

Runnymede Borough CouncilLICENSING COMMITTEE26 June 2018 at 7.30pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillors Mrs J Gracey (Chairman), S A Lewis (Vice-Chairman) J Broadhead, I A Chaudhri, D A Cotty, Mrs E Gill, Mrs M T Harnden, N W Rubidge, Ms A Shepperdson and P S Sohi.

Members of the Committee absent: Councillor P J Waddell

123 FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Vice-Chairman read out the fire precautions.

124 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14 November 2017 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

125 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P J Waddell.

126 2018 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE LICENSING COMMITTEE

The Committee received a detailed report on the work of the Licensing Section in relation to matters under the Licensing Act 2005. This included a comprehensive overview of the Licensing regime as it operated in Runnymede.

Members also reviewed the statistical data which had been submitted as required to the Home Office for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

The Committee noted that the Council's Licensing Policy was in its second year and would be updated as necessary and fully reviewed in 2021.

The number of Premises Licences had increased slightly on the previous year and now stood at 237. Eight new premises licences and 18 new Personal Licences had been granted, noting that Personal Licences did not have to be renewed any more. The number of premises licences was fairly evenly spread across the borough as were the 3 that had been surrendered. Members noted that the Barley Mow in Englefield Green which had been the subject of a Hearing when it applied for a new licence was now fully refurbished and operational. Despite de-regulation there had been 208 Temporary Event Notices, mostly from pubs, clubs and restaurants, although schools and similar also produced a substantial number. Of the 208 TENs, 43 had been 'late'. As there was no right of appeal if a late TEN was not granted it was fortunate that no objections had been received to these by the responsible authorities permitted to object.

In respect of Inspections and Enforcement, Officers continued an intelligence led approach, often working jointly with other Officers in Environmental Health. Officers reported only minor infringements such as a premises changing its internal layout without submitting a variation to their licence. Many issues were pre-empted by actively assisting applicants through the process to ensure compliance. For example writing to premises with instructions about displaying notices correctly, attending PubWatch to keep licence holders up to date and communicating with each other.

Officers were keen to promote PubWatch which they attended regularly. Of the 50 public houses and 34 registered clubs, it was noted that 33 were members of PubWatch. The Committee was thanked for their support of Pub Watch. Members had attended a recent meeting and asked Officers to check if there were any people currently on a Pub Watch ban in Runnymede. It was clarified that someone could be barred from any individual premises without the need to issue a Pub Watch ban.

The Committee was advised that, to date, there had been no progress by the Government to introduce the ability for the Licensing Authority to set fees locally. As a result, the Licensing account was now in deficit by approximately £39,953. This was frustrating, but beyond the Council's control.

Officers reported that the Section 182 Guidance had recently been revised and available on the Council's website which was kept up to date by the Senior Licensing Officer. An up to date website reduced the amount of phone calls coming into the team and assisted the public generally, as did the gov.uk facility when it was working. The Committee was assured that despite only having a very small team, they could accommodate the workload and future demands that might arise from new developments in the borough. The Committee thanked the Senior Licensing Officer for his report and recognised the support provided to him by the Licensing Administration Assistant.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 7.49 pm)