

Minutes of the Special Licensing and Safety Committee

Wednesday 7th November, 2018 at 6.00 p.m.
in Committee Room 2, The Council House, Dudley

Present:-

Councillor K Finch (Vice-Chair in the Chair)
Councillors J Baines, H Bills, M Evans, A Goddard, S Keasey, P Miller, C Perks, A Taylor, E Taylor and S Waltho.

Officers:-

B Hughes – Assistant Team Manager Waste and Licensing Enforcement, S Smith – Team Manager (Licensing and Waste Enforcement) (Place Directorate); R Clark – Principal Solicitor and H Shepherd - Democratic Services Officer (Chief Executives Directorate).

6 **Apology for Absence**

An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor C Elcock.

7 **Declarations of Interest**

No member made a declaration of interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

8 **Minutes**

Resolved

That, the minutes of the Licensing and Safety Committee meeting held on 24th May, 2018, be approved as a correct record and signed.

9 **Review of the Gambling Policy (Statement of Principles)**

A report of the Strategic Director Place was submitted for the Committee to review the responses to the consultation of the Council's Gambling Policy (Statement of Principles).

Resolved

- (1) That the responses to the consultation and review of the Council's Gambling Policy (Statement of Principles), be noted.

- (2) That the Cabinet and Council be recommended to approve the revised Gambling Policy (Statement of Principles).
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10 **Section 141 Policing and Crime Act 2017 Assessment of Cumulative Impact Policy 2018**

The Committee considered a report on the review of the Cumulative Impact Policy that was currently in place in Stourbridge Town Centre.

The Assistant Team Manager Waste and Licensing Enforcement presented the report in detail and in doing so stated that it was now a statutory requirement to review and assess any Cumulative Impact Policy on a three yearly basis.

In referring to the four licensing objectives, the Assistant Team Manager Waste and Licensing Enforcement stated that although not formally adopted by Government, a fifth objective promoting Public Health was also considered whilst assessing a Cumulative Impact Policy.

Following the presentation of the report, Members referred to the reasoning for the initial implementation of the Cumulative Impact Policy in Stourbridge Town Centre and commented positively on the impact the policy had had on the town since it became operational. Some Members were of the view that the policy should remain in force.

In referring to the cumulative impact policy legislation, a Member expressed concern in regard to the lack of statistical information presented in the documentation and lack of evidence to support the Cumulative Impact Policy to remain in Stourbridge town. The Member, although acknowledged that a serious incident had occurred at a licensed premise in Stourbridge during 2017, which had resulted in a fatality, commented that there was no evidence to prove that this was an alcohol related crime.

The Member expressed his disappointment that only a speculative summary had been provided by West Midlands Police with no current crime statistics or details in respect of the nature of crimes reported over the three year period, therefore no evidence to prove that the increase in crimes referred to, related to licensed premises. The lack of representations made in respect of environmental health concerns and complaints received by the Local Authority were also noted. The Member stated that since the initial implementation of the Cumulative Impact Policy, the industry had significantly declined and although a policy could have a positive impact on an area, it could also have the reversed affect, therefore evidence was required to ensure that the Cumulative Impact Policy was still relevant.

The Assistant Team Manager Waste and Licensing Enforcement stated that he would convey the comments and concerns raised by Members to West Midlands Police and other partner organisations. At the request of the Committee it was agreed that timely statistical information and supporting evidence would be included in future reports.

Members reiterated their support for the Cumulative Impact Policy to remain operational in the Stourbridge area and emphasised that a Cumulative Impact Policy did not prevent new licensed premises from opening in the area but ensured that premises operated better.

Resolved

That the Cabinet and Council be recommended to approve the retention of the Cumulative Impact Policy in respect of the specified area of Stourbridge Town Centre, as identified in Appendix B of the report submitted.

The meeting ended at 6.35 p.m.

CHAIR