

M I N U T E S

meeting: **LICENSING COMMITTEE**

date: **12 DECEMBER 2012**

PRESENT:-

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

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:-

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Angus, Clarke Collingswood and Jaspal.

IN ATTENDANCE:-

Delivery

L Banbury - Democratic Support Officer
S Hardwick - Solicitor

Education and Enterprise

R Edge - Section Leader (Licensing)
I Hipkiss - Section Leader (New Works), Transportation
A Jervis - Head of Regulatory Services
C Parr - Licensing Manager
S Randall - Principal Engineer

Wolverhampton
City Council



Declarations of Interest

4. No interests were declared.

Minutes

5. Resolved:-
That the minutes of the meeting held 17 October 2012 be approved as a correct record, subject to the inclusion of an apology for absence on behalf of Councillor Banger.

Night-time Tour of City Centre

6. Pursuant to minute 109, it was noted that B Hague, Strategic Lead (Pupil and Support Services) had furnished Councillors Bolshaw and Claymore with information in regard to school transport contracts and it was agreed that it should be circulated to all Members of the Licensing Committee.

Schedule of Outstanding Minutes (Appendix 2)

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.

7. Resolved:-
That the report be received.

Consultation Draft Scheme for City Centre Transportation and Public Realm Improvements (Appendix 3)

The Section Leader - New Works (Transportation) presented a report, which sought the views of the Licensing Committee in respect of the draft City Centre Transportation and Public Realm Improvements, which was approved by Cabinet on 24 October 2012.

The following comments and observations were made during the ensuing discussion:-

- There is now a public house situated at Lich Gates and it was suggested that it would be appropriate for a vehicle pick up/drop point to be provided for patrons.
- It was stressed that Pedestrian Finger Posts should be of good quality, fit for purpose and at a sufficient height that they could not be turned to point in the wrong directions.
- Concerns were expressed regarding the safety of cyclists in regard to the proposals.
- Comments were made regarding the under utilisation of the bus station and the Committee stressed the need for maximum use of this facility to ease congestion in the City Centre.

The Committee were advised that an alternative route plan was currently in the process of being produced and that, when the two plans had

been drawn up, the requests of the hackney carriage and private hire trade groups would be considered. It was further noted that initial consultation had taken place with Bus Company in regarding to the proposals and that further discussion would take place when the alternative rout plan had been produced.

8. Resolved:-

That the report and presentation be received with the above comments and observations.

Policy for the Management of 'A' Boards, Tables and Chairs and Goods on the Highway (Appendix 4)

The Licensing Manager presented a report, which sought consideration of the responses to the consultation on the draft Policy for the Management of 'A' Boards, Tables and Chairs and Goods on the Highway and approval and adoption of the Policy.

Responding to Councillors' comments, the Licensing Manager advised that the Council's Access Officer would be consulted to ensure that equalities legislation was complied with, adding that wherever possible the 'A' Boards would be situated directly adjacent to other street furniture. If this was not possible, they would be placed on the building line. He further advised that it was not possible to control human advertising boards via this policy.

9. Resolved:-

That the Policy for the Management of 'A' Boards, Tables and Chairs and Goods on the Highway be approved and adopted.

Alleged Conflicts of Interest

Councillor Claymore expressed concern that he and Councillor Bolshaw had been replaced on the Licensing Sub-Committee, scheduled to take place on 5 December in respect of an application to review the Premises Licence for the Empire Suite, Ward Street, Wolverhampton. They had been replaced following concerns expressed by the legal representative for the Premises Licence Holder that they were compromised due to their involvement on a visit to the night-time economy on 27 October, accompanied by representatives of the West Midlands Police and Licensing Authority Officers. It was noted however that, although the Police Vehicle carrying the Councillors and officers had stopped outside the Premises, there was no discussion regarding the impending review.

As a result of the ensuing discussion, it was confirmed that Officers had taken a pragmatic and legally sound view to the request for the membership of the Licensing Sub-Committee to be changed and that this had in no way reflected on the integrity and professionalism of the Councillors involved. There had clearly been no breach of the Councillors' Code of Conduct. However, the Licensing Committee Members believed that the Councillors should have been given the opportunity to decide for themselves, in accordance with the Code of Conduct, whether or not they should withdraw from the hearing.

Appreciation was expressed to Councillors Clarke and Mrs Patten for stepping in to attend the meeting on 5 December.

10.

Resolved:-

That a protocol be produced, in conjunction with the West Midlands Police, for the annual visit in respect of the night-time economy, and that in future the proposed itinerary should be presented to the Licensing Committee.