

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
LICENSING COMMITTEE HELD IN THE  
COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS,  
HERTFORD ON WEDNESDAY, 22 JULY  
2009 AT 4.30 PM

PRESENT: Councillor M P A McMullen (Chairman).  
Councillors D Andrews, P R Ballam, K Barnes,  
R H Beeching, A L Burlton, Mrs R F Cheswright,  
J Demonti, P A Ruffles, R I Taylor, N Wilson and  
B M Wrangles.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Linda Bevan	- Committee Secretary
Chris Clowes	- Licensing Enforcement Manager
Paul Newman	- Licensing Process Manager
Brian Simmonds	- Head of Community Safety

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

PC Lesley O'Connell	} Herts Constabulary
Inspector Dianne Watson	

129 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of  
Councillors N C Poulton, R A K Radford and J J Taylor.

130 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman asked for the views of the Committee on a  
new taxi light. The Committee indicated its preference for  
the style currently used.

He also said arrangements for Officers to agree minor  
variations would be reported to the meeting of the  
Licensing Committee in November 2009.

RESOLVED ITEMSACTION131 MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2009 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

132 LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the meetings of the Licensing Sub-Committee held on 19 March, 9 April, 24 April, 28 April, 5 May, 15 May, 8 June, 10 June and 19 June 2009, be received.

133 PRESENTATION BY POLICE - LICENSING ACT 2003

The Police had attended at the request of the Committee and gave a presentation on the effect of the Licensing Act 2003 on the work of the Police.

Inspector Dianne Watson explained the Police worked with partners to achieve a safer environment for residents. She said people had been concerned that there would be applications for 24 hour drinking licences when the Licensing Act 2003 came into force. This had not happened and there had been much good practice to ensure the licensing objectives set by the Act were upheld.

PC Lesley O'Connell said many premises had carried on with the same licensed hours as before the Act. Some had applied for slight increases. The Act had made it possible to impose some new conditions on premises such as CCTV, door staff and use of Pub Watch. The number of reviews requested had fallen from 77 in 2005 to 8 in 2009. Premises were being encouraged to apply only for the hours they actually intended to use. Applicants were encouraged to negotiate hours and conditions with the Police so that applications did not need to be considered by the Council's Licensing Sub-Committee.

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Inspector Watson highlighted the drop in violent crime when certain premises had been closed. A number of other initiatives helped with the link between alcohol and violent crime, e.g. orders prohibiting the consumption of alcohol in certain public areas.

PC O'Connell said the Police were concerned about the Temporary Event Notice (TEN) procedure. The application form did not provide an opportunity for applicants to indicate how the event would be supervised. This was often negotiated by telephone but sometimes there was insufficient time for the Police to comment. The Police were receiving a large volume of TENs each year and could only object on the basis of crime and disorder. The Police wanted to work with communities and charities holding these events to make sure they were safe for the public. The Government had been made aware of these problems and Inspector Watson asked for the Committee's support in lobbying for the revision of the procedure.

Inspector Watson said that some of the evidence provided for Licensing Sub-Committee had not been as watertight as she would have liked. There were some difficulties with how the evidence was given to the Police, e.g. anonymous calls and making sure analysts provided the information needed.

Inspector Watson thought joint training on licensing with Police, Members and Environmental Health Officers would be valuable.

She felt licensed premises should contribute to policing over and above paying business rates.

She also felt the District's towns had been improved since the Licensing Act and that the Council should consider a cumulative impact policy in future so that this improvement could be maintained.

PC O'Connell said the voluntary code of conduct for

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premises licence holders should be strengthened.

Members of the Committee raised a number of concerns over premises in the District.

The Committee decided to thank the Police for their attendance and note the work of the Police since the Licensing Act 2003.

RESOLVED - that the Police be thanked for their attendance at the meeting and their work, and its effects on town centres since the introduction of the Licensing Act 2003 be noted.

134 ATTENDANCE AT LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE

The Director of Internal Services submitted a report on details of Members' attendance at Licensing Sub-Committee.

The Committee asked for further details to be included in future in order that information on all Members attending the Sub-Committees including those observing was reported.

RESOLVED - that the report on attendance be extended to include Members attending to observe in future.

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135 ENFORCEMENT REPORT - 1 JANUARY - 30 JUNE 2009

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on compliance and enforcement activities. Visits and inspections had included taxi, premises and gambling licensing and house to house collections. The Licensing Enforcement Officer gave some details of premises which had been visited.

In response to questions from the Committee, he gave further details of the cameras installed in some taxis. He

ACTION

undertook to remind drivers not to sound horns outside premises when collecting clients.

RESOLVED - that the report be received.

136 TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE LICENSING BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on proposed changes to the Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Best Practice Guidance from the Department for Transport. A revised Appendix showing proposed changes more clearly was circulated at the meeting.

This guidance was used by the Council when forming its own polices and conditions for the licensing of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers, vehicles and operators. The changes included improvements for the disabled and security in taxis, e.g. cameras.

In response to a question from Councillor P Ballam, it was explained that owners of limousines were being encouraged to seek licensing with local authorities where appropriate.

A group would review the Council's polices in 2010 and Councillors A L Burlton, M P A McMullen, R I Taylor and N Wilson expressed an interest in being involved with this.

RESOLVED - that the proposed changes to the guidance be noted.

137 LICENSING ACT 2003 - UPDATE

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted a report providing statistical information on the various licences issued by the Council under the Licensing Act 2003, Gambling, Sex Shop and Taxi Licensing.

Members noted that a new application/transfer of the

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District's sex shop was expected in the near future.

RESOLVED - that the report be noted.

138 GAMBLING ACT 2005 - REVISION OF STATEMENT OF LICENSING PRINCIPLES

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on draft changes to the Council's Statement of Licensing Principles under the Gambling Act 2005. The Council's statement was due for republication by 31 January 2010 under the process for review of it.

The statement had been updated and made more readable. No changes to policy were suggested. A wide consultation would be carried out on the revised statement.

The Committee noted that a "No Casino" resolution had not been passed and decided this should be discussed further. The Committee would have a stronger case in refusing applications for casinos if the Council had passed this resolution.

RESOLVED - that the report be noted and Officers report further on a "No Casino" resolution.

DNS

The meeting closed at 6.25 pm.

Chairman	.....
Date	.....