

# M I N U T E S

meeting: **LICENSING COMMITTEE**

date: **25 JULY 2012**

**PRESENT:-**

Councillors Dass (Chair), Banger, Bolshaw, Clarke, Claymore, Inston, Jaspal, Mrs Patten, N A Patten, John Rowley and Judith Rowley.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:-**

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Angus.

**IN ATTENDANCE:-**

Delivery

L Banbury - Democratic Support Officer  
S Hardwick - Solicitor

Education and Enterprise

C Parr - Licensing Manager  
E Ward - Interim Head of Commercial Development

**Wolverhampton**  
City Council



**Declarations of Interest**

61. No interests were declared.

**Minutes**

62. Resolved:-  
(a) That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2012 be approved as a correct record.  
  
(b) That the minutes of the meetings of the Licensing Sub-Committee held on 27 and 29 June 2012 be approved as a correct record and adopted.

**Wolverhampton Alcohol Strategy 2011-2015: Reducing the Harms Caused by Alcohol to Citizens of Wolverhampton**

Pursuant to resolution 18, attention was drawn to a recent Licensing Sub-Committee to consider representations made in regard to Premises Licence applications under the Licensing Act 2003. Councillors were concerned that in two instances the Police had negotiated with the Premises Licence Holder/applicant, had agreed to additional conditions on the Licence and had not therefore attended the Hearings. Objections had also been made by the Local Health Board, and Councillors expressed concern that the representations were extremely vague and did not refer to any of the licensing objectives. Comment was also made on an inconsistency of approach between neighbouring authorities in regard to the licensing hours for the sale of alcohol.

The Licensing Manager referred to the fact that the Local Health Board had only recently been included as a Responsible Authority and that the Licensing Department was working closely with them to ensure that any representations were relevant.

63. Resolved:-  
(a) That a letter be sent to the West Midlands Police, expressing the Committee's concern that, contrary to previous practice, Police representatives no longer attended Licensing hearings where they had negotiated with the applicants or Premises Licence Holders and agreed to add conditions to the Licence.  
  
(b) That a letter be sent to the Local Health Board to raise concerns regarding the relevance of representations and consistency of approach.

**Schedule of Outstanding Minutes (Appendix 22)**

The Democratic Support Officer submitted a report, which set out a schedule of outstanding minutes together with details of when it was expected that reports on individual items would be presented for consideration.

64. Resolved:-  
That the report be received.

**Proposed Revisions to the Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Guidelines (Appendix 23)**

The Licensing Manager presented a report, which advised the Committee of the outcome of consultation with the hackney carriage and private hire trades and other interested parties on proposals to revise the Council's existing guidelines relating to hackney carriage and private hire vehicle proprietors, drivers and private hire vehicle operators. The report further sought the Committee's approval of the revised Guidelines.

65. Resolved:-

That the revised Guidelines relating to the relevance of Convictions and Breaches of Licensing Conditions for hackney carriage and private hire vehicle proprietors, drivers and private hire vehicle operators be approved, subject the incorporation in the Guidelines of the following statement:-

'That hackney carriage and private hire vehicle drivers should be able to communicate satisfactorily in English with customers, in order to be considered a fit and proper person to hold a Licence'.

**City Centre Regeneration – Update (Appendix 24)**

The Interim Head of Commercial Development presented a report, which updated the Committee on progress with the strategic initiatives aimed at regenerating the City and included information on the following workstreams:-

- Consolidating and expanding the retail and leisure offer – jointly commissioned research and feasibility plan;
- The Interchange – Metro tram alignment and areas of redevelopment and refurbishment;
- Canalside – relocation of LPG tanks and bid for funding;
- The Fox Hotel – demolition and plans for redevelopment;
- Westside – development proposals;
- Southside – repair, refurbishment and environmental improvements;
- High Street Innovation Fund/Portas Pilot – benefits to improving the high street;
- City Centre Management – co-ordinated approach to the provision and management of the public realm;
- People and Transport Movement/Public Realm – traffic management issues, and
- City Centre Prospectus – launched on 19 July 2012.

In welcoming the report, Councillors voiced their concerns regarding the current transportation infrastructure in terms of the night-time economy and regeneration of the City Centre, particularly in regard to the lack of rank space for hackney carriages. They also drew attention to the need for consideration to be given to the pedestrianisation of Queen Square and Lichfield Street. The Committee further stressed the need for the leisure facilities catering for all ages and for families to be given paramount consideration in order to revitalise the City Centre, both during the daytime and in the evening.

The Licensing Manager drew attention to two specific areas in which the Licensing Committee would play a significant role, these being hackney carriages and private hire vehicles and the change in demand as the City is regenerated and the establishment of a 'café culture' in terms of the policy relating to the provision of tables and chairs on the highway.

66.

Resolved:-

(a) That the report and verbal update be received.

(b) That the Licensing Committee be included in the consultation process following the report to Cabinet in September in respect of the transportation infrastructure and proposed vehicle/pedestrian movement in the City Centre.