

Licensing Committee

Tuesday, 14th February, 2012

PRESENT: Councillor S Armitage in the Chair

Councillors K Bruce, R Downes, J Dunn,
R D Feldman, G Hussain, G Hyde, A Khan,
P Latty, B Selby, C Townsley, D Wilson
and G Wilkinson

65 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest

66 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gettings and Hanley.

67 Minutes

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17th January 2012 be agreed as a correct record

68 Matters Arising

Minute 61 NVQ Working Group – It was noted that the NVQ Working Group had not yet reconvened

69 Leeds Festival

The Head of Licensing and Registration submitted a report advising Members of the receipt of the Event Management Plan (EMP) for the Leeds Festival 2012 scheduled to be held in the grounds of Bramham Park, Wetherby between 24th and 26th August 2012. The report included a schedule of changes made to the EMP since last years event.

The Committee welcomed Mr Benn, the event promoter to the meeting. Mr Benn outlined the success of the 2011 Festival in terms of the Traffic Management Plan; noise management and the changes within the EMP including:

- Use of LED signage at main thoroughfares to assist patrons moving around the site during the Festival and leaving the event
- Impact of new legislation on water safety standards
- Crowd control and the introduction of a new design to the main stage barrier which reduced the sway of the crowd

The Committee noted that all agencies had been satisfied with the event this year and commended the promoter on the success of the Festival and the ongoing efforts to refine and improve arrangements for the event.

RESOLVED – To note the contents of the report and to extend thanks to Mr Benn for his attendance.

70 **Presentation - Policing and the Night Time Economy - West Yorkshire Police**

Further to minute 33 of the meeting held 13th September 2011, the Committee welcomed officers of West Yorkshire Police (WYP) to the meeting to discuss issues relating to policing and the night time economy in Leeds city centre.

Chief Inspector V Francis; Chief Inspector S Palmer and Sergeant R Fullilove attended the meeting. Members noted that Ch. Ins. Francis had recently retired from his post and extended their best wishes to him. Ch. Ins Palmer was introduced as the new Chief Inspector for the city centre area. Sgt Fullilove led discussions on the following matters:

Cumulative Impact Policy (CIP)

WYP submitted schedules outlining decisions taken by the Licensing Sub Committees since January 2011 relating to applications from premises located within Cumulative Impact Area 1 (city centre) and those premises which featured in WYP Matrix system used to monitor premises which needed support from WYP

DVD presentation – The Committee viewed CCTV footage of the Albion Street/Merrion Street area taken on 21 September 2010 at approximately 02:00 hours showing the volume of patrons from local licensed premises on the street.

- Sgt Fullilove reported on an incident of oversubscription to an event at a premises that evening; highlighting several contributory factors which resulted in a crushing incident
- Members discussed their concerns with regards to the health and safety of both patrons of the premises and the public outside and expressed surprise that WYP had not sought a Review of the premises licence. Members felt that the premises should have been referred to the Committee such was the serious nature of this incident
- Members noted the number of Matrix points amassed by another venue over the previous 6 months and heard that although the premises management had changed; WYP felt the venue worked with them to tackle crime and disorder
- WYP stated they also had regard to the size of a premises and volume of patrons before taking direct action. It was noted that the LCC Entertainment Licensing Enforcement Officers undertook regular compliance visits to licensed premises and visits in conjunction with WYP. A request for detail on any follow up action undertaken by LCC following the incident was noted.

Ch. Ins Francis stated that large, high capacity premises would statistically generate more points on the Matrix system. Some Members however did not fully accept that argument, stating that all premise licence holders had a responsibility to their patrons in terms of crime and disorder and public safety; regardless of the size of their venue.

Members supported a suggestion that representatives of premises causing concern to WYP should be invited to attend a Committee meeting to take part in discussions on the responsibilities of premise licence holders, the Committees' concerns and how to make progress. Members also agreed that

representatives of a premises that had previously been a cause for concern but had made significant improvements should be invited to attend a “best practice” type workshop

The Matrix System

- Ch. Ins Palmer clarified the decision making process which had regard to the type of venue, capacity, nature of entertainment offered, clientele and whether that venue consistently worked with WYP
- Members supported the continued use of the Matrix System, however commented that it could be refined to include a weighting system – having regard to capacity and number of incidents causing concern
- Sgt. Fullilove provided further information on the top ten premises listed within the Matrix System, highlighting those premises with recurring issues which WYP sought to address

Members additionally discussed:

- The prevalence of drug use amongst patrons in city centre premises and the actions undertaken by WYP to identify drug use
- The correlation between alcohol pricing and incidents of crime and disorder
- the importance of strong management to take ultimate responsibility for all aspects of the licensed premises, including management of the door team. Members considered whether a condition to set a minimum number of doorstaff could be introduced at premises causing serious concern

To conclude, Ch. Ins. Francis outlined what had been achieved in Leeds during his tenure, including the introduction of the Matrix System; additional police officers and the street marshal scheme sustained in partnership with the licensees and the reduction of violent crime by 40%.

The Committee thanked the officers of WYP for their presentation and welcomed the discussions it had generated

RESOLVED –

- a) To note the contents of the presentation and discussions
- b) To note the request for further information regarding the incident on 21 September 2010 and that consideration be given to inviting representatives of city centre premises to future meetings of the Committee

(Councillors Downes and G Hussain left the meeting at this point)

71 Licensing Act 2003 - Update

The Head of Licensing and Registration submitted a report providing an update on changes to the Licensing Act 2003 in respect of the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee and the Live Music Bill. Members comments were also sought to inform the Council’s response to the Home Office consultation “Dealing with the problems of late night drinking” which proposed secondary legislation for the introduction of the Late Night Levy and Early Morning Restriction Orders. The Consultation document was attached to the report.

The Committee discussed the following matters with officers

Live Music Bill

- the possible impact of the removal of the effect of conditions specific to provision of live music
- the expectation that more applications to Review premise licences will be received
- the impact of Local Health Authorities being made Responsible Authorities on the review process

(Councillors Bruce and Townsley left the meeting at this point)

Late Night Levy

- impact of the levy on the voluntary provision by larger clubs/licensed premises of measures designed to address the licensing objectives
- the fee structure for the LNL

RESOLVED –

- a) That the contents of the report be noted in respect of the Golden Jubilee and the Live Music Bill
- b) That the contents of the consultation document “Dealing with the problems of late night drinking” be noted and
- c) That the Principal Project Officer be requested to draft a response to the consultation to be despatched to the Committee Members for comment prior to submission to the Home Office

72 Licensing Work Programme

The Committee considered the contents of the Licensing work programme for the remainder of the Municipal Year and noted the following

Appeals Sub Committee – The Chair reported on requests received from the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage trades for the Committee to establish a sub committee to deal with appeals received from drivers who may have been sanctioned or had their licences suspended. The Chair briefly outlined the resource implications for both Members and officers and the intention to present a report on the matter to the next appropriate meeting

Large Casino Licence – Members noted the intention to arrange a site visit in early March to existing casinos with the involvement of current operators

RESOLVED – To note the contents of the Licensing Work Programme

73 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note the date and time of the next meeting as Tuesday 13th March 2012 at 10.00 am