
Licensing and Protection Panel

Report of the meeting held on 24th June 2014

Matter for Decision

1. FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2014/15

The Panel has considered an executive summary of the proposed Service Plan for Food Law Enforcement for 2014/5. The Plan has been developed to comply with the requirements of the Food Standards Agency and incorporates the aims and objectives of the service, the resources available and a review of work undertaken during the previous year.

Approval of the Plan is reserved to Council and appears elsewhere on the Council Agenda.

Matters for Information

2. HEALTH AND SAFETY ENFORCEMENT PLAN 2014/15

The Panel has endorsed the content of the Service Plan for Health and Safety Enforcement for 2014/15. The Plan has been developed in accordance with guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executive and outlines the aims and objectives of the service, resources available and a review of the work undertaken in the previous year.

The Plan has been prepared against a background of staffing changes within the Environmental and Community Services Division and changes to the national health and safety agenda. The current Plan varies from previous plans in that it includes a reduction in unannounced premises inspections and an increased commitment to education and advisory work. There is also increased pressure to generate income for the service. The Panel has been assured that providing staffing remains at the current level it would be sufficient to meet the demands of the service.

3. LICENSING COMMITTEE – REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The Panel has considered a report reviewing the effectiveness of the Licensing and Protection Panel/Licensing Committee.

The review, which was undertaken at the request of the Corporate Governance Panel, was carried out by a working group which comprised the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Panel and Councillors R J West and I J Curtis, together with Officers who regularly support the Panel/Committee in its various forms.

Although concluding that the Panel/Committee is effectively discharging its responsibilities, the Panel has been recommended to consider whether some existing practices could be amended to increase the involvement of Panel members in Sub-Groups and Sub-Committees.

Mindful of the Special Responsibility Allowances received by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, the Panel concluded that there should be no change to the existing arrangements provided this does not impede the involvement of other Members of the Panel should they wish to become more involved.

The Panel requested further clarification with regard to the requirement for political balance on Sub-Groups and Sub-Committees and has subsequently been informed of the legal requirements.

4. FEES AND CHARGES

The Panel has noted a revised schedule of fees and charges for licences administered by the Council for the period 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015. With the exception of taxi licensing, which has been frozen, the charges will increase by 2.5% in order to cover the costs of the service.

5. DELEGATIONS

In the interests of cost, speed and efficiency the Panel has authorised the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to determine unopposed applications for the grant renewal, variation or transfer of licenses for sex shops, sex cinemas and Sexual Entertainment Venues. The Panel will continue to determine applications where objections are received.

6. REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

The Panel has appointed a number of representatives to outside organisations for the ensuing Municipal Year.

7. LICENSING AND PROTECTION APPLICATIONS SUB-GROUP

The Panel has noted details of the four meetings of the Applications Sub-Group that took place between 27th January and 20th May 2014.

J W Davies
Chairman