

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee

(to be confirmed at the next meeting)

Date: Tuesday, 19 September 2017

Venue: Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs P M Bryant (Chairman)

Councillor Ms S Pankhurst (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: Mrs S M Bayford, Miss S M Bell, F Birkett, T M Cartwright, MBE, Mrs T L Ellis, M J Ford, JP, Mrs C Heneghan, L Keeble, A Mandry, Mrs K Mandry and S Cunningham (deputising for R H Price, JP)

**Also
Present:**



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor R H Price, JP.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee held on 13 June 2017 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman thanked members of the Committee for attending the Licensing training which took place on the 04 September 2017. Further training may be arranged later in the municipal year.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with Standing Orders and the Council's Code of Conduct, Councillor Miss S M Bell declared a non-pecuniary interest for minute 8 – Polling Place Review, as she is a member of the Board of Trustees of Portchester Parish Hall.

5. DEPUTATIONS

The Panel received a deputation from Mr C Hughes, representing the Fareham Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Association, concerning agenda item 6 – Review of Hackney Carriage Fares. He was thanked for his deputation accordingly.

6. REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES

With the agreement of the Chairman, this item was brought forward on the agenda in order to consider the deputation made at Minute 5.

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Environmental Health on the Review of Hackney Carriage Fares.

RESOLVED that the Committee:-

- (a) considered the responses from the individuals who responded and the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Association in respect of the changes to the tariff;
- (b) considered if a change is appropriate; and
- (c) recommends to the Executive that no increase to charges be made at the present time.

7. POLICE UPDATE

The Committee received a verbal update from the Head of Environmental Health on Police Licensing arrangements.

Members were reminded that staffing levels have reduced significantly in recent years. The number of Licensing Officers covering Fareham, Gosport, Havant and Portsmouth has now reduced from 8 to 2 which is challenging given that the officers now cover the Victorious and Isle of Wight Festivals in addition to more routine areas of work. There is also an increasing number of alcohol and drug related issues to deal with in the Portsmouth Guildhall Walk area.

Significant work has been done in reducing street drinkers in all areas of the Borough. As a result of a long running campaign, all but one of the stores licenced to sell alcohol in the town centre has stopped selling the higher strength beers and ciders. There are, however, emerging alcohol related issues around the shops in the Highlands Road area that will now need to be addressed.

The Pubwatch scheme remains a strong and active organisation in the Borough. The organisation, which is voluntarily managed and supported by the Council and the Police, aims to achieve a safer drinking environment in licenced premises.

Crime rates in the Borough's night-time economy remain low compared to other areas. The lack of a nightclub is a key factor in this respect, however liaison work with HMS Collingwood in managing the behaviour of new trainee military personnel has also had a positive impact.

The most recent test purchase results were disappointing, with 7 out of 10 tests resulting in failure – a significant drop on previous performance. Members enquired whether this is as a result of carrying out test purchases less frequently and, if so, whether this is leading to complacency in some stores. The Head of Environmental Health advised that this is a possibility but that it is too early to say at present whether this set of data represents a reducing trend in performance. If, however, the next set of results are poor, further action will need to be taken.

Work continues to be done in identifying people who are vulnerable to abuse. Ongoing operations with immigration services are taking place to help people identify signs that vulnerable people are being held at licenced premises against their will.

The Head of Environmental Health was thanked for providing his verbal update.

8. POLLING PLACE REVIEW

Councillor Miss S M Bell declared a non-pecuniary interest for this item as she is a member of the Board of Trustees of Portchester Parish Hall.

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Democratic Services on a review of Polling Places.

Members discussed a number of polling places that have issues with parking, in particular the use of the Fire Station in Portchester, where it was suggested

other venues such as the Parish Hall and the Methodist church might be more suitable. The Head of Democratic Services advised that electoral legislation places a duty on the Local Authority to ensure that polling places are positioned within the heart of the community and that any natural or obvious boundaries such as major roads are avoided. However, there will be an opportunity to review alternative venues with more adequate parking facilities as part of the full consultation that will take place by 2020.

Members commended the Electoral Services team for the work it has done in securing alternative venues as polling places which will mean that schools no longer need to be used.

RESOLVED that the Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee agrees the revised polling place designations from May 2018, as set out in Appendix A to the report, subject to the full statutory polling district and polling place review being carried out, with full consultation, by 2020 and recommends these revisions to Council for approval.

9. LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Environmental Health on the Committee's Work Programme for 2017/18. It was noted that the agenda for the November meeting is very light and that it is therefore likely that this meeting will be cancelled.

RESOLVED that the Committee:-

- (a) notes the progress on actions considered at the meeting of the Committee held on 13 June 2017, as shown in Appendix A to the report; and
- (b) agrees the Work Programme for 2017/18 attached as Appendix B to the report.

(The meeting started at 6.05 pm
and ended at 6.55 pm).