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BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

COMMITTEE OF THE LICENSING AUTHORITY

Held on Wednesday, 13 November 2019 at 10.00 am in
Norfolk Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham

PRESENT

Councillor M. Chapman-Allen (Chairman)	Cllr T. Kiddell
Mr K. Martin (Vice-Chairman)	Mrs L.H. Monument
Mr R. F. W. Brame	Mr P. Morton
Mr M. P. Brindle	Miss T. Taylor
Mr T. R. Carter	

Also Present

Mrs A. M. Webb	Mrs J. James
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In Attendance

Donna Hall	- Licensing & Business Support Manager
Sarah Wolstenholme-Smy	- Legal Services Manager (Deputy Monitoring Officer BDC)
Heather Lawson	- Licensing Team Leader (Shared)
Stephen James	- Communities & Environmental Services Manager
Ruth Tudge	- Democratic Services Officer

8/19 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

9/19 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bowes and Dowling and Dale.

10/19 URGENT BUSINESS

None.

11/19 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None.

12/19 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING

Councillor Alison Webb and Councillor Jane James.

ACTION

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13/19 UPDATE ON COMMITTEE TRAINING

The Licensing and Business Support Manager, Donna Hall confirmed there would be training for Committee Members in early 2020. The training would be delivered by the Environmental Health Consultancy, an in house training consultancy provider. This will be the APLH Personal Licence Course which is a statutory requirement for Personal Licence Holders. Dates would be circulated in the near future.

14/19 FEEDBACK AND DISCUSSION ON RECENT PANEL MEETINGS (IF ANY)

The Chair expressed her gratitude to Members for their enthusiasm in putting themselves forward to sit on the Licensing Hearing Panels.

15/19 CUMULATIVE IMPACT POLICY IN THETFORD

The Licensing and Business Support Manager presented the report and asked Members to consider whether Breckland Council should adopt the Cumulative Impact Policy (CIP) as part of the Statutory Licencing Act Policy.

The Licensing and Business Support Manager explained currently by Law if Breckland Council received an application for a Premises Licence, unless any objection was received by the relevant responsible authorities or person, the Licence would be issued. With the introduction of the CIP there would be a requirement for any applicant to explain how they would uphold the Licensing Objectives which were preventing crime and disorder, public safety, preventing public nuisance and protecting children from harm. If any objection was received the application would be heard at a Licensing Panel where the applicant would have the opportunity to prove they could uphold the objectives and if the Panel were not satisfied the Panel could agree not to grant the licence.

The CIP would take each application on a case by case basis and if the policy was adopted it would mean more scrutiny would be given to each application and more ownership from the business that they would agree to trade responsibly.

The CIP would be predominantly for new businesses and variations to existing Licences and if agreed would require a 12 week consultation period. Comments would be referred back to committee to be ratified and approved.

The Council had been asked to consider the adoption of the CIP as a request from the Safer Thetford Action Group (STAG) and Norfolk Police as they believed it would enable officers to be better equipped to deal with issues like street drinking.

The STAG Chairman, Mac Macdonald explained street drinking

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had become a real issue with additional consequences of anti-social behaviour. The majority of the issues could be linked to cheap alcohol sales from off-licences and they hoped to work closely with Breckland Council and local licensees to tackle the issues.

Sgt Simon Jones from Norfolk Police was in charge of a small team to help tackle the issues of street drinking and anti-social behaviour in the Thetford and Attleborough areas. He confirmed that street drinking was a real issue within Thetford Town Centre that had many consequences. Currently Community Protection Warnings and Criminal Behaviour Orders could be issued. He went on to advise that they had set up an Operation called Operation Dismount to deal with the problems and seen a slight reduction but the problem still continued. One main issue had been with off-sales premises selling cheap imported single sales of premium lager of 7% to 9% alcoholic content. Sgt Jones felt more work was needed with local Councillors, support services, referrals and at a Government level but felt if the CIP could be adopted it would be a step in the right direction of tackling some of the sales issues and going forward in adopting a multifaceted approach.

The Communities and Environmental Services Manager, Steve James explained Breckland Council had put in place a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in December 2017, which replaced the Designated Public Places Order – both prohibiting the consumption of alcohol in a designated area. The Police were undertaking operations as mentioned and this was within the designated PSPO area and enforcing against those that breach the order.

The Communities and Environmental Services Manager stated Breckland Council were committed to trying to design out places that those who street drink congregate such as the substantial work undertaken on Butten Island.

The Communities and Environmental Services Manager added that he was working with Ipswich Borough Council, and planned to attend a meeting with them in December where they would be investigating their methods of trying to tackle street drinking Ipswich Borough Council had also implemented a voluntary scheme for off licences to sign up to which means they agreed to limit the strength of the lager sold, therefore reducing the availability of high strength, low cost drinks. This was something Breckland Council are also discussing with Ipswich to understand if it was something that could be replicated within the Breckland Area. Ipswich Borough Council had also developed a successful multi agency approach.

The Communities and Environmental Services Manager went on to say that Breckland Council were mindful that those individuals undertaking street drinking were vulnerable people who may have multiple dependencies and in order to find a long term solution to

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the wider issues needed to be addressed. As a result Breckland Council were committed to working with Ipswich Borough Council, who for many years have led on multi-agency meetings that discussed the places street drinking occurred with a view to making them less attractive as well as discussing the individuals involved and offering the appropriate support to encourage behaviour change or to ensure appropriate enforcement action be taken.

He explained how it was a hugely complex issue that involved long term engrained behaviour of a group of individuals that would require a number of coordinated initiatives to address.

The Licensing Manager and Business Support Manager explained to the Committee that the CIP would only relate to a saturation of Licence Premises in one area and the impact that had on the licensing objectives. Public Health is not currently a licensing objective. The Licensing Manager said she would be supportive of a multi-agency approach but the Policy should be seen as separate.

Councillor Brame felt that as Police had suggested Breckland consulted on the CIP it would be one approach and maybe a lead then for Breckland to work together and adopt a multi-agency approach to tackle other issues.

Councillor Brame proposed the recommendations to implement the CIP which were seconded by Councillor Kiddell. The Chair put the options to the Committee.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) That the Committee of the Licensing Authority consider the request for a Cumulative Impact Policy under the Licensing Act 2003, for Thetford be approved.
- 2) That the Committee of the Licensing Authority decide to carry out a full public consultation on this, and if so identify the locality that the Policy will cover and the activities and premises types it will apply to be approved.

The Committee identified that the Draft Policy would cover the existing PSPO area in Thetford and would apply to Off Licence Premises only.

16/19 NEXT MEETING

The arrangements for the next meeting on Wednesday, 8 January 2020 were duly noted.

N.B. Subsequent to the meeting, the above meeting date was postponed and will now take place at 10am, Tuesday 28 January 2020, in the Norfolk Room, Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke, Dereham, NR19 1EE.

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The meeting closed at 11.20 am

CHAIRMAN