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Our ref GH/KLC
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Dear Mark,

LEEDS CITY CENTRE EVENING AND NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

You will be aware that the Licensing Act 2003 requires licensing authorities to prepare and publish a statement of licensing policy every 5 years. The Licensing Policy for Leeds contains six cumulative impact policies (CIPs) for various areas of the Leeds district, including the City Centre. The City Centre CIP goes further to designate red, green and amber zones. The policy specifies that the city centre CIP evidence and map would be revised each year based on the most recent crime and disorder statistics supply by the West Yorkshire Police.

Most notably are the two red zones that apply to the areas of Albion Street/Woodhouse Lane, and Lower Briggate/Call Lane/Duncan Street. It is the Council's view that these areas cannot support any further licensed premises or variations to existing premises as this would impact on the antisocial behaviour experienced in these areas.

The annual review of the city centre zones was brought before the recent meeting of the Licensing Committee. The Committee were most concerned to hear that the West Yorkshire Police crime statistics for the preceding 12 months demonstrated that violent crime and theft had increased significantly in the red areas of the city centre and continued to be problematic. In fact, the most recent figures show that the two red areas are responsible for the majority of the crime in the city centre during the night time economy. I enclose the latest crime report produced by the Leeds District Analysis Unit which was used to review the city centre cumulative impact areas.

The Members were informed that agencies are now looking at how the situation may be improved, with planned meetings with the trade and partner agencies including voluntary organisations.

The Members also heard how the West Yorkshire Police are in the process of reviewing Operation Capitol which should hopefully provide more police resources in the City Centre during the peak times of the night time economy.

However, the Licensing Committee remain concerned and disappointed at the increase in violent crime and despite assurance that agencies and the trade are working together, the Members are of the opinion that police resources within the busy night time economy are inadequate.

Members have recently joined police colleagues on Operation Capitol conducting night time patrols of the city centre and therefore have a firsthand account of the strains that are put on the police, in particular when all resources are directed to a serious incident.

Whilst acknowledging the good work being done by the police officers on duty, it is the Licensing Committee's desire to see additional police deployed to the city centre during the night time economy, without having any detrimental impact on the ability to police other areas of the district.

I would be happy to meet and discuss further as necessary.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Hyde'.

Councillor Graham Hyde
On behalf of the Licensing Committee