

LICENSING LIAISON PANEL – 31 March 2008

PRESENT Councillor Iris Smith, Councillor Edward Smith, Councillor Peter Malpas, Stephen Culleton, Janet Brereton, Brian Crompton, Mohammed Essa, Mazaffar Hussain, Shakhail Ahmed, Peter Verhaege.

1 APOLOGIES: Bob Beeston, Phil and Lynne Cooper, Yaqoob Illahi.

2 MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST MEETING

2.1 Traffic Light Signals, A6 Hartwood Roundabout, Chorley – Janet Brereton read out an email received from Lancashire County Council which pointed out that the layout of this junction was not suitable for uncontrolled operation. The junction had been re-designed to improve the capacity for the recent and future increase in traffic load due to Buckshaw Village and the associated industrial development. The signals operate between 06:30 and 18:45 on a fixed time plan and after the evening peak hours, they operate under local vehicle-actuated control. Any change from this would affect the pedestrian and cyclists crossings.

2.2 Pavement Café Design Guide (update) – Steve Culleton informed the panel that the Pavement Café scheme would be implemented by Licensing. He was currently going through the document to clarify a number of points, such as method of application. A panel member brought up the issue of town centre venues which did not comply with the design guide and Steve Culleton told him that he had had background meetings regarding this. Steve Culleton said that he was keen to work with the recently appointed Town Centre Manager to address this issue.

2.3 Sign at head of Taxi Rank, High Street – As requested, Janet Brereton had brought up this matter at a recent Town Centre Working Party. The problem arises because the roundabout is located at the end of a pedestrianised area. It was agreed that Janet Brereton raise it again at the next Town Centre Working Party, to ask if it would be possible to erect a suitable sign. In the meantime, it was agreed that the hackney carriage drivers should continue to take care in this area. This discussion led on to the lack of signage from the train station/bus interchange area and whether a rank could be appointed at the train station. Steve Culleton said that the issue of ranks would be covered within the hackney carriage survey. Janet Brereton said that this matter also links in with Agenda Item 6.

3 PARKING ISSUES

Councillor Peter Malpas, the Executive Member for Economic Development and Regeneration, attended to speak to the panel regarding parking issues following a previous meeting. He explained that there had been changes to the parking tariff on all short stay car parks so that anyone paying £1 could park for three hours. This would benefit the town centre by allowing for a more relaxed shopping experience and people could shop for longer. The barriers had been removed from Fleet Street car park to free up more spaces near to the town centre. He pointed out that every month car parking tickets bought did increase.

A panel member raised the issue of Portland Street car park being used as a shortcut through to Brown Street. It was generally felt that this was unsafe, especially on a Tuesday when the area was busier. Janet Brereton was asked to look into this issue and report back.

4 PUB WATCH ITEMS

There were no specific items from Pub Watch, however the representative did say that it was saddening that two town centre venues had recently closed. He said it would have a further affect on the night-time economy. Councillor Iris Smith asked for clarification on the Pub Watch scheme which banned persistent offenders from town centre venues and the representative went through the process.

5 POLICE ITEMS

There were no items from the Police.

6 TOWN CENTRE SURVEY

Janet Brereton informed the panel that a Town Centre Survey had recently taken place which would form the basis of a Chorley Town Centre Audit and Design Strategy. This should address some of the issues previously raised such as signage to Ranks etc. Councillor Malpas explained the survey was very detailed and thorough. In addition, the Council had recently appointed a Town Centre Manager who had agreed to attend a future meeting of the Licensing Liaison Panel.

7 UPDATE ON SIGNS AND LIVERY

Steve Culleton updated the panel on this and said that a report would be going to the Licensing and Safety Committee on 2 April 2008 and he would be presenting the new livery. It was agreed that a representative from the trade be allocated time to speak to Committee. Concern was expressed about hackney carriages which had been resprayed white being damaged by the door signs. Steve Culleton pointed out that at the working party the option to take away the white only saloon cars for hackney carriages was not considered necessary and said that if the top signs were removed, the vehicle would not be recognisable as a hackney carriage. Steve Culleton said that any new livery would be promoted and advertised in the local papers and pubs and clubs.

8 UPDATE ON UNMET DEMAND SURVEY

Steve Culleton said that there had been 32 responses in favour of a survey and 5 'no responses', although one of these was from a proprietor with two hackney carriages who was currently out of the country. A report was being taken to the Licensing and Safety Committee on Wednesday 2 April 2008 to update Committee. Discussion followed concerning the funding of the survey, but Steve Culleton pointed out that the survey must be paid for before it went ahead as there was no allocation for it in the budget.

9 GUIDELINES ON CONVICTIONS

Steve Culleton explained that the last guidelines were produced in 1992. He had updated them and a report would be taken to the Licensing and Safety Committee on Wednesday 2 April 2008. The guidelines ensure that a new applicant with previous convictions will be able to decide whether to proceed with an application. The guidelines have been adopted by a number of other local authorities and worked on by the Council's legal section.

10 OPERATORS AND PLANNING PERMISSION

Steve Culleton pointed out that there was an issue had come to light concerning an operator obtaining planning permission and said that he would shortly be looking at this part of the licensing process.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11.1 PRINTER FOR MAKING BADGES – Steve Culleton let the panel know that the Licensing Section had now obtained a new printer. This means that in the near future the Licensing Section will be able to make badges and be able to take photographs for these badges within the One Stop Shop. This meant that taxi badges would be turned around within 24 hours to improve the service provided to drivers.

11.2 SECOND DRIVER'S LICENCES – a Panel member sought clarification regarding drivers with existing 'dual' licences. At the meeting of the Licensing Liaison Panel on 4 February 2008, some changes to procedures were explained. In relation to second driver's licences, the following was noted:

'Any driver who currently had two licences which expired on different dates could benefit from the lesser fee if, on renewal of the first licence to expire, the second one was also renewed but issued to expire on the same date as the first licence.'

This also ensures that the medical and CRB check are kept in line.

11.3 VEHICLE TESTING ARRANGEMENTS – Steve Culleton informed the panel that he would shortly be looking at the current vehicle testing arrangements with a view to improving them. He welcomed suggestions from the trade and it was agreed that a working party be arranged to consider suggestions from the trade. Invitations would be sent out shortly.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING – the next meeting has been arranged for Monday 12 May 2008 at 10.30am in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Chorley. (Please note different room)

ALL THOSE WISHING TO RECEIVE THE AGENDA AND MEETING NOTES BY EMAIL, PLEASE LET ME HAVE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS BY EMAILING ME ON janet.brereton@chorley.gov.uk