

Runnymede Borough Council

LICENSING COMMITTEE

25 June 2019 at 7.30pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillors D Cotty (Chairman), E Gill (Vice-Chairman)
J Broadhead, I Chaudhri, D Clarke, J Gracey, R King and
J Olorenshaw.

Members of the Committee absent: Councillors T Burton, J Furey and P Snow

Councillor M Kusneraitis also attended the meeting.

81 FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Chairman read out the fire precautions.

82 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 November 2018 and the Sub-Committee held on 20 March 2019 were confirmed and signed as correct records. It was noted that the minutes of the Sub-Committee meeting held on 4 April 2019 would be signed at the next scheduled meeting of the Committee in September 2019.

83 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T Burton, J Furey and P Snow.

84 2019 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE LICENSING ACT 2003

The Committee received the Annual report on all matters relating to the operation of the Licensing Act 2003 in the borough.

Members reviewed all the statistical information provided. This was normally also reported to the Home office but Officers advised that this had not been requested for 2018. However, for the sake of consistency, Officers had produced the same information as it gave Members a good overall picture of Licensing in the borough.

The Committee noted that the Council's Licensing Policy was working well and was in place until 2021 and would undergo a full review in 2020.

There had been only a very small increase in the total number of Premises Licences and Club Premises Certificates, a small decrease in the number of temporary event notices given and the number of variations to licences was consistent with previous years.

The number of Personal Licences issued had fallen, although there was still a year on year increase in the total numbers issued, bearing in mind that they did not need to be renewed once issued anymore, owing to a lack of capacity to deal with the volume, which also had a negative effect on the income for the Council. It was also regretted that to date, there was no national Register of Personal Licence holders.

Eight new Premises licences had been issued, including two in Addlestone One and the new Leisure Centre in Egham, both of which were high profile projects. Seven premises licences had been surrendered, noting the sad closure of the historic Sun Public House in Englefield Green.

Members noted an analysis of Temporary Event Notices and were pleased that the vast majority did not give cause for any concern in terms of noise or other public nuisance. Inspections and Enforcement was a fairly low key area for the section (approximately 17 inspections at new premises had taken place) which continued to be operated on an intelligence led approach, maintaining a positive and proactive relationship with local licensees. Similarly, Officers had found that engaging with applicants at an early stage, offering support and advice reduced the need for applications to be re-worded and/or revised plans submitted. Officers confirmed that the Council's website contained key guidance documents to assist applicants and existing licence holders.

Officers emphasised the importance of Pubwatch, which the Senior Licensing Officer and Surrey Police attended regularly. It was encouraging that 33 of the potential 84 premises were members but there was room for improvement, especially for more members' clubs to attend. Members of the Committee were welcome to attend Pubwatch as well which took place every 6 weeks at different locations in the borough.

Officers confirmed that the future of the on-line .gov.uk was being considered as a result of a Government consultation; Members reported that it did have operational faults which could slow the application process of Temporary Event Notices for example.

The Committee noted that there had been no updates on the possibility of being able to set fees locally. Therefore, although the deficit had reduced it was still approximately £20,601.

The Licensing section was modestly staffed and covered, as well as the Licensing Act 2003, Gambling, Scrap Metal Dealers and Sex establishments, noting there were currently none of the latter in the borough (and no applications submitted) but each application would be treated on its merits.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 7.55 pm)