

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 12TH DECEMBER 2011 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs. R. L. Dent (Chairman), Mrs. C. J. Spencer (Vice-Chairman), C. J. Bloore (substituting for Ms. M. T. Buxton), Mrs. J. M. Boswell, J. R. Boulter, S. J. Dudley, Mrs. H. J. Jones, R. J. Shannon and L. J. Turner

Invitees: Councillor Miss P. A. Harrison, Ward Member for Alvechurch Inspector S. Fulton, District Inspector, Bromsgrove, West Mercia Police, and Mr. A. Humphries, Alvechurch Parish Council.

Officers: Mrs. A. Heighway, Mrs. S. Sellers, Mr. C. Santoriello-Smith and Mrs. P. Ross

12/11 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ms. M. T. Buxton, K. A. Grant-Pearce, S. P. Shannon and P. J. Whittaker.

13/11 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received. It was noted that Councillor Miss P. A. Harrison was attending the meeting as Ward Member for Alvechurch not as a member of the Committee.

14/11 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting held on 31st October 2011 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

15/11 **REVIEW OF ALVECHURCH VILLAGE DESIGNATED PUBLIC PLACE ORDER**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and requested brief introductions from Members, Officers and Invitees present.

The Committee considered a report that detailed the conclusions of analytical work carried out by the Community Safety Team on police recorded data in relation to alcohol related disorder. The report provided Committee Members with key information in relation to consideration of the future of Alvechurch Village Designated Public Place Order (DPPO).

The Senior Community Safety Project Officer introduced the report and in doing so informed the Committee that in July 2008 Bromsgrove District Council had exercised its powers under section 13 of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 and designated Alvechurch Village as a designated public place.

In November 2009 the Home Office had produced guidance on Designated Public Place Orders (DPPOs) for local authorities in England and Wales. The guidance explained the legislative obligations involved and set out examples of good practice to help local authorities get the best out of DPPOs. Although there was no statutory requirement to undertake a review of DPPOs, the Home Office recommended that they should be evaluated and reviewed as a matter of good practice, ideally every two years to ascertain if the DPPO was working and still required. The guidance also suggested that police recorded data on alcohol related disorder be used as a foundation for any review.

At the Licensing Committee meeting held on 26th July 2010 Members had been presented with a report that detailed the results of an evaluation into the effectiveness of all 22 DPPOs within Bromsgrove District.

The Head of Community Services reiterated to the Committee that the report presented to Members detailed the conclusions of analytical work on police recorded data together with the results of the stakeholder and public consultation facilitated by Bromsgrove District Council's Community Safety Team. This key information had been provided in order for Members to make an informed decision on whether to retain, amend or revoke Alvechurch Village DPPO.

The Senior Community Safety Project Officer responded to several questions from Members regards current signage used, the location of signage and the new signage as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Senior Community Safety Project Officer informed the Committee that all of the DPPOs in Bromsgrove District were granted prior to the publication of the Home Office Guidance in November 2009 and were granted on the basis of the legislative information given prior to 2009.

The Head of Community Services informed the Committee that there had been some confusion regarding DPPOs. Initially introduced as Alcohol Free Zones and then transferred through legislation to DPPOs, hence the publication of the Home Office Guidance.

The Chairman invited Mr. A. Humphries, Alvechurch Parish Council, who spoke in favour of retaining Alvechurch Village DPPO. In doing so he stated that he welcomed the review. He informed the Committee that he was a member of Alvechurch Parish Council and Chairman of Partners and Communities Together (PACT). He expressed his concern about the uncertainties raised during the meeting regards signage and that police statistical data may not tell the full story. Residents who attended PACT meetings had expressed concerns with issues on Friday and Saturday

evenings around Meadow Lane and Redditch Road. The Committee of the recently opened youth facility, The Lounge, along with PACT members had expressed concerns that Alvechurch Village DPPO may be removed.

Mr. Humphries suggested to Members that PACT could be used to give a clear message to the community and residents on the changes that had taken place. This would then allow the community to make a better, informed decision on the DPPO. Mr. Humphries further suggested that PACT could be used to consult more specifically with residents on Alvechurch Village DPPO. He informed Members that Alvechurch Parish Council and West Mercia Police Community Fund may be able to provide funding for new signage.

The Chairman invited Councillor Miss P. A. Harrison, Ward Councillor for Alvechurch, who spoke in favour of retaining Alvechurch Village DPPO. In doing so she stated that statistics did not always reflect what was actually happening in the village and that the DPPO gave residents comfort and she would like Alvechurch Village DPPO to be retained. She was also concerned that the public had been consulted on the proposal to introduce an Alcohol Free Zone in Alvechurch Village but had not been consulted on the possible revocation of the DPPO.

The Chairman invited Inspector S. Fulton, District Inspector for Bromsgrove to speak. Inspector Fulton stated that he was unlikely to object to any tools that would help his policing team in relation to crime and anti-social behaviour, but he had to base his representation on police data and the effectiveness of the DPPO. There were issues around licensed premises but these issues were usual for night time activities in any area. He had looked at incidents over the last 12 months. He had also spoken to officers under his control including CSO's who police the area. The vast majority of incidents they came across were young people under the age of 18 and the police had other powers available to them to deal with this. Other issues involving alcohol that had arisen had been in private premises namely inside homes and gardens. He had no evidence to object to the revocation of Alvechurch Village DPPO and thought the widespread use of the DPPO throughout the whole of Alvechurch Village quite strange in relation to residential areas where the DPPO legislation could not be used in private homes and gardens.

The Chairman invited the Consultees present to sum up their representations. Councillor Miss P. A. Harrison, Ward Member for Alvechurch, endorsed Mr. A. Humphries view that residents were concerned and she would like to endorse that Alvechurch Village DPPO remain or that another period of review take place. Inspector S. Fulton summed up that the majority of incidents in Alvechurch involving alcohol had involved people under 18 years of age.

Further discussion followed on the evidence and statistical information provided to the Committee and the questions raised and answered during the meeting. Members then discussed and considered the recommendations detailed in the report.

The Chairman announced that, in light of a revised recommendation which had been proposed, she was prepared to adjourn the meeting to allow officers to seek legal advice.

Accordingly, the meeting stood adjourned from 7.06pm to 7.15pm.

Having re-convened, the Senior Solicitor informed Members that, having received information and representations, Members would need to determine if further consultation was required and whether in the meantime the need to change the signage should be prioritised.

The Head of Community Services responded to Members questions with regard to timescales for further consultation and officer capacity to facilitate this. She informed the Committee that residents needed to be made aware of DPPO legislation and what they were being consulted on.

Following further discussion it was:

RESOLVED:

- (a) that Alvechurch Village DPPO be retained in full,
- (b) that the current signage in Alvechurch Village DPPO be replaced with the signage as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (c) that the Senior Community Safety Project Officer be tasked to provide a report detailing consultation timescales to the next meeting of the Licensing Committee.

The meeting closed at 7.24 p.m.

Chairman