

LICENSING COMMITTEE

7 July 2022

Present: Councillor G Saffery (Chair)
Councillor R Wenham (Vice-Chair)
Councillors M Devonish, S Feldman, P Hannon, M Hofman,
A Khan, L Nembhard, T Osborn, K Rodrigues, B Stanton, S Trebar
and D Watling

Also present:

Officers: Democratic Services Officer (LM)
Environmental Health Manager (Commercial)
Senior Licensing Officer (AY)

1 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Allen-Williamson.

No apologies had been received from Councillor Smith.

2 **Disclosure of interests**

There were no disclosures of interest.

3 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 30 January 2022 were submitted and signed.

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

The following Licensing Sub-Committee hearings had taken place in the last year and the minutes were agreed by the committee

- Oaklands Wines (10 March 2021) Councillors G Saffery (Chair), Hofman and Mills
- Polski Supermarket Mieszko (13 July 2021) Councillors G Saffery (Chair), Hofman and Stiff

- Mad Squirrel (8 September 2021) Councillors G Saffery (Chair), Grimston and Stanton
- Abaco's Bar (9 September 2021) Councillors Grimston (Chair), Devonish and Stanton
- DKSR (2 February 2022) Councillors G Saffery (Chair), Devonish and Stanton

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Licensing Act 2003 - Annual Report for 2021

The committee received the annual report on the Licensing Act 2003 by the Senior Licensing Officer. It was explained to the committee that the purpose of the report was to highlight any trends for the calendar year 2021. The annual report for 2020 had many figures down on previous years as the pandemic affected business, events and licencing applications. However the worst fears had not materialised and there had been a bounce back with new applications up to 30. This was higher than pre pandemic levels in 2018 and 2019. It had been anticipated that there would be more applications for online sale of alcohol, however this had maintained at 2020 levels. Variation applications saw similar numbers to 2018 and 2019 with businesses now more confident in making changes. Miscellaneous applications did not seem to follow any trends and they also did not reflect if business were successful or not. Hearings saw an increase compared to 2020 which was to be expected post pandemic with an increase in overall applications. There was engagement from the public with seven objections received and one supporting statement and ongoing support from the Police and Environmental Health. In 2020 there was an increase in lapsed licenses, this trend had not continued in 2021. There was also an increase in applications for temporary licenses from 2020 however despite the increase this had not yet returned to pre pandemic levels. The application rate for personal licenses was lower than average. In regards to compliance and enforcement, the approach was one of pro-activeness rather than enforcement and the service worked with premises and the Police. With regards to complaints, these were often about noise and were monitored by environmental health and most had been investigated and closed.

Councillor Hannon commented regarding the increased applications, temporary notices and licenses affecting the resources of the licensing team and asked if more support was needed. In response the Environmental Health Manager explained that officers' workload was monitored. There were times when there could be a peak in applications, for instance in the summer with temporary notices, however the team was flexible and worked well.

Councillor Watling asked about the complaints process and how they were monitored. The Senior Licensing Officer answered that there was a risk based system, complaints were kept on a database so if further complaints were made it could be taken into account and were maintained live on the system for 12

months. The council worked closely with the licensing enforcement officer who liaised with businesses and residents.

Councillor Hofman enquired about premises losing their license in an emergency situation. The Senior Licensing Officer said that the police could issue a closure notice that would have immediate effect and the council worked with the police in such matters. When a sub-committee revoked a licence a premises did not have to close immediately and they had until the end of the appeal process. If the case was to go to the Magistrates court and further infractions occurred during the period up to the court hearing these would be taken into account by the court.

There were further questions regarding the costs and budgets for the department. The Environmental Health Manager explained that the budgets were approved by audit and the surplus for the year 2021 was in regards to the difference between projected costs and actual costs.

RESOLVED –

That the report is noted.

Chair
Licensing Committee

The Meeting started at 7.00 pm
and finished at 7.30 pm