

Minutes

of the Meeting of

The Licensing Committee

Tuesday, 16 November 2021

New Council Chamber, Town Hall

Meeting Commenced: 11.00 am

Meeting Concluded: 12.00 pm

Councillors:

Andy Cole (Chairman)

Peter Bryant
Caroline Cherry
Nicola Holland
Stuart McQuillan
Ian Parker
Marcia Pepperall
James Tonkin

Apologies: Councillors: James Clayton, John Crockford-Hawley, Hugh Gregor, Ann Harley, Robert Payne, Mike Solomon and Roz Willis.

Absent: Councillors .

Also in attendance: Councillors .

Officers in attendance: Sioux Isherwood, Caz Horton, Kellie Trego (Public Health and Regulatory Services Directorate); Sara Saunders, Leo Taylor (Corporate Services).

LIC1 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (Standing Order 37) (Agenda Item 3)

None.

LIC2 Minutes 9 March 2021 (Agenda Item 4)

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record.

LIC3 Mid-Year Report on the administration and enforcement of all licensing regimes (Agenda Item 6)

The representative of the Director of Public Health and Regulatory Services presented the report on the administration and enforcement of all licensing

regimes undertaken by the council. The report provided a summary of some of the main activities carried out by the Licencing Team so far within the financial year 2020/2021 and highlighted the continued pressures and difficulties experienced as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. She emphasised that overall, with the current focus on pandemic recovery, there were few proposed licencing policy revisions at this stage: most of these related to relatively minor updates and the removal of the Cumulative Impact Area (CIA).

Licensing Act 2003

Members sought and received clarification on the following:

- numbers of premises closing down over the pandemic; and
- approaches to combating drinks “spiking” in licensed premises
- provisions for protecting children/schools

Concern was expressed about the proposal to discontinue the CIA in Weston-super-Mare town centre. Officers reiterated the view that continuing with the CIA would be detrimental to the establishment of new operators in the context of pandemic recovery: the underlying policy remained the same and licensees would still be required to address the key policy objectives, consider compliance and conditions, and convince the authority that all was being done to meet these.

Taxi and Private Hire

Members sought and received clarification on the following:

- risks to the council if Taxi licence levels do not recover; and
- the increases in private hire and hackney taxi fares

Gambling Act

In providing feedback to the draft Statement of Principles, it was suggested that the document could be more user-friendly.

Members noted with concern the pressures faced by staff in the Licencing Team. Some additional administrative support had been provided, following a successful bid for additional covid-19 related funding, and it was hoped that a more sustainable position would be reached by the time this funding lapsed in March next year

In the concluding discussions, it was:-

Resolved:

- (1) that the outcomes and challenges to the administration of Licensing regimes undertaken by the North Somerset Council Licencing Team so far this financial year be noted;
- (2) that the draft revisions of the statutory policies be endorsed ahead of public consultation; and
- (3) that a further meeting of the Committee be arranged early in the new year to re-consider the statutory policies following the consultation response.

Chairman
