

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

LICENSING COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 1ST APRIL, 2020

A MEETING of the LICENSING COMMITTEE was held at the TELECONFERENCE on WEDNESDAY, 1ST APRIL, 2020, at 11.00 am.

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Ken Keegan

Vice-Chair -

Councillors John Gilliver, Martin Greenhalgh and Charlie Hogarth

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Iris Beech, Duncan Anderson, Bev Chapman, Steve Cox, Neil Gethin, Nikki McDonald, David Nevett, Ian Pearson, Dave Shaw and Frank Tyas

1 **Declarations of Interest, if any.**

There were no declarations made at the meeting.

2 **Yorkshire Wildlife Park, Hurst Lane, Auckley, Doncaster, DN9 3HQ -Extension of Hearing time limits due to Covid 19 restrictions.**

The Committee considered a report that sought approval to extend the time limit for the hearing of the Yorkshire Wildlife Park application for a premises licences.

It was reported that further to the agreement of the Committee at the last full Licensing Committee on 19 March, 2020, whereby the Committee had considered future options for hearings in light of the Covid-19 Virus, a teleconference meeting had been considered but as there was a large volume of objectors (41) it wasn't felt this would be manageable. The Committee had approved a verbal report at this meeting that stated under the Licensing Act it allowed for changes to be made to the way in which meetings were held, and whilst the current issues with the worldwide pandemic were ongoing, holding hearings remotely via video call or teleconference were preferable.

Members noted that following this meeting on 19 March, 2020, further restrictions had been imposed with regard to the movements and gathering of people, and therefore the Licensing Authority has had to consider numerous options to ensure the hearing for the Premises licence for Yorkshire Wildlife Park was carried out in accordance with the Government guidelines. However, given the number of people involved with this particular application, there was strong concern expressed that this would not be possible.

Officers reported to the Committee that the Licensing Act 2003 and the Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005, and amending secondary legislation, makes

provision for the Procedure at the Hearing to be changed, and contains the power to extend a time limit provided for in these Regulations for a specified period where it considers this to be necessary in the public interest. Officers outlined, that due to the large amount of objections with regard to this particular application, it was felt it would be a responsible use of this provision to extend the time limit. It was reported that the applicant was in agreement with this proposal, and had aimed to provide their availability for a considerable amount of time into the next year to ensure that a new date could be accommodated with all parties.

Members held a brief discussion regarding this issue and any concerns they had were voiced to Officers who endeavoured to provide them with reassurance that this was the preferred option at the current time. It was acknowledged that not only the Council but the country as a whole were facing unprecedented challenges and it was important that wherever different processes could be used to ensure normal business was maintained, these were undertaken. However, in this instance it was felt that the best option for all parties concerned moving forward was to postpone the hearing until a later date.

RESOLVED that due to the unprecedented circumstances surrounding the Covid-19 Virus, it was in both the public interest, and that of the applicant to delay the hearing by invoking the powers under Licensing Act 2003 and the Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005, and amending secondary legislation, Therefore, the meeting would be rescheduled for Monday 6th July, 2020 at 10.00 am and the meeting notices in relation to this notifying all parties would be distributed in due course.