

**Report to:** PUBLIC PROTECTION SUB-COMMITTEE

**Relevant Officer:** Michelle Wilson, Head of Building Control

**Date of Meeting:** 18 July 2023

## SAFETY CERTIFICATION- BLACKPOOL FOOTBALL CLUB

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To inform the Sub-Committee that the Safety at Sports Grounds Act 1975 will transition to risk-based Safety Certification at Blackpool Football Club and consider any issues arising from this change.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To note the transition from current prescriptive safety certificate to risk-based safety certificate.

2.2 To delegate approval of the new Ground Safety Certificate to the Head of Building Control.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 The new model risk-based safety certificate is in accordance with Sports Grounds Safety Authority guidance and has been agreed and accepted by Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. The delegation to the Head of Building Control will enable the new Certificate to be in place for the start of the new Football League season.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? Yes

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? No

### 4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None, the report is for information only.

### 5.0 Council priority:

- 5.1 The relevant Council priority is
- "The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool"
  - "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

## **6.0 Background information**

- 6.1 Under the provisions of the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975, county councils, unitary authorities, metropolitan or London boroughs are responsible for issuing and enforcing a safety certificates in respect of any sports ground in their area which has been designated by the Secretary of State.
- 6.2 Sports stadia with a capacity of more than 10,000 spectators or more than 5,000 spectators for football are so designated. One stadium within Blackpool, The Bloomfield Road Stadium has a capacity of more than 16,500 and is therefore a designated sports ground. The purpose of a general safety certificate is to ensure that provisions are in place to secure reasonable safety at that ground.
- 6.3 A general safety certificate must be held by an individual who is, in the Certifying Authority's determination, a person likely to be in a position to prevent contravention of the terms and conditions of a certificate (referred to within the legislation as a "qualified person").
- 6.4 From 26 June 2023 based on updated Sports Grounds Safety Authority guidance which has been agreed and accepted by Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport there have been changes to a more risk-based approach on identified concerns. Given that the capacity will remain unchanged from the existing certificate and there have been no identified issues or concerns by the Blackpool FC Safety Advisory Group then the exercise would seem to be a straightforward one so it is proposed that the issue of the certificate be delegated to the Head of Building Control. If significant issues were identified in the future then a report would be brought back to the Sub-Committee but at present it is considered that it would be a purely administrative exercise.
- 6.5 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

## **7.0 List of Appendices:**

- 7.1 None.

## **8.0 Financial considerations:**

- 8.1 None.

## **9.0 Legal considerations:**

- 9.1 None.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None.

**11.0 Equalities considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:**

12.1 None.

**13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

13.1 Consultation has been undertaken with the Police, Fire Authority and Ambulance Service via the Blackpool FC Safety Advisory Group.

**14.0 Background papers:**

14.1 None.