

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 20TH MAY 2013 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs. S. J. Baxter, J. R. Boulter, Ms. M. T. Buxton, Mrs. R. L. Dent, S. J. Dudley, K. A. Grant-Pearce, Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths, Miss P. A. Harrison, R. J. Shannon, S. P. Shannon and Mrs. C. J. Spencer

Observers: 3 Members from Bromsgrove Taxi Association

Officers: Mrs. S. Sellers, Mrs. V. Brown (observing), Ms. S. Garratt and Mrs. P. Ross

1/13 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs. R. L. Dent be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

2/13 **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs. C. J. Spencer be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

3/13 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. H. J. Jones and J. S. Brogan.

4/13 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

5/13 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 29th October 2012 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

6/13 **WORCESTER ROAD TAXI RANK - REVIEW**

Members considered a report detailing a request made by the Bromsgrove Taxi Association to amend the Worcester Road Hackney Carriage Rank to incorporate a further 7/8 taxi rank spaces. The request was supported by West Mercia Police.

The Licensing Manager presented the report and in doing so informed Members that licensing officers had been working with members of the Taxi Association and West Mercia Police to monitor the operation of the taxi rank on Worcester Road and the interim arrangement for taxi drivers to use Station Street. Worcester Road was a busy area of town in terms of night time economy with close proximity to various licensed premises, which resulted in a concentration of members of the public looking to use taxis at the end of the evening and the early hours of the morning.

As detailed at Appendix 2 to the report, an unofficial, temporary practise had been in place since December 2012, where taxis had parked along Station Street awaiting fares. This temporary practise had caused problems for residents on Station Street with noise and traffic congestion during the early hours of the morning.

The Licensing Officer had received an alternative proposal from Bromsgrove Taxi Association and supported by West Mercia Police, to extend Worcester Road Hackney Carriage Rank by a minimum of 7 additional spaces thereby increasing the total capacity to 10 spaces. These additional spaces would be available between 7.00 p.m. and 7.00 a.m.

Worcestershire County Council (WCC) Highways Department were in agreement with the proposal and if Members agreed the recommendations, as detailed in the report, WCC officers would undertake consultation on the Road Traffic Regulations Orders. Simultaneously Bromsgrove District Council officers would conduct a 28 day public consultation. Members were asked to note that the WCC consultation would take considerably longer than the Council's 28 day consultation.

The Licensing Manager responded to Members' questions in respect of the proposed additional taxi rank spaces affecting residents who resided on Station Street. Residents would lose a number of free parking spaces during the hours proposed. Members were informed that local residents would be included in the 28 day consultation process.

Councillor R. J. Shannon stated that he fully supported the consultation. However he expressed his and residents' concerns with the police's interim arrangement for taxi drivers to use Station Street and emphasised that Station Street had double yellow lines indicating no parking at any time. From the 30th May 2013 Bromsgrove District Council would be responsible for enforcing on street parking regulations instead of the police. He then raised the question, if Members agreed to the recommendations, as detailed in the report, would the interim arrangement for taxi drivers to use Station Street continue, until both consultation periods were over; and how would this impact on the Council who would be responsible for enforcement. The Principal Solicitor responded to Councillor Shannon and agreed that the points raised were valid and that she would seek clarification on the points raised.

Following further discussion Members agreed that they understood why the police had an interim arrangement for taxi drivers to use Station Street; to

ensure that members of the public were safely and quickly transported away from the town centre to prevent potential anti-social behaviour with large numbers of people leaving licensed premises at the same time.

RESOLVED:

- a) that the Worcester Road Hackney Carriage Rank be amended as proposed by Worcestershire County Council Highways Department;
- b) that the proposals to amend the rank be subject to public consultation for a period of 28 days; and
- c) that the outcome of the public consultation exercise be reported back to the Licensing Committee.

7/13 **LICENSING COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

Members were asked to consider the Licensing Committee Work Programme.

The Licensing Manager informed the Committee that in respect of Worcestershire Regulatory Services Licensing Committee's meeting and sharing best practice, this had not progressed as no further interest had been expressed. Members agreed that this item be taken off the work programme.

The Licensing Manager responded to Members' questions with regard to the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 and training for Committee Members with regard to the new Act.

The Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 maintains local authorities as the principal regulator of these industries. The Act creates two different types of scrap metal licence. One would be a site licence, the other a collector's licence. It gave local authorities the power to better regulate these industries by providing a power to refuse to grant a licence and revoke licences if the dealer was considered 'unsuitable'. The Licensing Manager highlighted that the Act had not been enacted. Once officers had received guidance on the Act a specific training session to cover the Act and the role of local authorities would be organised for Committee Members.

RESOLVED that, subject to the amendments as referred to in the pre-amble above, the Licensing Committee Work Programme be noted.

The meeting closed at 6.27 p.m.

Chairman