

# Cabinet

**Dorset County Council**



Date of Meeting	18 January 2017
<b>Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee – Councillor Trevor Jones</b>	
<b>Subject of Report</b>	<b>Call to Account – Ironman Event</b>
Executive Summary	<p>The IRONMAN Weymouth event took place on 11 September 2016 across south and central Dorset.</p> <p>Competitors and spectators largely viewed it as a success. However, many people contacted the county council, as Dorset's highway authority, about delays and confusion on local roads due to problems with signage, stewarding and information.</p> <p>Unfortunately, this was not the first time that events such as these have experienced problems. This is despite previous assurances by organisers that issues would not be repeated.</p> <p>Therefore, on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2016, the Audit and Governance Committee held a special 'call to account' meeting to look at a range of evidence to investigate and scrutinise the circumstances which had led to these concerns. This exercise was structured around key lines of enquiry and its aim was to make recommendations to the Cabinet for necessary improvements.</p> <p>At the end of the session, three key areas of weakness were identified and acknowledged by all involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i) Traffic Management</li><li>ii) Marshalling</li><li>iii) Communication</li></ul> <p>Moving forward, overall the Committee are eager to ensure and have evidence that strong and effective partnership working is in place, leading to successful events for the benefit and prosperity of Dorset, whilst minimising disruption for those not involved.</p>

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	<p>As such, and to ensure appropriate elected member oversight, the Committee recommend that the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Highways &amp; Transportation is consulted upon and agrees the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and receives evidence at key stages of the event planning process to ensure that the agreed conditions are met.</p>
<p>Impact Assessment:</p>	<p><b>Equalities Impact Assessment:</b> There are not considered to be any equalities issues associated with the specific content of this report.</p>
	<p><b>Use of Evidence:</b> This report summarises the outcomes following the evidence presented and considered by the Audit and Governance Committee at its ‘call to account’ meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2016.</p>
	<p>Budget: N/A</p>
	<p><b>Risk Assessment:</b> Having considered the risks associated with this decision using the County Council’s approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as:</p> <p>Current Risk: MEDIUM Residual Risk LOW</p> <p><i>(i.e. reflecting the recommendations in this report and mitigating actions proposed)</i></p>
	<p>Other Implications: None</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That the Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Carefully consider, agree and implement the recommendations of the Audit and Governance Committee (as set out in Appendix A), which are designed to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Improve future Ironman events</li> <li>ii) Provide a governance framework for the approach to other significant events</li> <li>iii) Minimise any negative impacts and maximise the benefits associated with future events.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

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	<p>2. Formally agree that the Portfolio Holder for Highways &amp; Transportation is asked to ensure he is consulted upon and agrees the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and receives evidence at key stages of the event planning process to ensure that the agreed conditions have been met.</p>
Reason for Recommendation	To support the councils stated corporate plan outcomes of a 'Safe' and 'Prosperous' Dorset.
Appendices	<p>Appendix A – Call to Account - Recommendation &amp; Implementation Plan</p> <p>Appendix B - Minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee meeting held on 7 December 2016</p>
Background Papers	Reports to the Audit & Governance Committee on 7 December 2016
Elected Member and Officer Contact	<p>Name: Councillor Trevor Jones – Chairman of Audit and Governance Committee  Tel: 01305 264335  Email: d.t.jones@dorsetcc.gov.uk</p> <p>Name: Mark Taylor - Group Manager – Governance &amp; Assurance  Tel: 01305 224982  Email: m.taylor@dorsetcc.gov.uk</p>

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The recent 'IRONMAN Weymouth' event followed two 'Challenge Weymouth' triathlon events that had been held previously in the area. Although some new personnel were involved in leading this new event, many had been directly engaged in the previous organisation of the event.
- 1.2 On the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2016 the event was held, with competitors and spectators largely viewing it as a success.
- 1.3 However, many people contacted the county council – as Dorset's highway authority – about delays and confusion on local roads due to problems with signage, stewarding and information. In light of these concerns elected members were eager to review why these difficulties had been encountered.
- 1.4 Therefore, on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2016, the Audit and Governance Committee held a special 'call to account' meeting to look at a range of evidence, including complaints received immediately following the event, to investigate and scrutinise the circumstances.
- 1.5 The meeting proved extremely useful and informative and heard views from the county council highways officers, Ironman, the police, Dorset Councils Partnership, and, importantly, members of the public.
- 1.6 At the conclusion of the call to account meeting the Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee informed those present that the committee would report to the county council's cabinet on January 18, to set out and seek support for its key messages and recommendations.
- 1.7 This summary report, which is supported by the minutes of the call to account meeting included at Appendix B, documents those areas that the committee have concluded are necessary for improvement.

## **2. Key Messages**

- 2.1 The Committee, and hopefully also those others present at the meeting, welcomed and appreciated the frank apologies provided both by the organisers and the council for the mistakes that had been caused by the event.
- 2.2 There was unanimous acknowledgment and agreement by all parties involved that similar disruption and frustrations must not be allowed to arise in future.
- 2.3 This was especially important as, despite lessons learned having been identified following previous events, evidence had confirmed that these had not been properly implemented.
- 2.4 The main issues highlighted at the meeting related to signage problems; a lack of communication between the event organiser, communities and marshals; and the lack of knowledge of the marshals who had been hired from other areas and knew little to nothing of the local area.

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- 2.5 It was revealed at the meeting that two of the three companies who had been commissioned to provide marshals for Ironman had pulled out not long before the event took place. Ironman failed to communicate this until the day of the event.
- 2.6 Suggested ideas for improvement were discussed including producing a detailed communication plan; ensuring that all control centres work together; producing a Memorandum of Understanding; and practices and training reviewed and refreshed.
- 2.7 To summarise, three key areas of weakness were identified and acknowledged by all those involved. These were:
- i) Traffic Management
  - ii) Marshalling
  - iii) Communication
- 2.8 The Committee also acknowledge and appreciate the proactive suggestions for improvement that had already been identified and included in the report by officers.

### 3. Recommendations

- 3.1 Moving forward, overall the Committee are eager to ensure and have evidence that ***‘Strong and effective partnership working is in place, leading to successful events for the benefit and prosperity of Dorset’***.
- 3.2 In order to deliver this the Committees key recommendation relates to the establishment of a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)**, which would clearly set out and robustly ‘bind’ the various parties involved to specific actions for significant events of this nature.
- 3.3 Whilst clearly it is not the role of the Audit and Governance Committee to set out the exact detail and nature of this document, the committee expressed a clear view that, as a minimum, it would expect the following criteria to be included:
- The establishment of clear roles, responsibilities and timelines – *With all parties formally acknowledging accountability for their assigned roles and responsibilities.*
  - Adequate resource contributions made by event organisers which reflect an appropriate level of professional input by the various key partners.
  - Use of skilled, accredited and knowledgeable local marshals to support the smooth running of the event.
  - An appropriate Traffic Management Plan which is clear, agreed, widely communicated in advance and adhered to.
  - Effective and early consultation across the various stakeholder groups, agencies and bodies.
  - An effective communication strategy which is wide ranging, utilising all avenues available, to maximise awareness to the general public, local residents and business affected well in advance.
  - Evidence based staged reviews to ensure adherence to the agreed criteria.

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- Adequate contingency planning is in place, supported by a robust risk register.

3.4 The Committee feel it is vital that the above criteria are all supported through a **relationship of openness and trust**, especially in respect of the early sharing of issues and/or concerns. This will ensure these can be assessed and dealt with effectively.

3.5 During the committees discussions reference was made to a specific partner forum, referred to as the Safety Advisory Group (SAG). The committee were advised that this provided periodic and important oversight of safety in the planning and execution of such events. The Committee therefore suggest that, rather than create an additional forum, the establishment of 'SAG Plus (+)' is considered. This forum would allow partner discussions to build beyond the specific safety issues and enable consideration of the wider aspects and actions of event planning (e.g. the remaining MoU commitments) for significant events.

3.6 These meetings, chaired by the local authority, must continually seek to ensure that robust arrangements are in place in order to deliver successful outcomes.

3.7 Also, to ensure appropriate and continued elected member oversight until confidence levels improve, the Committee recommend that the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Highways & Transportation is consulted upon and agrees the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

3.8 The committee further recommend that the Cabinet Portfolio Holder also receives evidence at key stages of the event planning process to ensure that the agreed conditions as set out in the agreed MoU are met.

3.9 In addition, the report which provided background and context for the call to account meeting, also included a number of further suggested improvements. These are all supported by the Committee and are considered important in the active pursuit of delivering better outcomes.

3.10 For ease of reference these are as follows:

- i) Produce a MoU between all key SAG members in accordance with the home Office guidance.
- ii) A post event meeting and evaluation is undertaken within a month of the event taking place and consider Legal Services involvement when legal issues are involved.
- iii) Event organisers are asked to produce a detailed communication plan, at least 6 months before the event, in support of their application for a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) which seeks to consult and, where possible, engage the District, Town, Borough and Parish Councils.

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- iv) Ensure that the Ironman hotline, Dorset County Council Traffic Control centre and event Control centre work in a fully integrated manner.
- v) Review and refresh practices, systems and training needs relating to legal and practical processes and requirements.

### **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1 The Committee has carefully considered the evidence provided and also recognises the estimated economic benefits that are associated with events of this nature.
- 4.2 It remains of the view that the council should continue to actively encourage and support such events and/or ventures.
- 4.3 However, the committee remains of the clear view that we must ensure that evidence of professional and adequate event planning exists. This will provide assurance that such events are run to maximise the enjoyment of those involved and minimise disruption to others.
- 4.4 It is important that future events are planned and communicated closely with local communities and businesses to mitigate any negative impacts from the event.
- 4.5 The Audit and Governance Committee strongly believe that the call to account and the resultant key messages and recommendations will help the council to improve outcomes for the residents and businesses of Dorset.
- 4.6 The committee therefore strongly urges the Cabinet to carefully consider and support our recommendations in full as they will provide appropriate clarity and oversight to help ensure similar problems are not repeated.

**Trevor Jones**  
**Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee**  
January 2017