

REPORT OF LICENSING AND SAFETY COMMITTEE AND THE STATUTORY LICENSING COMMITTEE

GENERAL REPORT

1. This report sets out a brief summary of the main items considered at the meeting of the Licensing and Safety Committee and the Statutory Licensing Committee held on 22 November 2006.

LICENSING AND SAFETY COMMITTEE – 22 NOVEMBER 2006

Presentation on Alcohol Related Crime

2. We received a short presentation from Inspector Ian Roberts of Lancashire Constabulary informing us of the alcohol related crime in the Chorley area.
3. He reported on the recent action that had taken place relating to Operation Nimrod and the arrests and the charging of individuals involved in drugs related crime.
4. We welcomed information received telling us of the reduction in violent crime compared with that of 5 years ago however problems occur associated with access to alcohol from those under 18 years of age. The Police had been working with the Council's Multi-Agency Problem Solving (MAPS) Team over the months as there was becoming a real need for a street ban on the drinking of alcohol.
5. A problem also existed with excessive drinking in pubs and identified the need to introduce licensing conditions to reduce the binge drinking culture.

Consideration of Change of Criteria – Additional Hackney Carriage Licences

6. We received a report of the Director of Customer, Democratic and Legal Services requesting Members to reconsider an agreed criteria to be applied to additional hackney carriage vehicle licences.
7. The report indicated that the Committee had previously agreed on 5 April 2006 a criteria for the issue of seven additional hackney carriage licences identified by a survey as being required to meet the needs of disabled people in the Borough.
8. It was considered that the criteria that had been agreed in April 2006 could result in a legal challenge and it was appropriate to reconsider the criteria before any further action was taken regarding the issue of the seven additional hackney plates.
9. We agreed to change the criteria which would enable vehicle proprietors to have a choice of suitable vehicles whilst the Council would be able to maintain a high standard of vehicular accessible vehicles. By specifying that the vehicle must be new or less than 500 miles could ensure that conversion had been carried out to the latest specification.

Licensing and Registration Licences Issued from 23 September 2006 to 1 November 2006

10. We received a report of the Director of Customer, Democratic and Legal Services on the various licences and permits issued and the registrations affected by the Licensing Section for the period 23 September 2006 and 1 November 2006.

Annual Review of Licence Fees

11. We considered a report of the Director of Customer, Democratic and Legal Services requesting us to review the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence fees charged by the Council and recommending adoption of a revised fee structure with effect from 1 April 2007.
12. We approved the increase in the fees by approximately 3%, the aim of which was to maintain the standard of service.

Private Hire Operator Allowing Vehicles to be Used in a Dangerous Condition

13. We received notification from Officers that as a result of a decision by the Committee at its meeting held on 11 October 2006 the private hire operator had now completed the required tests on the vehicles, however, the daily defects sheets for each vehicle of the private hire fleet had not been implemented as had been requested by the Committee.
14. An explanation letter would be sent to the operator explaining these areas and the need for them to be completed and maintained. A report on this will be submitted to the Committee on 17 January 2007.

STATUTORY LICENSING COMMITTEE – 22 NOVEMBER 2006

Licensing Act 2003 – Licences Issued from 1 September 2006 to 22 September 2006

15. We received from the Director of Customer, Democratic and Legal Services a report informing the Committee of the various licences issued and the regulations affected under the Licensing Act 2003 for the period 1 September 2006 to 22 September 2006.

The Gambling Act 2005 – Approval of Licensing Policy

16. We considered a report requesting the approval of the draft Statement of Gambling Policy and consultation responses prior to the policy being presented to the Council for approval. A separate report recommending the Statement of Gambling Policy appears elsewhere on the Council agenda.
17. The report provided further and updated information following the release of regulations and commencement orders by the Government.
18. The report set out the timetable for implementation indicating that consultation had taken place between 24 July and 13 October 2006. The timetable provided the following:
 - 19 December 2006 – Full Council to approve Policy Statement
 - 21 December 2006 – 2 January 2007 – Publish Policy Statement
 - 30 April 2007 – First appointed day. Transition commenced and Licensing Authority starts receiving applications for granting licences.
 - 1 September 2007 – Second appointed day. Full implementation of Gambling Act 2005.

Recommendation

19. The Council is recommended to note the report.

COUNCILLOR MRS I SMITH

Chairman of the Licensing and Safety Committee and the Statutory Licensing Committee.

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There are no background papers to this report.