

Runnymede Borough Council

Licensing Committee

Wednesday, 19 June 2024 at 7.30 pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillors E Kettle (Chair), M Singh (Vice-Chair), MK Cressey, K Graham, M Harnden, K Lee, I Mullens, P Tucker-Brown and J Wilson.

Members of the Committee absent: Councillors D Clarke and A King.

1 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 7 November 2023, and those of the Sub-Committee held on 14 December 2023 (two sets), were confirmed and signed as correct records.

2 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D Clarke and A King.

3 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

4 **2024 Annual Report on the Licensing Act 2003**

The Committee received for information the annual report on matters dealt with by the authority under the Licensing Act 2003 from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Members were presented with statistical information from 2018 – 2024 on the numbers and types of licences issued by the authority, how many personal licences had been issued and other information such as how many Temporary Event Notices had been received. Officers confirmed that the number of premises licences stood at 255, which was considered stable, 47 new personal licences were issued in 2023/24 whilst 5 premises licences were surrendered.

Details of the type and location of the 10 new premises licences was provided, noting the revocation of one licence for Addlestone Food and Wine following a summary review in November/December 2023.

Since the pandemic more Temporary Event Notices (TENs) had been issued as businesses were slowly recovering. The maximum number of TENs that someone could give had reverted back to the pre-pandemic level. Officers did all they could to assist applicants and encourage local businesses to be successful as well as promoting the licensing objectives.

Members reviewed enforcement and inspection activity which continued to be pro-active and intelligence led, working with colleagues in Environmental Health and the Police. Take-up of the new pre-application service launched in April 2024 as approved by the Committee in September 2023 had been modest but Officers hoped it would attract more applicants as it became more widely known about.

With regard to Pubwatch, Members agreed it was unfortunate to note that the Borough's

south area branch had not met since the resignation of their Chair. However, the one based in Egham for the north of the borough did continue to meet. Officers were asked to inform Members of the Committee of forthcoming Pubwatch meetings, noting the Council and Police were invited attendees. The Committee was also very welcome to attend.

The Committee was advised of some headline statistics from the Police on incidents in licensed premises and public houses. Officers reported that of the 241 incidents reported in 2023/24, 46 of which occurred in public houses. Incidents ranged from public order offences, criminal damage and hate crime to noise nuisance and shop lifting. Members considered that as the Council licensed all relevant premises including club premises certificates, it would be helpful to see figures relating to Royal Holloway University Students' Union and given their impact on the local community. The rationale behind the Police not providing this information was thought to be because the Student Union venues were private. However, Officers agreed to ask the Police for data regarding incidents recorded at Royal Holloway's Students' Union venues for next year's Annual Report.

In terms of legislative change, the Business and Planning Act 2020 continued to allow temporary amendments to the Licensing Act 2003 to provide automatic extensions to the terms of on-sales alcohol licences to allow for off-sales. Officers confirmed that the government had extended the temporary off-sales regulatory easement until 31 March 2025, pending the outcome of a public consultation on making the arrangements permanent by a Legislative Reform Order. The Committee would be kept informed of progress.

Officers also highlighted the new film Classification Guidelines which came into force on 1 May 2024 and the role the Licensing Sub-Committee might have if any films needed to be assessed against the new guidelines.

Members recalled the proposed Protect Duty known as Martyn's Law, its implementation, including the establishment of a Martyn's Law Regulator, would be determined following the forthcoming General Election.

Officers were thanked for their report which was duly noted.

5 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

There were no exempt or confidential items on the agenda.

(The meeting ended at 7.51 pm.)

Chair