

LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2015 commencing at 6.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Mrs. Morris (Chairman)

Cllr. Clark (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Abraham, Cooke, Esler, Kelly, Lake, McArthur, Parkin, Pett, and Raikes

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Purves

Cllr. Dr Canet was also present.

1. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 19 March 2015 and of the Sub Committees held on 23 March 2015 and 13 April 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman as correct records.

2. Declarations of Interest

No additional declarations of interest were made.

3. Actions from the previous meeting

There were no actions.

4. Appointments to Licensing Hearing Sub Committees

The Committee considered a report setting out the proposed memberships for the Sub-Committees for Licensing Hearings.

A Member suggested that once the membership of the Licensing Committee was amended at Council on 21 July 2015, Sub – Committee D should be amended to replace Cllr. Purves with Cllr. Dr. Canet.

Resolved: That the membership of the Licensing Sub-Committees subject to the amendment of Sub-Committee D after Council on 21 July, as set out in the report be approved.

5. Update of Licensing Partnership for 2015/16

The Licensing Partnership Manager presented a report which gave an update on the Licensing Partnership with Maidstone Borough Council, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Sevenoaks District Council since its partnership in 2010.

Licensing Committee - Wednesday, 10 June 2015

Members thanked the Licensing Partnership Manager for the clear report.

Resolved: That the report be noted

6. Report regarding the implications for the Licensing Partnership following the Report of Inspection of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council by Louise Cassey CB

The Licensing Partnership Manager presented a report which detailed how the publication of a report by Louise Cassey CB, following the lessons learned from Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council relating to taxi licensing and safeguarding children. She advised that there were three proposed actions to tighten some processes but stressed that there were no issues across the partnership.

The Licensing Partnership Manager summarised the three main actions that were to: improve the complaints recording system so it was easier to retrieve information of a complaint, seek greater harmonisation of policies across the Partnership to prevent human error in processing applications and to ensure all members of staff in the Licensing Partnership were reminded to record complaints and ensure any discussions regarding the investigation of complaints were documented. Members were advised that the final action point had already been implemented.

In response to questions the Licensing Partnership advised that the current complaints process took a long time to retrieve the complaints information as it was stored with additional information to do with the taxi driver. If it was required to gather the information of the complaint it would involve searching through all of information stored. By implementing the new system, the complaints would be stored separately and therefore easier to gather the information.

The Licensing Partnership Manager also advised that if a complaint or allegation was made in regards to sexual harassment due to legal restraints it was usual practice to revoke the licence until the investigation had taken place. Members thought this was a sensible idea as it safeguarded the public.

Resolved: That

- a) The recommendations in the report to;
 - i) improve the complaints recording system,
 - ii) seek greater harmonisation of policies across the Partnership;
 - iii) ensure all members of staff in the Licensing Partnership be reminded to record complaints and other documentation be noted; and
- b) authority be delegated to the Chief Officer Environmental and Operational Services to implement the recommendations.

ADDITIONAL MEETING

The Chairman advised that an additional meeting would be required for a new policy and would take place on 15 July 2015 at 6pm.

Licensing Committee - Wednesday, 10 June 2015

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 6.30 PM

CHAIRMAN