

Licensing Committee Minutes

Tuesday 23 June 2015

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Colin Aherne, Adronie Alford, Michael Cartwright, Steve Hamilton, Iain Cassidy, Larry Culhane, Belinda Donovan, Vivienne Lukey, Frances Stainton, Guy Vincent and Natalia Perez (Chair)

Officers: Patrick Crowley, Valerie Simpson, Sgt Stuart Ratcliffe

1. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2014 be confirmed and signed as an accurate record of the proceedings.

2. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Michael Adam, Daryl Brown, Alex Karmel and Jane Law.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

4. **ANNUAL LICENSING REPORT**

The annual report provided an overview of the work of the Licensing Authority over the previous 12 months, including: a summary of the Licensing Team's staffing levels and performance for the financial year 2014/2015, an update on service improvements, the shared management arrangements, the Alcohol Licensing Strategy 2012/2015, the statutory review of the Council's Statement of Licensing and Statement of Gambling Policies and legislative changes.

Mr Crowley highlighted the decrease in the number of review hearings and the significant increase in the number of inspection and enforcement visits. The Licensing Team worked closely with Licensing Police Sergeant Ratcliffe, and there had been several joint operations to tackle unlicensed activity and licensing issues across the borough.

The service review had allowed the licensing team to move to a structure, whereby officers were able to focus on inspecting premises and supporting businesses to achieve compliance and spend less time on administration.

Sergeant Ratcliffe stated that there was a continuing downward trend in crime, and provided the following statistics to demonstrate this. 2013/2014, there had been a 33% reduction in crime in licensed premises and in 2014/2015 a further 7.5% reduction in crime. Common assault (actual bodily harm and grievous bodily harm) had fallen by 20% and theft by 17.5%.

Sergeant Ratcliffe highlighted the Southern Belle as a very successful summary review, which had been effective in forcing the premises to change its practices. Crime had fallen drastically through the sub-committee's decision.

Councillor Cartwright queried the issuing of warning letters to licence holders, rather than prosecution and noted that Olympia Food & Wine had received a lot of warnings.

Ms Simpson responded that the Trading Standards Team had zero tolerance towards the illegal sale of alcohol to children. However, it was also one of their goals to provide advice and education.

The Team had targeted underage sales and had undertaken alcohol visits to check compliance with Challenge 21/25. There were three possible actions: review, caution or prosecute.

In respect of Olympia Food & Wines, a licensing sub-committee had revoked this licence in September 2013. However it was permitted for another operator to apply for a new premises licence.

Councillor Vincent queried whether changing behaviours pushed the problem to other areas. Sergeant Ratcliffe responded that, in terms of licenced premises, the standards had been raised for operators, and there was evidence that crime did not tend to be displaced.. Mr Crowley added that there had not been an impact on Kensington & Chelsea, where there was also a downward trend.

Meeting started: 19:00
Meeting ended: 19:40

Chair

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