

GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23 OCTOBER 2024

Present: Cllrs Derek Beer (Chair), Louise Bown (Vice-Chair), Matt Bell, Les Fry, Jill Haynes, Jack Jeanes, Claudia Webb and Kate Wheller

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Lara Aintree (Senior Lawyer - Regulatory), John Newcombe (Service Manager for Licensing & Community Safety), Matthew Turnbull (Democratic and Electoral Services Apprentice), John Miles (Democratic Services Officer) and Megan Rochester (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence was received from Cllrs Emma Parker, David Morgan and Sarah Williams.

2. Minutes

No Minutes to approve as no meetings have been held for the General Licensing Committee.

3. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made at the meeting.

4. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

5. Street Trading Controls - Adoption of Schedule 4 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982

The Service Manager for Licensing and Community Safety introduced the report. He outlined that in order to control street trading in Dorset, Schedule 4 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 needed to be formally adopted, by way of resolution. The Legislation had previously been adopted by some of the predecessor Councils, however it was not Dorset area wide. He requested that the Committee make a recommendation to Full Council to pass a resolution to formally adopt Schedule 4 of the Act, which would enable licensing to implement a new Street Trading Policy.

Proposed by Cllr Jill Haynes, seconded by Cllr Matt Bell.

Decision:

- 1. That the Committee recommended that Full Council pass a resolution to formally adopt Schedule 4 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 (as amended) which shall apply throughout the Dorset Council administrative area with effect from 6 December 2024, or such later date as is agreed by Council.**
- 2. That all existing street trading delegations and designated streets remain in place subject to any future amendments.**

6. Street Trading Controls – Publication of New Street Trading Policy for Consultation

The Service Manager for Licensing and Community Safety presented the report. He explained that the Council was in need of a new Street Trading Policy and had existing policies in Weymouth and Portland, East Dorset and Purbeck and a small number of designations in West Dorset. The existing arrangements were quite complicated as there were a lot of different areas and designations in place with local markets, town councils and a number of prohibited streets and consent streets and the Council was overdue for a new policy.

He informed that the new Policy would give licensing the powers to deal with illegal street trading and potentially alleviate existing problems such as blocking the highway, selling counterfeit goods or trading without permission. The new policy would look at designating all of the streets in Dorset as Consent Streets and require anyone trading within those streets to apply for a consent to trade. The Policy proposals were drafts at this stage and therefore not set in stone. There would be a new fee and pricing structure and the proposal in the policy was to have 4 different types of consent such as, static trader, mobile trader, short term experimental and multiuser permission. The draft Policy would go out for public consultation which would begin at the start of November and run for 12 weeks. The process would involve listing all the responses, make any changes necessary, putting recommendations together and bring it back to this committee for decision. There may be a requirement to go to Overview Committee and an Equalities Impact Assessment was being drafted to review if any vulnerable groups or minorities would be impacted by the new policy.

Proposed by Cllr Les Fry, seconded by Cllr Claudia Webb.

Decision:

- 1. The committee agreed the proposed draft Street Trading Policy for public consultation.**
- 2. To authorise the Service Manager Licensing & Community Safety to make any further minor editorial changes to the proposed policy, prior to the document being issued for consultation.**

7. Increase in Taxi Fares for Dorset Zone

The Service Manager for Licensing and Community Safety covered the report. He explained that the cost of running a taxi had increased significantly with the cost of fuel and insurance. There had been quite a few years without any increases on the maximum tariff that could be charged, which had resulted in some big jumps previously. The trade had expressed that they preferred smaller, regular increases to keep up with the cost providing the service. Last year there was an increase in Hackney fares for Weymouth and this year there had been a request from Hackney Carriage operators in the rest of Dorset. He informed that this would not stifle competition as operators did not have to charge the maximum fare but would allow them to charge a little bit more where appropriate. A preliminary consultation with the trade had been conducted, in which they had been generally supportive. The public would then be consulted by way of public notice and once the responses came back to the Committee and if approved, the recommendation would then go to the Cabinet Portfolio Holder.

Proposed by Cllr Jill Haynes, seconded by Cllr Les Fry.

Decision:

That the Licensing Committee recommended to the Cabinet Member for Health and Housing that they:

- 1. Authorise the undertaking of the statutory public consultation on the suggested tariff increase.**
- 2. Agree that the new tariff will come into effect on 1 January 2025 if no objections are received after the public consultation.**

8. Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.

9. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 10.30 am

Chairman

.....