



LICENSING COMMITTEE

MINUTES

6 December 2007

PRESENT

Councillor Alex Karmel (Chairman)
Councillor Lucy Ivimy (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Antony Lillis (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Eugenie White (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Michael Cartwright
Councillor Gill Dickenson
Councillor Gavin Donovan
Councillor Wesley Cartwright
Councillor Greg Smith

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Belinda Donovan
Councillor Donald Johnson

OFFICERS

Christine Francis – Licensing Officer
Adrian Overton – Licensing Officer
Alex Russell – Environmental Services Lawyer
Oliver Sanandres – Safety and Licensing Manager
Kevin Unwin – Committee Co-ordinator
Lisa White – Licensing Officer

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 5 February 2005 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Colin Aherne and Alexandra Robson.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared at this meeting of the Committee.

4. REVIEW OF LICENSING STATEMENT OF POLICY 2007

The Safety and Licensing Manager presented a report outlining the recent review of the Council's licensing policy. The policy had been formally adopted at an extraordinary meeting of the Council on 21 November 2007.

During the course of the presentation, the following key points were raised:

- That there was a legal requirement to prepare, consult and publish a new policy every 3 years;
- That the consultation commenced in July and concluded in September 2007, and as part of which 1052 questionnaires were despatched with a 10.6% response rate;
- That the results were positive – between 85 and 90% of respondents commented positively on the policy in all cases;
- Revisions had been made to policy regarding the prevention of crime and disorder to include activities immediately outside premises (where this was within the control of a premises) and the need for a comprehensive risk assessment for significant events;
- The section of the policy regarding Public Safety had been revised in light of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 – parallel changes had also been made to regulations regarding occupancy limits under 'Safe Capacities'.

On opening the item to questions, a Member queried what measures were in place to deal with premises without outside areas and where members of the public congregated on the pavement to smoke. An officer

responded that the onus was on venues to ensure that such situations were managed responsibly.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

5. The Problem Premises Register and the use of Risk Targeting

The Safety and Licensing Manager gave a presentation to the Committee outlining the problem premises register and use of risk targeting in enforcement.

During the course of the presentation, the following points were raised:

- That joint-working with organisations such as the Metropolitan Police and the London Fire Brigade was key to successful enforcement;
- That there would be a Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the Metropolitan Police which listed actions required by both organisations and identified lines of responsibility;
- That there were now tasking group meetings taking place between relevant departments to discuss enforcement issues;
- That there was a review of ongoing enforcement approximately every 3 weeks, whereby current problem premises were identified and a short-list drawn up, premises on which would be assessed for compliance against a number of standards;
- That current enforcement practices emphasised a targeted approach.

In response to a Member's question, the Committee heard that the Council was piloting a linking scheme surrounding alcohol and disorder / underage drinking where persons caught with alcohol were asked where they purchased it. An officer informed the Committee that this had resulted in enforcement action against stores, amongst these within the large supermarket chains.

A Member queried how often premises were checked for sale of alcohol to underage individuals using minors, and what actions had resulted. An officer responded that there were currently a number of volunteers used for this work, and that the pool was expanding. Fixed penalty notices were issued to premises selling alcohol to minors, with repeated offences (up to three instances) leading to a review of the license by the Committee.

In response to a Member's question, an officer informed the Committee that only the Police were able to object to events licensed under

'Temporary Event Notices' on the grounds of the prevention of crime and disorder.

In response to a question regarding licensing fees, the Committee was informed that legislation determined fee levels, and that there was no scope for variation across different premises according to their size or turnover or charitable status

In closing, the Chairman commended officers in the licensing team for their work over the past year.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

THE MEETING COMMENCED AT 7.00 PM, ADJOURNED FOR A FIRE ALARM AT 7.24PM, RECONVENED AT 7.35PM AND CLOSED AT 7.57 PM

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CHAIRMAN

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