Terrorism Plan following consultation with Police Scotland
- 4.7. In addition to the above, the following amendments have also been made to appendix 2 of the General Safety Certificate:-

- ◆ the maximum number of spectators which may be admitted to the West Stand has increased from 3,264 to 3,308 and the maximum number of spectators which may be admitted to the North Stand has increased from 2,246 to 2,274 as the capacities now include provision for spectators with disabilities and their carers/companions in the Stands and trackside concourses
- ◆ although not a regulated stand in terms of the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987, reference is now included to the maximum number of spectators, as set by the Holder of the General Safety Certificate, which may be admitted to the East Stand on any one occasion for the purpose of a specified activity, at 498

4.8. In terms of the policy documents and plans listed at paragraph 4.6, stadium management have been asked that these are produced prior to the commencement of the 2024/2025 season.

4.9. The Stadium Safety Team had reviewed the operations manual for last season which reflected that the stadium also hosted the home games of Clyde Football Club. Separate operations manuals are now in place for Hamilton Academical Football Club and Clyde Football Club for the 2023/2024 season.

4.10. The Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources), in consultation with the Chair and an ex officio member, approved the reviewed General Safety Certificate for the North and West Stands at the ZLX Stadium to allow it to be re-issued prior to the start of the 2023/2024 football season which commenced on 5 August 2023.

5. Employee Implications

5.1. None.

6. Financial Implications

6.1. The Council is authorised by regulations to charge fees for work reasonably done as a result of an application for the issue, amendment, replacement, transfer or cancellation of a safety certificate.

7. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

7.1. There are no climate change, sustainability or environmental implications arising from the information presented in this report.

8. Other Implications

8.1. There is a risk to the Council as the body responsible for administering safety certificates for sports grounds that any incident involving public safety where proper guidelines have not been followed could damage the Council's reputation. This risk is mitigated by the requirements and conditions contained within the General Safety Certificates on stadium management to implement measures within the Guide to Safety at Sports Grounds (Sixth edition) to ensure the reasonable safety of persons attending the sports ground.

8.2. In addition to this, annual inspections and annual event inspections will be carried out at the ZLX Stadium which include checks of safety procedures, physical inspections of the Stands and checks of inspection and test certificates of various installations and equipment.

9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 9.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.
- 9.2. Consultation has taken place with stadium management at the ZLX Stadium and the South Lanarkshire Sports Grounds Safety Advisory Group which comprises of representatives of the following:-
- ◆ relevant services within South Lanarkshire Council
 - ◆ NHS Lanarkshire
 - ◆ Police Scotland
 - ◆ Scottish Ambulance Service
 - ◆ Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Paul Manning

Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

6 September 2023

Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes

- ◆ Focused on people and their needs

Previous References

- ◆ Finance and Corporate Resources Committee – 7 September 2022

List of Background Papers

- ◆ General Safety Certificate for Regulated Stands – North and West Stands, ZLX Stadium, Cadzow Avenue, Hamilton

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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