

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the LICENSING COMMITTEE held in the Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 26 October 2011.

PRESENT: Councillor J W Davies – Chairman.

Councillors K M Baker, I J Curtis, J J Dutton, R S Farrer, G J Harlock, C R Hyams, T D Sanderson and S M Van De Kerkhove.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors A R Jennings, Mrs P A Jordan and A J Mackender-Lawrence.

### 4. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 26th October 2010 and 18th May 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 5. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

### 6. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

that Councillor J W Davies be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

**Councillor J W Davies in the Chair.**

### 7. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

that Councillor G J Harlock be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Panel for the ensuing municipal year.

### 8. APPOINTMENT OF SUB-COMMITTEES

The Committee received a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) inviting them to amend the existing Sub-Committee compilation arrangements from nine different combinations to any combination of three Members of the Licensing Committee. Members were advised that the change would simplify existing arrangements thereby

affording greater flexibility and Member availability to attend Sub-Committees, which were often required at short notice to determine applications, variations or reviews of licences where representations had been made.

RESOLVED

that the Licensing Committee establish Sub-Committees comprising of any three Members of the Licensing Committee.

## **9. LICENSING ACT 2003 AMENDMENTS**

With the aid of a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Committee was provided with an overview of a number of amendments to the Licensing Act 2003 contained within the new Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, which had gained Royal Assent on 15th September 2011.

Members were advised that the aim of the new Act would be to overhaul the Licensing Act in order to give local authorities and the Police much stronger powers to remove licences from, or to refuse to grant licenses to, any problem premises.

The Committee was made aware of the many changes to the Act which would include making the licensing authority a responsible authority, giving them the right to make representations and initiate a review of a premises licence or club premises certificate in their own right. It would also include the removal of the vicinity and interested party test, which would enable any person to make representations in relation to the grant or variation of licences, which could impact on the number of hearings.

The Committee was informed that the proposed changes were likely to increase both the financial resources required and staff workload, although the extension of the preparation of the Statement of the Licensing Policy from three to five years would be beneficial, alongside the ability to apply fees on a full cost recovery basis.

Having been advised that the majority of the Act was expected to come into force in late Spring 2012, with late night levy and fees following in the Autumn, the Committee

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report be noted.

## **10. DEREGULATION OF ENTERTAINMENT**

With the aid of a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Committee has noted the details of a consultation exercise being undertaken by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

Members were advised that the aim of the consultation was to gain the views of the public on proposals to deregulate regulated

entertainment wherever possible, thereby reducing bureaucratic burdens and costs. It was expected that the proposals would be of interest to a wide range of interested parties, including charities, schools, the music industry and licensed premises. Licensing authorities and other interested parties would be issued with guidance prior to any changes coming into force.

Chairman