
Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance)

Licensing Committee

Date: 6th October 2009.

Subject: Best Bar None Scheme

Electoral Wards Affected:

All

Specific Implications For:

Ethnic minorities

Women

Disabled people

Executive Summary

This report advises the Licensing Committee of the Leeds best Bar None scheme which has operated in Leeds for the past 4 years . The report sets out the background, accreditation process and current membership of the scheme together with an update on recent winners. Finally, officers recommend that the contents of this report are noted.

1.0 Purpose of this report.

- 1.1 This report is prepared to offer clarification on the Best Bar None scheme currently delivered across Leeds by Leeds Community Safety as part of the Leeds national Pubwatch scheme.
- 1.2 The report is written in response to an expressed desire of Members of the Licensing Committee to learn more about the nomination and accreditation process for the scheme. This desire was expressed at the Licensing Committee 4th August 2009. It is within the terms of reference of the Licensing Committee to receive reports of this nature.

2.0 Background Information.

- 2.1 Best Bar None was first introduced in Manchester in 2003 and has had a great success in reducing alcohol related crime, violence and drink related harm. Since then the scheme has been successfully introduced in over 100 towns and cities nationwide with the same level of success as achieved in North West England.
- 2.2 Best Bar None provides an incentive to the operators of licensed premises to improve their standards of operation to a commonly agreed national benchmark.
- 2.3 Best Bar None aims to reward licensees who provide good management, a safe and enjoyable environment for customers, discourage binge drinking and prevent alcohol-related crime. It seeks to encourage licensees to act responsibly and take pride in their premises and surroundings and, in doing so, contribute to their Town and their local community.
- 2.4 The rewards for licensees include, the prestige of being part of the awards scheme, increased business within the area and lower insurance premiums resulting from the fact that they are running safer establishments. Accreditation brings significant benefits and kudos to the venue.

3.0 Main Issues.

- 3.1 Members at the last meeting of the Licensing Committee expressed a desire to be Informed of how premises gain the accreditation. Members were concerned that some existing licensed premises accredited under the scheme, had been subject to reviews before Licensing Committee. Members were further concerned that premises that had operated in a manner which undermined the licensing objectives remained accredited.

Assessment and accreditation.

- 3.2 The assessment process is robust. The assessment of venues is carried out by a trained, accredited team of impartial assessors who will ensure a consistent

approach. Assessors are required to attend a two day course which culminates in an examination.

- 3.3 The assessment criteria are clear and straightforward and constructive feedback is provided to all entrants to assist in future development. The criteria used by assessors is contained in a 50 page accreditation package. This document will be available for Members to peruse at the Committee hearing.
- 3.3 Since 2007 Best Bar None has been in partnership with the Home Office and the British Institute of Innkeepers, the professional body for the licensed trade. An independent board has been formed to foster future development of the scheme nationwide and an annual conference of all participating regions is now into its second year.
- 3.4 For the participating venue the scheme offers an opportunity to promote its venue to potential customers and all premises accredited under the scheme receive a plaque for public display. Accredited premises are also able to include Leeds Best Bar None promotional advertising and all premises are included in Leeds City Council tourist information as well as the Leeds Best Bar None website.
- 3.5 Currently Leeds has 65 participating premises, mostly in the city centre although a major recruitment drive will take place in 2010 to recruit public houses in the outer areas to link in with the planned expansion of the Leeds Pubwatch scheme.
- 3.6 The most recent award winners in Leeds for 2009 were:
- Pub: Viaduct
 - Club: Flares
 - Bar: Napa
 - Best Door-team: Leeds University
 - Radio Aire Listeners Award: Northern Monkey

Removal of accreditation.

- 3.7 In the event of any accredited premises having their license withdrawn by the Licensing Committee or are found guilty of a criminal matter, this would bring disrepute to the Leeds scheme. This issue would be taken seriously.
- 3.8 The removal of an accreditation would be a matter for the management committee of the local Pubwatch scheme to which the premises in question belonged. The management committee would be authorised to withdraw the accreditation if they were satisfied this was an appropriate sanction. This has happened in other parts of the country.

4.0 Implications for Council Policy and Governance

There are no implications for Council Policy or Governance arising from this report.

5.0 Legal and Resource Implications

- 5.1 No significant resource implications identified.

6.0 Recommendations

- 6.1 That Members are invited to note the contents of this report.