

Public Document Pack

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

COMMITTEE OF THE LICENSING AUTHORITY

Held on Wednesday, 20 October 2021 at 10.00 am in
The Breckland Conference Centre, Anglia Room, Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke,
Dereham, NR19 1EE

PRESENT

Cllr Marion Chapman-Allen (Chairman)	Cllr Susan Dowling
Cllr Tina Kiddell (Vice- Chairman)	Cllr Keith Martin
Cllr Tristan Ashby	Cllr Philip Morton
Cllr Claire Bowes	Cllr Taila Taylor
Cllr Mike Brindle	

Also Present

Cllr Gordon Bambridge

In Attendance

Josie Hoven	- Licensing Team Leader
Julie Britton	- Democratic Services Officer

Action By

38/21 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

Councillor Morton referred to the section in the Minutes in respect of lack of security staff under Minute No. 34/21 and asked if there had been any issues. Members were informed that there was still a shortage but as yet no problems had been reported.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

39/21 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

None received.

40/21 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

None.

41/21 DECLARATION OF INTEREST (AGENDA ITEM 4)

None declared.

42/21 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 5)

Councillor Bambridge, the Executive Member for Waste & Environment and the Portfolio Holder for Licensing was in attendance.

43/21 QUARTERLY TEAM UPDATE REPORT (AGENDA ITEM 6)

Action
By

Josie Hoven, the Licensing Team Leader provided members with an update on the work that the Licensing had been doing since the last meeting in July.

The Members who attended the previous meeting had met with Alan Goodall, the Animal Welfare Licensing Officer and an update was provided on the work that he had been carrying out. The first in-person meeting was held on 21 September 2021 which was a Norfolk and Suffolk Animal Welfare Licensing Officers meeting.

This meeting was supported by Sam Chapman-Allen, the Leader of the Council who gave a very supportive speech and was attended by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Licensing Committee. The meeting had been very well attended by both Norfolk and Suffolk Animal Welfare Licensing officers with presentations from the Chapelfield Veterinary Partnership, Norfolk Police Rural Crime Officers and the RSPCA.

The afternoon session was mainly a discussion about how to remove advertisements from unlicensed breeders and the next meeting was scheduled to be held in December 2021.

The Animal Welfare Licensing Officer continued to investigate unlicensed breeders and the complaints received. He had been providing advice and had issued a number of warnings and had issued new licences to five new breeders and had managed to put a stop to a number of illegal advertisements and trading. He had also recently completed an Animal Inspectors Course and the final certificate was awaited.

In respect of the Licensing Act, there had been a continual increase in Temporary Event Notices, which was encouraging as this highlighted the fact that people were now getting on with their lives including private weddings, village fetes and many forthcoming Christmas events.

The Licensing Officers had visited two new licensed events to check compliance with their licence conditions during the summer months. These included a glamping event and the Maui Wau festival, held in Dereham. A follow up meeting was held so that the Safety Advisory Group could discuss some of the minor complaints received with the organisers. Confirmation had since been received from the organiser of the Maui Wau festival that they would be returning to the Breckland district again in the summer 2022. Subsequently, a new web page had been created on the Licensing section of the website that showed larger scale events that the Licensing Team had been made aware of.

The Team continued to work with a number of other departments within the Council in respect of complex cases but not all were found to be in breach of their licensing conditions.

The Government had increased the limits on Temporary Events Notices (TENS) from 15 to 20 Notices per year and from 21 to 26 days for the years 2022 and 2023.

**Action
By**

The 7-week consultation on the new Taxi Policy was started by offering six sessions to the trade to go through the changes in the Policy; however, the attendance had been quite low, but the Team was satisfied that most drivers would have been informed of these changes via word of mouth. Applications for drivers had increased over the past few months which was encouraging given the number that had not renewed or had retired due to the pandemic. There was still a shortage of taxis available for the night-time economy in the towns particularly in Dereham and Thetford and it was hoped that new drivers would take on some of this trade.

The Government had also extended pavement licences from the end of September 2021 to the end of September 2022. Anyone with an existing licence must renew under this new scheme and any new applications could still be accepted.

In respect of Covid, the Licensing Team was actively listening to what the Plan B scenario could be and how that would impact all of the licensees.

A number of scrap metal site visits were being carried out with the Police later on in November and any feedback on this matter would be reported to Members at the next meeting.

From April 2022, changes were afoot to taxis, private hire, animal breeders and scrap metal licence applications. Most companies would have to complete a tax check with the HMRC and then provide the Team with a 9-character tax code that they would be provided with on completion of this new procedure. If not provided their licence could not be issued or renewed. The Licensing Team would be attending a training session with the HRMC shortly.

The Chairman thanked the Licensing Team Leader for her detailed update it had been very interesting particularly on the new HRMC tax check as she was well aware of the extortionate prices that some animal breeders were charging for puppies etc and then not declaring their earnings.

Councillor Morton asked if the Maui Wau festival was going to be held on the same site as this year as he felt that there could be some constraints with that site if more people attended. Members were informed that the organisers were looking to go back to the same site and as a few noise complaints had been received, the Environmental Protection Team would be looking at where stages would be sited and when the music would be stopped. The finer detail had yet to be sorted and hopefully any concerns addressed.

Councillor Martin asked about the scrap metal site visits. Members were informed that the Police had a week in November where they would be carrying out all types of visits; for Breckland, it would be licensed scrap metal sites to establish if all conditions on their licence were being met.

**Action
By**

44/21 TRAINING REQUIREMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 7)

The Chairman announced that many Members would have heard that James Button, a Solicitor an expert in Licensing training and legal advice, would be Breckland Council's licensing training advisor in future. For the long-standing Committee Members who attended the last training session in Kings Lynn Mr Button was an excellent trainer and those Members who were new to the Committee were encouraged to attend any forthcoming training sessions for the experience and to prepare them to sit on Panel meetings. All being well, face to face training sessions would commence in January 2022.

The Licensing Team Leader advised that the training would be held over two half day sessions. One day would be on the Licensing Act and the other on taxi licensing and would be about what Members needed to take into account as Licensing Committee Members as well as gaining a sound indication of the legislation.

It was agreed that one full day of training would be preferred with lunch provided to save on travel. A date would be confirmed in due course.

45/21 FEEDBACK AND DISCUSSION ON RECENT PANEL MEETINGS (AGENDA ITEM 8)

Councillor Kiddell, the Vice-Chairman had sat on two Panel meetings that went very well and was very informative. She assured Members that these meetings were attended by an Officer from the Legal Team and encouraged those Members who had not had the opportunity to attend any of these Panel meetings to come along and observe.

Councillor Morton and Councillor Ashby concurred with the above comments.

The Chairman explained the process and that the decisions were made in private session.

46/21 REVISED GAMBLING POLICY (STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES) (AGENDA ITEM 9)

The Licensing Team Leader provided Members with a detailed overview of the report.

Members were being asked to consider the Council's revised Gambling Policy (Statement of Principles) following the consultation that had been held from July to September 2021 and recommend the final approved Policy to Full Council for adoption.

The Chairman drew Members' attention to page 17 of the agenda pack that listed the number of gambling authorisations granted by Breckland Council.

Councillor Bambridge, the Portfolio Holder for Licensing felt that sensible amendments had been made to the Policy and was in full support of the Policy going forward.

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman thanked the Licensing Team Leader for this enormous piece of work.

Councillor Dowling asked how children were protected in pubs and restaurants who had such gambling machines. Members were informed that the licence came with conditions, and it was the responsibility of the manager of those premises to ensure that under 18s were not using the machines.

Councillor Bambridge stated that he had spent 2 days with one of the larger gambling organisations and he had been pleased with the policing and management of such matters.

The Chairman encouraged all Members to report any concerns to the Licensing Team.

RESOLVED to **RECOMMEND** to Council that the final approved Gambling Policy (Statement of Principles) be adopted.

47/21 NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 10)

The arrangements for the next meeting on Wednesday, 12 January 2022 at 10am in the Anglia Room were noted.

Action
By

The meeting closed at 11.05 am

CHAIRMAN