

SCRUTINY BOARD (CITIZENS AND COMMUNITIES)

MONDAY, 10TH OCTOBER, 2016

PRESENT: Councillor B Anderson in the Chair

Councillors C Campbell, R Grahame,
M Harland, G Hyde, K Maqsood, J Pryor,
M Robinson, R. Stephenson, K Wakefield
and N Walshaw

36 Late Items

There were no late items.

37 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

38 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

An apology for absence was submitted by Councillor J Illingworth. Notification had been received that Councillor J Pryor was to substitute for Councillor J Illingworth.

39 Minutes - 12 September 2016

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 12th September 2016 be approved as a correct record.

40 Safeguarding and the night time economy

The report of the Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support made reference to the Board's initial interest in undertaking further Scrutiny into the role of the Council and its partners in addressing safeguarding issues linked to the city's night time economy. In doing so, particular attention was given to those service areas that fall within the responsibility of the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) and the remit of the Board. As such, the following information was appended to the report:

- Appendix A – a report from the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) on Safeguarding in Taxi and Private Hire Licensing – 12 months review of progress;
- Appendix B – a report from the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) on entertainment licensing's contribution to the night time economy.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- James Rogers, Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities)
- Councillor James Lewis, Executive Board Member for Resources and Strategy
- John Mulcahy, Head of Elections, Licensing and Registration
- Des Broster, Service Head, Taxi & Private Hire Licensing
- Nicola Raper, Service Head, Entertainment Licensing

The following key areas were discussed by the Board in relation to the role of Taxi & Private Hire Licensing:

- The significant progress made on the implementation of the annual DBS policy;
- The work being undertaken across the West Yorkshire Authorities towards attaining common standards and working in a cohesive way in terms of policy, decision making and enforcement capability.
- The steady progress made in delivering the compulsory Safeguarding Awareness training for all existing licence holders, escorts and permit holders (with 71 of the 187 contracted sessions completed by 31st August 2016 which equates to 39% of the licence base). Particular emphasis was placed on ensuring that such training was being delivered in a comprehensive and effective manner;
- The ongoing work to create efficiencies within the police disclosure process, including the appointment of a Research Officer to work with other West Yorkshire Authorities to reach an information sharing agreement that will enable the service to undertake a much closer scrutiny of all licensing databases and identify risks whilst still observing the Data Protection thresholds of the West Yorkshire Police.
- Implications surrounding the introduction of the De-regulation Act in October 2015 and also the Department for Culture, Media and Sport Tourism Action Plan. It was noted that the service would be reporting on these in more detail to the Council's Licensing Committee for further consideration;
- The ongoing work through the Combined Authority approach aimed at ensuring that other local authorities in West Yorkshire ensure that their licensing enforcement capability has sufficient resources and skills to sustain the very necessary controls required within the licensing environment. The Board requested to be kept informed of progress in this regard.
- The work undertaken with the UK Border Agency in relation to identifying common types of forgery linked to identity documents;
- The longstanding issues linked to the operation of 'out of town' Hackney Carriages and the introduction of controls, such as telephone booking facilities and information recording of journeys, to help with the regulation of such activity.
- Particular concerns were raised regarding the potential for taxi drivers to work dangerously long hours and the longstanding frustration with taxi drivers being exempt from the Working Time Directive.

The following key areas were discussed by the Board in relation to the role of Entertainment Licensing:

- The potential misuse of Temporary Entertainment Notices (TENs). The Executive Member for Resources and Strategy highlighted the Council's recent efforts, in conjunction with the LGA, to lobby the House of Lords to make a number of changes to existing licensing laws, one of which referred to the use of TENs. It was also noted that the Council had responded to the recent national consultation on TENs. The Board requested to be kept informed of progress on this matter.
- Issues relating to identified training needs of licensed premises and the difficulty in imposing conditions for premises to undertake mandatory training. However, it was noted that this matter was being explored further by the Licensing Committee.
- The Board requested more detailed information surrounding the role and impact of the Business Improvement District (BID)
- The Board requested details of previous national research linked to the concept of 'vertical drinking' establishments.
- Leeds Purple Flag Task Force – the Board noted that Leeds is progressing an application for Purple Flag accreditation and requested to be kept informed of progress with this application.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Board notes the reports.
- (b) That the Board's requests for additional information, as set out above, are actioned as soon as possible.
- (c) That a further update is scheduled at an appropriate time to enable the Board to pick up on those areas where it has requested to be kept informed of progress.

41 Scrutiny Inquiry into Community Hubs - Formal response

The report of the Head of Governance Services and Scrutiny Support presented the formal response to the Board's earlier Inquiry into the development of Community Hubs.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- James Rogers, Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities)
- Lee Hemsworth, Chief Officer Customer Access

The key issues raised were as follows:

- Further clarity was sought regarding timescales for developing a clear assessment and delivery model linked to the Community Hub 'Mobile' type provision. It was anticipated that this would be in place by the end of this financial year.
- It was noted that any wider issues surrounding the general roll out of the Community Hub programme would be picked up as part of the Board's November meeting.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That a further recommendation tracking report is scheduled within the next 6 months.

(Councillor M Robinson left the meeting at 11.20 am during the consideration of this item)

42 work schedule

The report of the Head of Governance Services and Scrutiny Support invited Members to consider the Board's work schedule for the municipal year.

The Chair made particular reference to the Board's forthcoming working group meeting on 18th October 2016 in relation to the Board's Inquiry into the revised Council Tax Support Scheme.

RESOLVED – That the work schedule be noted.

43 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 7th November 2016 at 10 am (Pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.30 am)

(The meeting concluded at 11.35 am)