

Remote meeting

Minutes of a meeting of the Licensing and Gambling Acts Committee on Thursday 4 February 2021

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Committee members present:

Councillor Cook (Chair)

Councillor Lygo (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Clarkson

Councillor Humberstone

Councillor Simm

Councillor Tanner

Councillor Taylor

Councillor Wade

Officers present for all or part of the meeting:

Daniel Smith, Lawyer

David Stevens, Business Regulation Team Manager

Joshua Curnow, Senior Licensing Compliance Officer

Lucy Longford, Licensing Compliance Officer

Rutendo Chigagure, Trainee Solicitor

Michael Watson, Interim Licensing Officer

John Mitchell, Committee and Member Services Officer

Apologies:

Councillors Upton and Wolff sent apologies.

7. Declarations of interest

None.

8. Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005 Licence Fees and Charges for the 2021/22 financial year

The Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety had submitted a report to seek agreement of the licence fees for 2021/22 where the Council has discretion over the level of fee charged.

The report was introduced by Lucy Longford, Licensing Compliance Officer, noting that no substantial changes were proposed for the forthcoming Council year in order to provide financial stability for licence holders in the present economic climate.

The Chair reminded those present that most of the charges were statutory and in relation to which the Committee's discretion was limited to the level of charge imposed.

In response to a question about whether fees were currently being paid it was confirmed that in the majority of cases they were. At the time of the first lockdown the Local Government Association had suggested to Government that these fees might be waived however the Government maintained that they should continue to be paid. In the minority of cases where fees were not paid, the associated licenses were reinstated

immediately upon payment. It was noted that these fees were relatively small when compared with the relief from business rates which was currently being offered.

The Committee was very supportive of the proposals to maintain the current level of charges. It was also noted that many of the businesses to which these fees applied were not able to operate because of other Covid related factors at the current time.

The Licensing & Gambling Acts Committee resolved to:

- 1. **Agree** the licence fees and charges for 2021/22 as set out in Appendix 1 and recommend them to Council.

9. Review of the Statement of Licensing Policy

Lucy Longford, Licensing Compliance Officer introduced the report. Taking into account the significant disruption to the night time economy caused by the current pandemic it was proposed to maintain the current policy for the forthcoming Council year, an approach supported by the Minister of State for Crime & Policing. The Policy before the Committee was therefore substantially the same with just minor changes of detail. It was however proposed to conduct a thorough review of the policy in 2021 to take full account of the consequences of the pandemic.

A response to the consultation which had preceded the report before the Committee had raised the lack of reference to the 2010 Equality Act. It was confirmed that consideration would be given to a more explicit reference to the Act as part of the forthcoming review.

The timescale for the review had yet to be confirmed but it was hoped that a draft would be ready for consideration by the Committee at its September meeting.

10. Minutes

The Committee resolved to:

Approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2020 as a true and accurate record.

11. Dates of future meetings

Meetings are scheduled on:

- 20 May 2021
- 27 September 2021
- 07 February 2022

All meetings start at 6.00pm

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 6.15 pm

Chair

Date: Thursday 20 May 2021

