

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM 14

REPORT TO CABINET

16 MARCH 2017

**REPORT OF SENIOR
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

Access, Communities and Community Safety – Lead Cabinet Member - Councillor Steve Nelson

LICENSING SERVICE

1. Summary

To inform Cabinet of the progress made by the Licensing Service over the last twelve months.

2. Recommendations

1. Members to note the progress made by the Licensing Service over the past 12 months.
2. Members to note the work identified which will enhance the Licensing Service further.

3. Reasons for the Recommendation(s)/Decision(s)

To keep Cabinet Members informed of work and planned activity within the Licensing Service.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members) should consider whether they have a personal interest in any item, as defined in **paragraphs 9 and 11** of the Council's code of conduct and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with and/or taking account of **paragraphs 12 - 17** of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 16** of the code, in any business of the Council he/she must then, **in accordance with paragraph 18** of the code, consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest and the business:-

- affects the members financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code, or
- relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the member or any person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code.

A Member with a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, may attend the meeting but must not take part in the consideration and voting upon the relevant item of business. However, a member with such an interest may make representations, answer

questions or give evidence relating to that business before the business is considered or voted on, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under a statutory right or otherwise (**paragraph 19** of the code)

Members may participate in any discussion and vote on a matter in which they have an interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, where that interest relates to functions of the Council detailed in **paragraph 20** of the code.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

It is a criminal offence for a member to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest (and where an appropriate dispensation has not been granted) **paragraph 21** of the code.

Members are required to comply with any procedural rule adopted by the Council which requires a member to leave the meeting room whilst the meeting is discussing a matter in which that member has a disclosable pecuniary interest (**paragraph 22** of the code)

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

16 MARCH 2017

**REPORT OF SENIOR
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

LICENSING SERVICE

SUMMARY

To inform Cabinet of the progress made by the Licensing Service over the last twelve months, and the planned activity going forward.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Members to note the progress made by the Licensing Service over the past 12 months.
2. Members to note the work identified which will enhance the Licensing Service further.

DETAIL

1. Over the past 12 months the Licensing Service has undertaken a period of review and progression. Clear local policies have been developed in line with legislation and consultation with users, including:
 - The Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Policy January 2016
 - The Licensing Act 2003 Statement of Licensing Policy January 2016
 - Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Licensing Principles January 2016
2. There is strong evidence that this policy foundation is leading to positive outcomes. The Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy has removed 41 accident damaged vehicles from the fleet, trained over 500 drivers in safeguarding, encouraged an additional 49 new vehicles to be registered that comply to Euro 5 emissions, and following intelligence and complaints 19 drivers have been revoked or refused licenses. Training in safeguarding for Stockton licensees, door staff and those involved in the night time economy has been delivered to 80 attendees.
3. Licensing administration and business processes have been reviewed to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of managing the issue of all licenses, permits and registrations. Improvements have been made to the licensing website as a proactive pre-application advice channel, and on-line application / payment portal. Improvements in the use of technology have been made including looking at the digitalisation of the Licensing Service and mobile working for officers
4. Intelligence routes have been identified and have been improved between the Licensing Service and the Police, and the Licensing Service and the Stockton CCTV Centre, with an increase in contact and joint working between all. In addition work assessing how this intelligence is being used and ensuring it is used in a risk assessed prioritised way is ongoing. Compliance activity based on this intelligence is supporting the consideration of developing a

purple flag scheme for Stockton's licensed premises within the Stockton Town Centre area. An event for Stockton's licensees, door staff and those involved with the night time economy will be planned, where information will be presented to attendees on the corporate vision of the Stockton Town Centre area, with a view to getting all concerned on board to improve services and promote the area.

5. Officers, Committee Members, Members and the Cabinet Member for Access, Communities and Community Safety completed a comprehensive four day training package provided by the Institute of Licensing. The four sessions covered Licensing Committees, Taxi Licensing, Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Street Trading & Street Collections.
6. As an outcome of the training sessions a number of areas requiring further work were identified:
 - The implementation of two separate Committees to deal with different parts of the Licensing regime. A table showing the functions of the two Committees is attached as Appendix 1.
 - The need to consider the Licensing Services current consultation practices against actual consultation requirements in relation to the Licensing Act 2003 and applications received.
 - To look at how Officers present Committee reports to members and for Officers to include any recommendations in those reports.
 - To research the potential benefits of late night levy's which have been introduced by other Local Authorities.
 - To research the work which has been carried out between other Local Authorities and alcohol retailers to work together in tackling street drinking and associated crime caused by this.
 - To revisit the implementation of a Licensing Service penalty points system and licence suspension, as tools to ensure compliance of Private Hire Operators, Licensed Drivers and Licensed Vehicles and therefore improve conduct and service.
 - Working with Private Hire Operators to encourage appropriate vetting procedures for unlicensed staff who have access to potentially sensitive information (i.e. call takers).
 - Review of the current codes of conduct for licensed drivers.
 - A Scrutiny review of gambling to understand the impact of Gambling in the community.
 - The implementation of returns information from Street Collections, including the percentage of the collection which will go to charity, to be made available to the public via the website.
 - To produce a set of standard procedures for the Committee process to ensure continued professionalization of the delivery of Committees
7. It is proposed the aforementioned work will be progressed over the next Municipal Year, further updates will be provided to Cabinet as appropriate and necessary.

COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

No implications

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

RISK ASSESSMENT

This matter is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

COUNCIL PLAN POLICY PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES

The areas of activity covered in this report will positively support the community safety priorities detailed in the Council Plan for Licensing Services.

CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

None

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Education related?

No

Background Papers

None

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors

Not specific to Wards

Property

Not applicable