

Licensing Committee

Monday, 28 July 2014

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Pattie Hill (Chair), Councillor Alan Mason (Vice-Chair)
Councillors Natalie Brookes, Andrew Fry and John Witherspoon

Officers:

K Barnett, D Etheridge and A May

Committee Services Officer:

P Ross

The Chair welcomed new Licensing Committee Members and A May, Licensing Officer, Worcestershire Regulatory Services to the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Gay Hopkins and David Thain.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 7th April 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

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Chair

4. LICENSING ACT 2003 - REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

Following on from the meeting held on 7th April 2014 the Committee considered a report which detailed the responses received during the consultation on the draft revised Statement of Licensing Policy.

The Senior Licensing Practitioner, Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) presented the report and in doing so drew Members' attention to the two responses received during the consultation, as detailed at Appendices 1 and 2 to the report.

The first response received, as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report, was sent on behalf of the Musicians' Union. The Musicians' Union was keen to ensure that the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy did not impose unnecessary burdens on licensed venues which would discourage their use for live music and therefore deny opportunities to working musicians. In response to the comments made by the Musicians' Union, Members were informed that the Statement of Policy acknowledged the deregulation of live music and other entertainment in chapter 19. The Statement of Licensing Policy made it clear at paragraph 5.1, that every application received would be treated on its own merit. Paragraph 5.3 stated that the authority would aim to carry out its licensing functions in a way that promoted tourism, increased leisure and culture provision and encouraged economic development within the Borough.

Chapter 9 in the Statement of Licensing Policy detailed that any conditions attached to licences would be tailored to the individual type, location and characteristics of the premises and events concerned. In summary officers believed that the Statement of Licensing Policy gave a fair balance between enabling the provision of live music and promoting the licensing objectives. Therefore, the comments received from the Musicians' Union would not be included in the Statement of Licensing Policy.

The second response received, as detailed at Appendix 2 to the report, was from Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFR). HWFR had suggested some minor amendments to paragraph 6.2 of the draft revised Statement of Licensing Policy, relating to the requirements on plans submitted with applications. The minor amendments suggested had been incorporated into the final version of the Statement of Licensing Policy, as detailed at Appendix 3 to the report.

Members were informed that the final version of the Statement of Licensing Policy, as detailed at Appendix 3 to the report, if

approved by Council, would be published with effect from 1st October 2014.

The Senior Licensing Practitioner, WRS responded to Members' questions with regard to advice from licensing officers to potential applicants. Applicants could seek advice on their applications from Redditch Borough Council and WRS websites, by phone call and at licensing surgeries.

The Senior Licensing Practitioner, WRS responded to Councillor A Fry in respect of how the consultation was conducted. Members were informed that the consultation process had been carried out via email, letter and the Council's website. The costs incurred would have included his time and minimal postage costs all accountable to WRS.

Further discussion followed with regard to the Home Office Guidance 'Safe Clubbing' and the employment of door safety staff licensed by the Security Industries Association (SIA).

RECOMMENDED that

The outcome of the consultation exercise be noted and that the Statement of Licensing Policy, as detailed at Appendix 3 to the report, be approved and adopted as from 1st October 2014.

5. LICENSING ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received the Licensing Annual Report 2013/2014 which detailed the activities under the Licensing Act 2003, Gambling Act 2005 and other aspects of Licensing delivered by Worcestershire Regulatory Services on behalf of Redditch Borough Council.

The Senior Licensing Practitioner, WRS introduced the report and in doing so informed Members of the number of new licenses issued and granted by Redditch Borough Council during 2013/2014. Four new premises applications and one Temporary Event Notice had been determined by Licensing Sub-Committee (Premises) Members, as the objections raised to these applications had not been mediated out.

The report also detailed the number of premises which had continued to be licensed by Redditch Borough Council under the Gambling Act 2005. The number of licensed Hackney Carriage vehicles, Private Hire vehicles, drivers and operators.

Members were pleased to see that an update had been provided detailing the number of all new Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle applicants and existing drivers who had undertaken the disability awareness training conducted by Worcestershire County Council and introduced in January 2014. At the Licensing Committee meeting held on 11th November 2013 and following the findings of the "Access for Disabled People Task Group", Members had resolved to make disability awareness training a mandatory requirement for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle drivers in the Borough; with the exception of those drivers who could demonstrate to the Council's satisfaction that they had undertaken equivalent disability awareness training.

Further discussion took place on the number of betting premises, whereby Members raised concerns with regard to a national proliferation in betting premises opening. The Senior Licensing Practitioner, WRS informed the Committee that the London boroughs had seen a proliferation in betting premises opening, this was not a problem in the Borough. Members were further informed that there was a code of practice that premises had to adhere to under the Gambling Act 2005.

The Senior Licensing Practitioner, WRS responded to Members' questions with regard to mobile scrap metal dealers and the requirement to display their licence on the windscreen of their vehicle. The Senior Licensing Practitioner agreed with Members that residents may not be aware of this requirement. It was suggested that further publicity to inform residents to look for the displayed licences would be useful and to encourage residents to report unlicensed scrap metal dealers to WRS licensing officers. It was also suggested that the publicity could be used to inform residents to contact licensed mobile scrap metal dealers to collect direct from their premises instead of leaving scrap metal on driveways. This may discourage unlicensed scrap metal dealers from collecting door to door. The Senior Licensing Practitioner informed the Committee that some unlicensed scrap metal dealers were now using transit vans, which made it difficult for the police to see what was being carried.

Councillor A Fry took the opportunity to thank officers for a good, concise informative report.

RESOLVED that

The contents of the Licensing Annual Report 2013/2014 be noted.

6. LICENSING COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee noted the Licensing Committee Work Programme for 2014/2015.

The Senior Licensing Practitioner, WRS provided the Committee with a brief verbal update on the Face to Face Fundraising – Site Management Agreement with the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PRFA). Members were informed that a further planned visit from PFRA would be carried out in August 2014. The final Site Management Agreement would be presented to the next meeting of the Licensing Committee.

The Senior Licensing Practitioner, WRS responded to questions from Members with regard to Animal Welfare and the Deregulation Bill.

Further discussion took place on the Deregulation Bill “Taxi” clauses and the proposals to deregulate certain existing rules with regard to permitting unlicensed drivers to drive licensed private hire vehicles whilst not in use as a licensed vehicle and Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver licenses lasting for three years instead of the current period of one year. Members were informed that the next event for the Deregulation Bill “Taxi” would be the Committee Stage in the House of Lords on 21st October 2014.

RESOLVED that

The Licensing Committee Work Programme 2014/2015 be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.00 pm