

Appendix - Minute 7 refers

On 5th December 2007, Redditch Borough Council's Licensing Committee received and endorsed a report containing recommendations directed at improving the licensing and regulation of the Borough's night-time economy, with a particular focus on preventing and reducing violent crime.

Since this date the Committee has received two formal reports in December 2009 and July 2010 concerning the implementation of these recommendations by Redditch Borough Council officers & Elected Members, Worcestershire County Council and West Mercia Police.

The verbal update given today continues this process and recommends that it now conclude. The main reasons for this recommendation are as follows:

Firstly, the recommendations of the Cardiff report have largely now been implemented. Those recommendations that have yet to be implemented are connected to the transition to Worcestershire Regulatory Services and should be reconsidered in this context.

Secondly, the Licensing arena has undergone, and will continue to face, substantial change chiefly due to the impact of agencies restructuring through the transition to WRS and changes to the Police licensing and local policing functions. There have also been significant changes in the national policy context for licensing.

These changes present new challenges and opportunities to ensure that the core activities necessary to deliver effective regulation – identified by the Cardiff report – are maintained, namely:

- engaging with premises
- collecting evidence and intelligence
- maintaining effective partnership working
- taking appropriate enforcement action

At a time when pressure on public resources is high, particular attention must be given to maintaining the ability of the front line to deliver what matters to the public.

The Committee and relevant agencies can take encouragement that levels of reported crime related to the Redditch town centre night-time economy fell between 2008/9 and 2010/11¹. Officers have suggested that the enhanced agency focus on licensed premises during this period and the economic downturn may be connected with this reduction. Separate analysis has shown a modest decline in levels of public disorder on Unicorn Hill following the introduction of the white lighting scheme and other environmental improvements in this area.

¹ The numbers of offences were: 2008/9 = 387, 2009/10 = 328, 2010/11 = 317. Crime related to the night time economy (NTE) is defined as a range of specific types of offences (broadly including personal violence, public order, damage, drugs, sexual offences and a small number of other offences) which occur in the town centre area, either indoors or outside, between the hours of 5pm and 5am.

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The Community Safety Partnership will continue to encourage the Committee and relevant agencies to focus on crime & disorder issues connected with the town centre night-time economy. This work forms part of Community Safety Partnership Plan priority “Safer Streets & Places.” This focus is regarded as being vital to developing a vibrant, inclusive and safe town centre after dark.

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