

LICENSING COMMITTEE (LICENSING ACT 2003)

17 January 2018

Present: Councillor J Fahmy (Chair)
Councillor A Dychton (Vice-Chair)
Councillors S Bolton, J Connal, K Crout, K Hastrick, P Jeffree,
Ahsan Khan, B Mauthoor, M Mills, M Parker, D Scudder and
R Smith

Also present:

Officers: Environmental Health and Licensing Section Head
Environmental Health manager (Business)
Senior Licensing Officer
Senior Solicitor
Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer (AG)

6 Apologies for absence/ committee membership

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor's Hoffman and Saffery.

7 Disclosure of interests (if any)

There were no disclosures of interest.

8 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 26 June 2017 were submitted and signed.

9 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.

The Committee received a report of the Head of Community and Customer Services providing members with the annual report for 2017.

The Senior Licensing Officer introduced the report explaining that he would discuss the key elements contained therein and invited questions both as he went through the document and at the end.

He discussed the increase in licensed premises in the borough and how this was slightly above the national average, the licensing hearings figures and how more than half of the hearings had been vacated owing to mediation. He discussed new licence applications, surrendered and lapsed licences, appeals, Temporary Event Notices, personal licences, the statement of licensing policy, sensitive licensed areas, compliance and enforcement and licensing reviews.

The Senior Licensing Officer concluded by referring to the 'look forward' contained in the report. He discussed business rates, elements of a House of Lords Select Committee report in to the Licensing Act 2003 published in early 2017 and the government's response, how the council's licensing policy would be reviewed pending renewal in November and the council's member training on licensing matters (that was considered futuristic in approach).

In response to questions from members, the Environmental Health and Licensing Section Head and Senior Licensing Officer:

- Gave examples of the complaints received about activities which were regulated by the Licensing Act 2003 (although these were small in number) and clarified that the level of distribution of information about complaints was decided on a case by case basis.
- Outlined the excellent working relationship with the police and other partners with regard to town centre licensing issues and how these had been developed over the past five years. These relationships would be maintained as the centre evolved – there was daily contact with partners and an early intervention approach to issues. The Chair thanked the officers for their work in this regard.
- Advised that it may be possible to benchmark the number licensing complaints against other similar authorities. However, numbers of complaints in Watford were very low. Operations were conducted to monitor night time activity including spot checks by the police. There were many checks and balances.

The Chair moved the officer recommendation.

RESOLVED –

that the report be noted.

Chair
Licensing Committee (Licensing
Act 2003)

The meeting started at 7.45 p.m.
and finished at 8.05 p.m.