

Licensing Committee – 9 March 2011

- Present Councillors Mrs Allgrove (Chairman),
Councillors Beaven, Brooks, Coles, Critchard, Ms Durdan,
Guerrier, Mrs Hill, House, Mrs Lees and Mrs Waymouth
- Officers: Ian Carter (Licensing Manager), Charlotte Dale (Environmental
Health Lead), John Rendell (Licensing Officer) and Olivia
Walton (Licensing Officer) and Helen Mockridge (Administrative
Officer – Democratic Services)
- Others: Councillor Hayward

(The meeting commenced at 6.20pm).

19. Apologies

Councillors Mrs Floyd, McMahon and Meikle

20. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 6 October 2010 were taken as read and were signed.

21. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Brooks and Mrs Waymouth declared personal interests as Members of Somerset County Council. Councillor Mrs Hill declared a personal interest as an employee of Somerset County Council.

22. Licensing Act 2003 – Taxi Handbook Amendments

Considered report previously circulated concerning the adoption of “Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Drivers, Vehicles and Operators Handbook”.

The Council’s recommendations, policies, practice and conditions relating to taxi licensing were contained in the Handbook.

The Licensing Team had reviewed what was required in the first aid kits.

Any vehicle with a first aid kit which did not contain all of the items failed the Council’s vehicle compliance test which was carried out at an approved testing station. To minimise disruption to the trade, vehicles with incomplete first aid kits were given advisory notes instead of failing the compliance test.

Following discussions with St Johns Ambulance, a new first aid kit list had been compiled. Additional items required included the following:-

- Eye pad
- Triangle bandage
- Cleansing wipe
- Powder free gloves
- Conforming bandage and
- Washproof plaster.

Resolved that the amendments to the taxi handbook be agreed.

24. Licensing Update Report

Considered report previously circulated regarding an update on the activities of the Licensing Service under the Licensing Act 2003, Gambling Act 2005 and Taxi Legislation together with other licensing matters.

Details of the number of licences that had been issued for taxis, street trading, animal licensing and gambling were reported.

In January 2011, the Home Office had conducted a consultation on the relaxation of the licensing hours for the Royal Wedding. The Government had decided to relax licensing hours for the Royal Wedding and pubs, clubs and other licensed premises would be allowed to open for an extra two hours from 11pm on Friday 29 April to 1am on Saturday 30 April and from 11pm on Saturday 30 April to 1am on Sunday 1 May;

In January 2011, the Home Office had given notice of the Government's intention to introduce a new measure which would prevent retailers from selling a 1 litre bottle of vodka (37.5 per cent abv) for less than £10.71 and a 440ml can of lager (4.2 per cent abv) for less than 38p; and

A number of proposals outlined in the Rebalancing the Licensing Act consultation were being taken forward in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill which had been introduced on 1 December 2010. The Bill had its second reading in the House of Commons and was proceeding to the committee stage.

Between November 2010 and January 2011 The Department for Culture, Media and Sport undertook a consultation on increasing the maximum stake for category B3 gaming machines and a recalibration of B3 gaming machine entitlements for adult gaming centres and bingo clubs. The results of the consultation had not yet been published.

A Taxi Forum meeting had been held on 21st February 2011 and the main topics discussed were as follows:-

- The requirement for first aid kits;
- The MOT testing stations used by the Council for the vehicle compliance test;

- Smoking in taxis;
- Magnetic advertising signs;
- A request for an unmet demand survey;
- A change in the Licensing application procedure.

The Licensing Team had been working with the RSPCA to exchange information and ideas on best practice for animal boarding and breeding establishments

On 3 January 2011 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 had been amended by the introduction of a new category of sex establishment called 'sexual entertainment venue'. No applications had been received to date.

Details of recent training events were reported.

Charlotte Dale updated Members on recent financial matters. Reported that the number of debts being written off totalled £18,270. Debts of £18,500 were being pursued. This was due to the downturn in the economy.

Resolved that report be noted.

(The meeting ended at 6.50pm)