

REPORT OF LICENSING AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

GENERAL REPORT

1. This report sets out a brief summary of the main items considered at a meeting of the Licensing and Safety held on 25 May 2005 and the Special Meeting of the Committee held on 3 June 2005.

25 May 2005 Meeting

Application for the Renewal of a Public Entertainment Licence – The Sirloin Inn, Station Road, Hoghton

2. We were requested to determine an application for the renewal of a Public Entertainment Licence in respect of The Sirloin Inn, Station Road, Hoghton.
3. The application was based on the same permitted hours of Wednesdays, 11.00am until 11.00pm and Saturdays, 11.00am until 11.00pm, however the application had been brought to Committee following the receipt of objections from two residents due to noise from the establishment. No objection had been received from the Police and the Council's Environmental Services did not object but had made recommendations regarding work to the premises that would reduce the escape of noise from the entertainment at the premises.
4. The Council agreed to the renewal of the licence on the hours requested subject to complying with the recommendations of the Council's Environmental Services.

Eccleston Cricket Club – Remission of Fee

5. We received a report of the Director of Legal Services to determine a request received from Eccleston Cricket Club for the Public Entertainment Licence fee of £180.00 in respect of a fund raising event on 24 December 2005 to be remitted.
6. The Committee considered that it required more information, in the way of receipt of a balance sheet and breakdown of expected costs for the event and therefore deferred the item to a future meeting.

Application for Licence to Drive Private Hire Vehicles

7. I accepted, as urgent, consideration of this item, not included on the agenda, in view of the fact that the next scheduled meeting was not until 24 September 2005.
8. An application had been received for a Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver's Licence in which the applicant had held a DVLA Driving Licence since 27 June 2002. The Council's policy was that applications for Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Driver's Licences who have not attained the age of 21 years at the date of applying or do not have three years of experience driving under a full DVLA licence be not normally granted a licence, but that applicants who wish to put forward reasons why an exception be made from this general policy in their case be given an opportunity to appear before the Committee.
9. Following representations in support of his applicant, the applicant was granted a licence to drive Private Hire (Hackney Carriage) Driver's Licence subject to the usual medical fitness and Criminal Records Bureau checks.

10. We also agreed to review the Council's policy on the issue of a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver's Licence to those applicants who have had a DVLA Licence for at least three years.

Private Hire Operator – Complaints

11. We were informed that a complaint had been received regarding a private hire operator in Chorley and that a special meeting of the Committee should be arranged as soon as possible to bring to the attention of Members the continuing problems associated with the operator.

This special meeting was held on Friday, 3 June 2005.

Special Meeting – 3 June 2005

12. Our attention was drawn to the continuing problems relating to a Private Hire Operator in Chorley.
13. Following receipt of a complaint, officers had been unable to carry out a thorough investigation as it had not been possible to contact the licence holder through letters or gaining access to the operating base.
14. Correspondence delivered to the home of the licensed operator enabled an interview to take place with the Enforcement Officer.
15. We were informed that it was a condition of a private hire operator's licence that the operator on receiving a complaint should notify the complainant of his right to forward the complaint to the Council. In addition the operator must investigate the complaint immediately and notify the complainant of the outcome. If the complaint is investigated by an authorised officer of the Council, the operator must conform to any direction of the officer.
16. In addition to the failure to deal with the complaint, there was also a lack of apparent involvement by the Licensed operator in the operation of the firm which raised concerns as to whether he was a fit and proper person.
17. The Committee agreed for the operator to continue to hold a licence, however, a strongly written letter should be sent to him stating that the Committee was unhappy with the running of the business and that conditions of the licence must be adhered to at all times, including making access for officers to attend the operating base at all times and that the operator must play an active role in the day to day operation of the business.

Recommendation

18. The Council is requested to note this report.

COUNCILLOR R SNAPE
Chairman of the Licensing and Safety Committee

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There are no background papers to this report.