
BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

COMMITTEE OF THE LICENSING AUTHORITY

**Held on Wednesday, 19 October 2022 at 12.00 pm in
The Breckland Conference Centre, Anglia Room, Elizabeth House, Walpole Loke,
Dereham, NR19 1EE**

PRESENT

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

In Attendance

Josie Hoven	- Senior Licensing Officer
Julie Britton	- Democratic Services Officer

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8/22 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

The Minutes of the Committee of the Licensing Authority meeting held on 20 July 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

9/22 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ashby, Dale and Kiddle-Morris.

10/22 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

None.

11/22 DECLARATION OF INTEREST (AGENDA ITEM 4)

None declared.

**12/22 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING
(AGENDA ITEM 5)**

None.

13/22 QUARTERLY TEAM UPDATE (AGENDA ITEM 6)

Josie Hoven, the Senior Licensing Officer provided Members with the following update.

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Two large scale events had been held in the district this year, the 'Maui Wau'i' festival and the Sennowe Park festival both held near Dereham in the summer. A meeting was held beforehand in July with all partner agencies of the Safety Advisory Group at the Breckland Council offices. Site inspections were also held in the week leading up to each event and visits to both events by local authority officers were undertaken.

A wash-up meeting with partner agencies would be held in November with the two organisers to discuss any issues that occurred, and to establish whether both festivals intend to take place again in 2023.

A survey in respect of premises licences had been undertaken, the results of which showed that in 2021, Breckland Council received 16 new premises licences applications under the Licensing Act 2003. So far, in 2022, 9 new applications had been received. The Licensing Team was beginning to see a slight downward turn as it was not anticipated that 7 would be received by the end of this year.

In 2021, 13 premises licences had been surrendered and this year, in 2022 there had been 5. Some had been expected and had not been a surprise as these had been businesses that had been closed for some time, except for 2 that had been unexpected. A further update on such matters would be provided at the next meeting.

Temporary Event Notices (TENs) had exceeded expectations, with 78 being issued from 1 July 2022 but with a total of 303 being processed since the beginning of the year in January. Compared to last year, from the 1 January 2021 to October 2021, just 149 were issued, a massive increase in people requiring TENs for different types of events.

In respect of animal welfare, Members were informed that earlier this year, in July 2022, Alan Goodall, the Animal Welfare Officer had a work experience person with him for most of the week. This person was of school age who was hoping to go into the animal welfare field and positive feedback had been received from both parties.

The Animal Welfare Officer had also been working on the Banham Zoo inspection, this had been undertaken with pre-inspection work by the Animal Welfare Officer and Zoo Inspectors. There were a few issues that had to be remedied and another visit would take place to ensure that these issues had been rectified.

In the last quarter, three new licences had been issued under animal welfare and 4 more were currently in progress. Pre-application advice had been undertaken for 3 new businesses, this was a new service being offered by the Animal Welfare Officer and was aside from his normal applications. Alan had also attended a one-day licensing course at Colchester Zoo on reptiles,

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amphibians and exotic animals as many pet shops were now selling more species of this kind.

In respect of taxis, an officer had been conducting inspections on private hire operators' records and policies, once their renewals had been received to ensure Operators were compliant and meeting the necessary requirements. The Senior Licensing Officer was pleased to report that all were currently on track with a few minor issues to be sorted. Thirteen drivers and 63 vehicles had been licensed in the last 3 months and surprisingly 18 of those were for new vehicles including 5 new drivers.

The Department for Transport (DfT) had not as yet published its new guidance on vehicle specifications. Members were reminded of the consultation period that finished on 20 June 2022. The DfT website currently stated that they were analysing feedback and to keep checking for updates. This had delayed the Licensing Team reviewing Breckland's Vehicle Specification Policy that had not been reviewed since 2007, and it would not be good practice to do too much without having the new guidance in place.

A forthcoming discussion with the Environmental Health & Licensing Manager would take place shortly as to what could be done in the interim as there were issues in regard to window tints, an issue for the trade, due to the way cars were manufactured as most had tinted windows in the back of the vehicles. This matter would be highlighted at the forthcoming Norfolk-wide Licensing Officers Forum and also at the Regional Institute of Licensing meeting both of which were taking place in December. Members would be updated accordingly at the January meeting.

Scrap metal licences were due for renewal were due, of which 90% were due in the next quarter. Breckland had two new scrap metal sites that had been visited by the Police and the Senior Licensing Officer to check for compliance, but the new Licensing Officer would be taking over responsibility for renewals in due course.

Garage contracts for the Council's testing station for taxis and private hire vehicles would also be reviewed and would be asking again at the Norfolk Licensing Officers Forum whether any changes had been made to their policies.

The Business and Planning Act in respect of tables and chairs on the pavements had been extended until 30 September 2023, off-sales of alcohol had also been extended for those premises with on-sales that automatically had entitlement to off-sales until 11pm.

Councillor Kiddell, the Vice-Chairman thanked the Senior Licensing Officer for her comprehensive update and had been pleased to hear that the Team would be looking at tinted windows and the increase in testing stations.

As far as the testing stations were concerned, the Chairman asked

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what happened if other vehicles in the district used Breckland's testing stations.

The Senior Licensing Officer explained that the testing stations were MOT registered garages, and they were authorised to carry out mechanical tests for the Council's taxi fleet and could perform tests on any vehicle as a normal testing station would.

The Chairman also asked about illegal dog breeding practices and asked if the Animal Welfare Officer was on top of this now.

Members were informed that 3 new breeders had been licensed and that there had been a decline on breeders advertising puppies for sale. The Team was starting to see an increase in younger dogs being taken to re-homing centres due to the current cost of living crisis and it seemed as if puppies were not so popular now due to the cost to keep them. The Animal Welfare Officer investigated every complaint received and was doing a sterling job.

Councillor Morton referred to the increase in taxi fees and fares and asked if there had been any feedback received from Operators. Members were informed that the fees had been implemented and the meters were being recalibrated and checks would be put in place to ensure that everyone who needed to do that had been done. Overall, the consensus had been that all had been very pleased that the fares were increased, and no complaints had been received about the fees.

The Chairman asked Councillor Morton, a Ward Member for Dereham if he had received any feedback in respect of the 'Maui Wau'i' festival. Councillor Morton said that the event had moved to a different site so there had been less noise and no complaints.

In response to a question about whether a licence was required to keep snakes at home. Members were informed that this was not a requirement unless it was a Zoo or an exhibition or on the endangered animals list. Councillor Dowling said that she was aware of people breeding snakes and selling them on Facebook. The Senior Licensing Officer explained that if snakes were bred in a private dwelling it was dependent on how regularly the person was selling them and how much income was being gained each year.

The Chairman reminded Members that they were the Council's eyes and ears and to phone the Licensing Team if they had any concerns within their Wards.

Councillor Morton said he shared the Senior Licensing Officer's frustration about the lack of information in respect of the Vehicle Specification Policy and wondered if there was anything that could be done to establish what the Policy might be going forward as this matter had been on-going for a while.

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The Senior Licensing Officer explained that unfortunately there was nothing that could be done, the DfT must have received many responses and was taking a great deal of time to go through them all. The issue in regard to tinted windows would be taken to the aforementioned Forum to establish whether other authorities had already made any changes to their policies due to the fact that all new cars seemed to have tinted windows. Members would be updated accordingly in January 2023.

The Chairman thanked the Senior Licensing Officer for her update.

14/22 TRAINING REQUIREMENTS (IF ANY) (AGENDA ITEM 7)

Members were asked to inform the Senior Licensing Officer if any training was required in future.

15/22 FEEDBACK AND DISCUSSION ON RECENT PANEL MEETINGS (IF ANY) (AGENDA ITEM 8)

Just one Panel meeting had been held since the last meeting which was for a Temporary Event Notice that had the Police had objected to, but Members agreed to the application and the event went ahead with no complaints.

16/22 NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 9)

The arrangements for the next meeting on Wednesday, 11 January 2023 immediately following the Licensing Committee meeting that starts at 10am were noted.

The meeting closed at 12.05 pm

CHAIRMAN