

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

LICENSING COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 22ND JUNE, 2017

A MEETING of the LICENSING COMMITTEE was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICE on THURSDAY, 22ND JUNE, 2017, at 3.00 pm.

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Ken Keegan
Vice-Chair - Councillor Linda Curran

Councillors Lani-Mae Ball, Iris Beech, Bev Chapman, Steve Cox, John Gilliver, Martin Greenhalgh, Charlie Hogarth, Mark Houlbrook, Nikki McDonald and David Nevett.

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Neil Gethin.

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

There were no declarations made at the meeting.

2 **Minutes of the Licensing Committee Meeting held on 15th December, 2016**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Licensing Committee Meeting held on 15 December, 2016, be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

3 **Terms of Reference, Procedures and Delegations.**

Members received a report that detailed the Terms of Reference for the 2017/18 Municipal Year, and also outlined the procedure to be followed for Licensing Hearings, as well as the agreement of the delegation of functions.

As the Licensing Authority, Doncaster Council was required to establish a Licensing Committee and Sub-Committee in order to discharge its duties under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005, thus allowing the Council to make the required licensing decisions.

The Terms of Reference had been approved by Full Council at its Annual Meeting on 19th May, 2017, a copy of which had been appended to the report for information.

RESOLVED that:-

- 1) The Licensing Committee note the Terms of Reference as detailed in Appendix A to the report;
- 2) The Licensing Committee note the Terms of Reference for the Licensing Sub-Committee as detailed in Appendix A to the report;

- 3) Members of the Licensing Committee approve the procedures set out in Appendices B1 and B2 to the report, and these be the procedures to be followed for the Licensing Committee and Licensing Sub-Committee Hearings held under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005 respectively;
- 4) The delegation of functions set out in Appendix C1 and C2 be agreed;
- 5) The appointment of Members to the Licensing Sub-Committee as set out in Appendix D be agreed; and
- 6) The procedure for dealing with settling appeals after the Sub-Committee Hearing but prior to an appeal hearing in the Magistrates Court be approved.

4 Licensing Act 2003, Gambling Act 2005 and General Licensing Update.

Members received a report that provided an update on any issues relating to the Licensing Act 2003, the Gambling Act 2005 and additionally, any significant licensing enforcement actions.

Members of the Licensing Committee had requested that they be provided with details of any developments and issues on a regular basis in order that they continue to be best placed to deal with future licensing decisions.

Members discussed the points of concern and any issues that they felt warranted further clarity. It had been noted that there had been a few revisions to the guidance by the Home Office since the last Inaugural Meeting of the Licensing Committee in 2016. The guidance was last reviewed in 2015, and changes that had now been brought about related to the Immigration Act 2016. The Licensing Authority was now required to check the eligibility of those applying for a license to work in the UK. This required the Licensing Authority to work alongside the Home Office Immigration Enforcement as well as the Police in order to prevent immigration crime. It was noted that Doncaster had long established links with these services in order to ensure that this was successfully managed. Members noted that this had already been applied to taxi licensing in the previous year and provided the option to provide a time restricted licence based on a person's eligibility to work in the country.

RESOLVED that:-

- 1) Members note that for the period 1 April, 2016 to 31 March, 2017, the following Committees were held:
 - 2 Licensing Committees
 - 14 Licensing Sub-Committees
- 2) The statistical details of all other licence applications (Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005), determined by the Authority and a summary of significant licensing enforcement actions, for the period 1 April, 2016 to 31 March, 2017, be noted. (attached at Appendix A to the report); and
- 3) The recent changes to the Licensing Act 2003 and the Home Office Guidance as summarized in Appendix B be noted.

5 'Reduce the Strength' Campaign.

Andy Collins, Public Health Co-Ordinator, presented a report to the Committee which provided information relating to the 'Reduce the Strength' campaign that was due to be rolled out to Off Licences within Doncaster Town Centre in order to encourage the establishments to adopt a voluntary initiative to remove low price, high strength alcoholic products from the shelves.

Similar campaigns have been introduced in other areas of the country, including Ipswich and Portsmouth where its success has been acknowledged. Whilst Reduce the Strength Campaigns vary from place to place, they largely targeted white cider and super strength lager which were above 6.5% in volume.

It was reported that approximately 1.6 million adults in England were dependant on alcohol, which could lead to a wide range of conditions, including cancer, heart disease, strokes and liver disease, with the estimated cost to society of dealing with these conditions estimated to be around £21bn, with the NHS incurring £3.5bn a year alone.

The Committee noted that since the introduction of the scheme in Portsmouth there had been a 39% drop in street drinkers and a 43% drop in associated incidents and there had been a significant number of reductions in street drinking and alcohol related violence.

The Reduce the Strength would look to cover all off licences within the town centre, Broxholme Lane Christ Church Road, Copley Road, Highfield Road and Nether Hall Road where there was currently a Cumulative Impact Zone in place. Members noted that this area was the same area where the main focus of the 'complex lives' work was being undertaken in order to support vulnerable people.

Further to the presentation of the report, Members discussed the points raised and held a thorough debate on the issues and concerns that had become apparent. Whilst Members were largely supportive of the scheme and felt that this could bring some benefit to the targeted community, concern was voiced that they had not been made aware of the proposal to implement this scheme at an earlier point in the process of its development. As 'the Licensing Committee', they felt that they could have added depth to the consultation and insight and understanding that may not have been included as a result. Members agreed to support the campaign but felt that in future, they should be made aware of anything of this nature well in advance in order to ensure that the proper consultation and engagement took place.

Members noted that it was imperative that Public Health engaged effectively with the local shopkeepers in order to gain their support, as initially they could see this as having a potential effect on their business and therefore it was important to create a good relationship where they worked well together to tackle problems within the area.

The Committee were informed that both Councillor Nigel Ball, Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Leisure and Culture and the Health and Well Being Board had been consulted on the initiative and were wholly supportive of this scheme, and it was hoped that it would be implemented by the autumn.

RESOLVED that the Licensing Committee note the contents of the report.