

LICENSING COMMITTEE (LICENSING ACT 2003)

11 January 2017

Present: Councillor K Crout (Chair)
Councillor J Fahmy (Vice-Chair)
Councillors S Bolton, J Connal, A Dychton, K Hastrick, M Hofman,
Ahsan Khan, B Mauthoor, M Mills, A Rindl, G Saffery and
D Scudder

Officers: Environmental Health and Licensing Section Head
Senior Solicitor
Environmental Health Manager (Commercial)
Licensing Enforcement Officer (JM)
Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer (AG)

1 **Apologies for absence/ committee membership**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Laird and Turmaine.

2 **Disclosure of interests (if any)**

There were no disclosures of interest.

3 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 29 February 2016 were submitted and signed.

4 **Licensing Sub-Committee minutes and update**

The Committee received an update on the Licensing Sub-Committee hearings which had taken place since the last Committee meeting.

The relevant minutes were submitted and signed.

Licensing Act 2003 Annual Report for 2016

The Committee received a report of the Head of Community and Customer Services. The Senior Licensing Officer introduced the report. He clarified the scope of the activities contained in the document. He discussed the increase in licensed premises in the borough, the licensing hearings figures (including how considerations as to representations were made), licence variations and changes to licences, surrendered licences, appeals, Temporary Event Notices, personal licences, the statement of licensing policy, sensitive licensed areas, compliance and enforcement and licensing reviews.

In response to questions from members, the Senior Licensing Officer:

- Clarified that two addresses were shown in relation to applications for premises licences for the Gabriel's Bakery as a second property had become available.
- Advised that applications for premises licenses in Market Street had resulted in licensing hearings.

The Senior Licensing Officer continued by discussing the 'look forward' contained in the report. He discussed statutory fees, the government's crime prevention strategy, the working relationships with partners and other agencies, the award of the Purple Flag in the town centre, government consultations on licensing issues, minimum unit pricing, the House of Lords committee considering the effectiveness of the Licensing Act 2003 (to which the council had provided a submission), the Policing and Crime Bill that would provide various new powers to the 2003 Licensing Act (and enshrine 'Cumulative Impact Policy' in law) and changes to immigration legislation.

In response to further questions from members, the Environmental Health and Licensing Section Head and Senior Licensing Officer clarified, that in relation to appeals against the Commutative Impact Policy; the policy was quasi-legal owing to the Secretary of State's Guidance provided under Section 182 Licensing Act 2003; and potentially with a statutory footing under the Policing and Crime Bill. There had been no appeals in Watford in the last twelve months. There were presently 215 such policies managed by more than 80 councils nationwide.

The Environmental Health and Licensing Section Head and Senior Licensing Officer explained that there were no powers to carry out annual renewals of personal licences (involving the checking of criminal records) – although the police were consulted on applications to name personal licence holders as premises supervisors. However, when initial applications were made for licences criminal records checks were conducted. This was of concern to the council and was being taken forward across the county; particularly in relation to feedback from the police throughout the currency of a licence. The Chair reassured the

committee that the council met with the local police on a regular basis and that there was an extremely effective regime in the town and around the night time economy.

RESOLVED that –

the report be noted.

Chair
Licensing Committee (Licensing Act 2003)

The meeting started at 7.55 p.m.
and finished at 8.20 p.m.