

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
LICENSING COMMITTEE HELD IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS,
HERTFORD ON THURSDAY 9 JULY 2015,
AT 4.30 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs R Cheswright (Chairman)
Councillors A Alder, P Ballam, R Brunton,
G Cutting, B Deering, J Jones, P Kenealy,
M McMullen, T Page, P Ruffles, J Taylor and
C Woodward

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors D Andrews, L Haysey,
G McAndrew and S Rutland-Barsby

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Robin Clark	- Licensing Enforcement and Community Safety Manager
Oliver Rawlings	- Senior Specialist Licensing Officer

137 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

It was proposed by Councillor G Cutting and seconded by Councillor T Page that Councillor J Jones be appointed Vice-Chairman of Licensing Committee for the 2015/16 civic year.

After being put to the meeting, Councillor J Jones was appointed Vice-Chairman of the Licensing Committee for the 2015/16 civic year.

RESOLVED – that Councillor J Jones be

appointed Vice–Chairman of Licensing Committee for the 2015/16 civic year.

138 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted from Councillor N Symonds.

139 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed new Members to the Committee. She hoped that Members would find the work interesting and always try to attend meetings.

The Chairman recognised the difficulties some Members might have in attending daytime meetings and that she was intending to speak with the Leader regarding changing the start time of Licensing Committee to an evening. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken in favour of an evening start time, the Chairman stated that she would speak with the Leader.

The Chairman asked that all Members leave by the rear entrance following the meeting.

140 MINUTES – 26 MARCH 2015

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

141 LICENSING NOW AND NEXT

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted a report setting out recent, forthcoming and proposed changes to the various regimes under the remit of the licensing section. The Senior Specialist Licensing Officer provided a summary of the key issues and changes.

Members were provided with a summary of the key changes following the deregulation of certain activities

(including music), the detail of which was set out in Essential Reference Paper “B” of the report submitted. The Senior Specialist Licensing Officer provided clarification following a number of queries regarding the playing of live and amplified music between 8am and 11pm.

The Senior Specialist Licensing Officer detailed the ongoing work in relation to the Site Management Agreement (SMA) with the Professional Fundraising Regulation Association (PFRA) to control direct debit collections throughout the District and specifically referred to the difficulties in Ware and its narrow roads along the High Street.

The Senior Specialist Licensing Officer explained the days allocated for direct debit and cash collection arrangements and how the dates for the different types of collections had been arrived at.

A number of Members also expressed concern about the narrowness of some of the roads in Ware and particularly the south side of the High Street and of the dangers of pedestrians being forced into the road in trying to avoid direct debit collectors. Members also referred to the added danger of cars parking on pavements on the south side of the High Street. The Senior Specialist Licensing Officer acknowledged Members’ concerns and sought advice from Members regarding any preferred change in the wording of the draft SMA to address this issue. He suggested that Members agree that he sign the SMA and to review the matter again, should any problems arise.

It was noted that Sawbridgeworth had not been included within the Site Management Agreement. The Chairman suggested that the SMA be signed and to review the matter if a problem arose. This was supported.

The Senior Specialist Licensing Officer referred to the ongoing discussions with Hertfordshire County Council in relation to an agency agreement for the Council to take

over the licensing of pavement licences. He referred to the a number of complaints which had been received regarding tables and chairs being placed on the highway and of the joint visits being arranged to review the problems.

In response to a query from Councillor D Andrews regarding alcohol being bought on licensed premises but consumed off the premises, i.e. on a table outside, the Senior Specialist Licensing Officer explained the legal position. In response to a query from Councillor J Jones regarding pavement licences and their public display, the Senior Specialist Licensing Officer commented that a licence, when issued, would need to be displayed. He stated that he had established a single point of contact for complaints about tables and chairs on the public highway and this was Paul Chaplain (Licensing and Enforcement Officer at Hertfordshire County Council).

In response to a comment from Councillor D Andrews regarding pavement revenue, the Senior Specialist Licensing Officer confirmed that there was a potential valuable revenue stream in issuing pavement licences and of the need to calculate appropriate fees and charges on a cost recovery basis.

The Committee received the report.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

142 LICENSING ACTIVITY – QUARTER 1 OF 2015

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted a report updating Members in relation to statistics on processing licences, enforcement activity and implementation of the Service Plan. The Licensing Enforcement Manager provided a summary of the report, as now submitted.

Councillor G Cutting expressed concern in relation to the figures about changes in Designated Premises

Supervisors (26) and the number of Temporary Event Notices received (125). The Licensing Enforcement Manager explained the circumstances surrounding these figures and assured Members that the figures were average.

The Leader of the Council asked that in relation to Essential Reference Paper “A” of the report submitted, there should be a general acknowledgement of the impact of alcohol in terms its impact on health and wellbeing.

The Chairman referred to the positive and helpful work of Street Pastors within the District. She referred to the fact that some young people were being encouraged to drink more and that the ability to buy from an off licence and then from a supermarket open 24 hours did not help the situation.

Councillor G Cutting referred to the impact of alcohol abuse on Accident and Emergency Units and suggested that people should be charged for self-inflicted injuries. He stated that there was disharmony about alcohol abuse and in allowing late licences which, he felt, the administration should address.

The Committee received the report.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

The meeting closed at 5.30 pm

Chairman
Date