

Annual Licensing Committee

Thursday 6th June 2024

10.00 am



Report of: Service Director – Legal & Democratic Services.

Title: Annual Business Report 2024/25

Ward: All

Officer Presenting Report: Democratic Services

Recommendation

See Recommendations as set out in each paragraph.

Summary

To agree the Annual Business for Municipal Year 2024/25.

A. Membership of Committee.

To note the following members were appointed at Annual Full Council AGM at its meeting on Tuesday 21 May 2024 to serve on the Licensing Committee for 2024/25 Municipal Year with the Chair and Vice-Chair elected at Full Council AGM as indicated:

1. Cllr Fabian Breckels (appointed as Chair)
2. Cllr James Crawford
3. Cllr Richard Eddy
4. Cllr Emma Edwards
5. Cllr Paul Goggin
6. Cllr Fi Hance
7. Cllr Cam Hayward
8. Cllr Tim Kent
9. Cllr Susan Kollar
10. Cllr Louis Martin
11. Cllr Guy Poultney (appointed as Vice Chair)
12. Cllr Serena Ralston
13. Cllr Izzy Russell
14. Cllr Kirsty Tait
15. Cllr Stephen William

B. Confirmation of Chair – Municipal Year 2024/25

- **To note the appointment of Councillor Fabian Breckels as Chair of for 2024/25 Municipal Year.**

C. Confirmation of Vice - Chair – Municipal Year 2024/25

- **To note the appointment of Councillor Guy Poultney as Vice - Chair of the Committee for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.**

D. Terms of Reference.

- **As set out in Appendices A & B.**

E. Dates and Times of Meetings.

- **To note that meetings of the Licensing Committee as required and its Sub Committees will be held weekly or biweekly depending on demand throughout the forthcoming municipal year, all scheduled for a 10.00 am start.**

F. Establishment of Special Purposes-Sub Committee.

- **In accordance with Licensing committee Procedure Rule (LCR) 1(iii) the annual meeting needs to establish a special purposes sub-committee comprising the Chair of the Licensing**

committee, its Vice chair and one other committee member. Its terms of reference must enable it to deal with any matters of business which would ordinarily be referred to the next ordinary meeting of the committee but which are, in the opinion of the Licensing Team Leader (in consultation with the Chair) of such urgency that they cannot await the date of the next ordinary meeting.

Recommended.

- **That the Licensing Committee establish a Licensing (Special Purposes) Sub-Committee with the terms of reference set out in Appendix B;**
- **that the membership of the special purposes sub-committee comprise the Chair, the Vice Chair and one other member;**
- **that the committee appoint from amongst its number, one other member to serve on the sub-Committee.**

G. Establishment of other Sub-Committees.

LCR1(iv) requires that the annual meeting establish any other sub committees considered necessary and in respect of each of them

- (a) agree the membership;
- (b) agree the terms of reference.

In accordance with the Licensing Act 2003 sub committees may be established but they must comprise no more and no less than three members each.

At its meeting on 9 February 2005 the Licensing Committee established Licensing (Hearings) sub committees comprising any three members of the Licensing committee. That meeting appointed each member of the Licensing Committee to serve on any such sub-committee (of three) which is convened so as to include him/her in its membership.

It is recommended that this year the Licensing committee continue with this approach.

The recommended terms of reference are set out in Appendix B.

Recommended

- (a) **that the Licensing committee establish Licensing (Hearings) sub committees comprising any three members of the Licensing committee and that each member of the licensing committee be appointed to serve on any such sub-committee which is convened so as to include him or her in its membership; and**
- (b) **that each of the sub committees so established shall have the terms of reference as set out in Appendix A**

H. Delegations to Sub-Committees and Officers.

Section 10 of the Licensing Act 2003 allows the Licensing committee to arrange for the discharge of any functions exercised by it –

- a) by a sub-committee established by it, or
- b) subject to certain statutory limitations, by an officer of the licensing authority

Section 10 of the Licensing Act 2003 also applies to certain Gambling Act 2005 functions that fall within this Committee's terms of reference, that is, those gambling functions that are referred to in paragraph 3 of the Committee's terms of reference.

In previous years the Committee conferred delegated power on each of the sub committees it established to discharge all functions falling within their terms of reference (which for the avoidance of doubt includes all matters ancillary thereto). It is recommended the annual meeting do the same in respect of any sub committees it decides to establish having considered this report.

The functions referred to in paragraphs 2 and 4 of the committee's terms of reference are governed by different law as far as the ability to delegate the decision making process is concerned. Those matters are delegated to the Committee by the full council in exercise of its powers of delegation under section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972. Under that section the Committee itself enjoys the power to delegate those matters to one or more of its sub committees and/or to an officer of the council.

It is anticipated that some applications made under the paragraph 2 and 4 functions may prompt the right to be heard. Therefore, whilst it is anticipated that most decisions connected with the discharge of these functions will fall to be made by a delegated officer, provision has been made in the recommended Terms of Reference of the hearings sub committees for applications to be referred to such a sub-committee by a delegated officer. This particular provision also enables applications under the Licensing or Gambling Act to be decided by a sub-committee notwithstanding the law does not absolutely require this (e.g. because there are no representations). Whilst it is not expected this will often be utilised it does enable matters to be given a public airing where that is judged to be reasonable and appropriate.

Officer delegations.

In accordance with LCR1 the annual meeting should review the delegations to officers. The Committee's responsibilities have greatly expanded since its first annual meeting and this report recommends comprehensive delegations to sub committees and officers covering the vast majority of the Committee's responsibilities whilst continuing to ensure that:

- i. Officers are not authorised to make any decision which by law may only be made by Members meeting as a Committee or duly authorized sub-committee; and
- ii. The delegations reflect the policy of Bristol City Council with regard to the decision whether certain representations are to be disregarded by virtue of being judged to be frivolous or vexatious.

Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005

In the discharge of its licensing functions the committee must have regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State or the Gambling Commission (as appropriate) and to the Council's own adopted statements of policy. The recommendations in such national guidance reflect the fact that there are many decisions which the law simply does not allow an officer to take. For example an officer cannot determine an application for a premises licence under either Act where relevant representations have been made.

The Council's published statements of licensing policy recommend that the Licensing Committee follow the delegations recommended in national guidance but that, for the reasons set out in the Council's policy statements, the committee should depart from that guidance in respect of decisions about whether or not representations are frivolous or vexatious.

In previous years the committee has effected its delegations in accordance with the Council's adopted statement of licensing policy and it is recommended that this practice should continue for Gambling Act functions as well as for the Licensing Act functions. This is covered in recommendation 1 below.

In respect of the functions referred to in paragraphs 2 and 4 of the Committee's Terms of Reference the Committee will know that the full council has itself effected delegations to the relevant Director in Part 3 of its constitution. The Committee is informed that the relevant Directors have, in line with what is recommended in that constitution, made arrangements under which appropriate subordinate officers assist them in the discharge of these tasks on behalf of the Council as a whole. It is recommended that the Committee note and approve these arrangements.

It is therefore recommended that:

In respect of the functions referred to in paragraphs 1 and 3 of its Terms of Reference the Committee makes the following arrangements: subject to the limitations set out in (a) and (b) below officers occupying the following posts:-

**Regulatory and City Events Manager
Licensing Team Leader
Senior Licensing Officer
Licensing Officer
Trading Standards Team Leader
Senior Trading Standards
Officer
Trading Standards Officer
Trading Standards Investigator**

Senior Environmental Health Officer (Public Health Services)

Environmental Health Officer (Public Health Services)

Principal/Team Leader/Lead Environmental Health Officer (Public Health Services) to include Lead Officers in each of the following specialisms:

Food Safety

Pollution Control and Pest Control

Port Health

Health and Safety

Food Safety and Infectious Disease control

Assistant Environmental Health Officer (Public Health Services)

Senior Pollution Control Officer

Pollution Control Officer

Public Health Services Manager

Neighbourhood Enforcement and Street

Scene Manager

Neighbourhood Enforcement Team Leader

Neighbourhood Enforcement Senior Officer

Neighbourhood Enforcement Officer

are authorised to discharge any function which in law may be discharged by an officer of the licensing authority.

Limitations

(a) The power to decide whether representations are frivolous or vexatious may only be made in respect of applications that officers would be empowered to proceed to determine themselves should it be decided that the representation under consideration is either frivolous or vexatious.

(b) An Officer may not decide whether to grant or refuse an application under the Licensing Act 2003 for a personal license in any case where there are unspent convictions.

- In respect of the functions referred to in paragraphs 2 (a) and (b), 4(a) – (f) and 4(g) to (i) inclusive of the Committee's Terms of Reference the committee notes the arrangements made by the full council and the delegated Director under which his subordinate officers assist him in discharging functions on behalf of the Council. The Committee approves the continuation of such arrangements as if they had been made directly and particularly by this committee
- For the avoidance of doubt the Service Director - Legal Services and officers within his team who assist him in this task shall continue to be authorised to institute and defend legal proceedings of any kind falling within this Committee's terms of reference.
- The possession of delegated powers shall not prevent a delegated officer bringing a matter before an appropriate body of Members but this should only be done following consultation with the Chair of the Licensing committee.

Authorisations in respect of Major Events taking place at Ashton Court 2024/2025

A number of major events take place at Ashton Court each year. These include the Balloon Fiesta and major festivals. This is in the jurisdictional district of North Somerset. One of the key entry points is via Kennel Lodge Road. This road and the surrounding network are in the jurisdictional area of Bristol City Council.

Historically, each year there are a number of relatively minor enforcement problems associated with the event within the Bristol City boundary such as illegal street trading and on one occasion the illegal sale of alcohol from a van.

Whilst Bristol City Council do have an enforcement presence throughout the event, to increase regulatory capacity and deployment, over recent years officers from North Somerset have been authorised by Bristol City Council to act on its behalf for the duration of the event.

At this point in time it is not known which officers will be deployed by North Somerset Council for these events. Therefore for the purpose of the authorization, these will be determined in accordance with the provisions of S.113 of the Local Government Act 1972 enabling staff from one authority to be placed at the disposal of another is in place for this purpose.

Authorisations in respect of other Licensing functions such as Street Trading fall outside the scope of the Licensing Committee but will be secured if and when necessary. Officers request that this authorization is in place for the next year.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1. That all sub committees established by the Licensing Committee shall have delegated authority to discharge all functions falling within their terms of reference;**
- 2. That the Committee approves delegations to officers as recommended in paragraph H of this report (including North Somerset Officers); and**
- 3. That for the avoidance of doubt any authority conferred upon a sub committee or an officer in connection with the discharge of any function includes the power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of the function concerned.**

Public Sector Equality Duties

Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following “protected characteristics”: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:

- i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.

- ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --
 - remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);
 - encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to –
 - tackle prejudice; and
 - promote understanding.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal

Not applicable

Financial

(a) Revenue

Not applicable

(b) Capital

Not applicable

Land

Not applicable

Personnel

Not applicable

Appendices:

Appendix A – Terms of Reference - Licensing Committee.

Appendix B – Terms of Reference – Licensing Sub-Committees.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers: None

Terms of Reference – Licensing Committee.**Appendix A****Overview**

Functions relating to licensing and gambling as set out below.

Licensing Act 2003 (“the 2003 Act”)

1. All those matters relating to the discharge of licensing functions that are referred to the committee by virtue of section 7(1) of the 2003 Act;
2. Other functions which full Council has arranged for the Licensing Committee to discharge, namely:
 - a) Power to grant permission for provision etc of services, amenities, recreation and refreshment facilities on the highway and related powers (sections 115E, 115F & 115K of the Highways Act 1980);
 - b) Power to make an order identifying a place as a designated public place for the purposes of police powers in relation to alcohol consumption (section 13(2) of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 (c.16));
 - c) Power to make or revoke an order designating a locality as an alcohol disorder zone (Section 16 Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006);
 - d) The Council’s functions under the third schedule to the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 (as amended); and
 - e) Powers to make and cancel closure notices; make applications for closure orders; issue certificates of termination of closure orders; defend applications for the discharge of closure orders; appeal against the refusal to make closure orders; enforce closure orders; and prosecute for obstruction of authorised officers or for offences in connection with closure orders (sections 19 to 28) of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001);

Gambling Act 2005 (“the 2005 Act”)

3. All of those functions under Part 8 of the 2005 Act that are delegated to the Committee by virtue of section 154 of the 2005 Act;
4. Other gambling functions which the full Council has arranged for the Licensing Committee to discharge, namely:
 - a) Duty to comply with requirements to provide information to the Gambling Commission (s.29 of the 2005 Act);
 - b) Functions relating to exchange of information (s.30 of the 2005 Act);
 - c) Functions relating to occasional use notices (s.39 of the 2005 Act);
 - d) Power to designate officer of a licensing authority as an Authorised Person for a purpose relating to premises (section 304 of the 2005 Act);
 - e) Power to make order disapplying section 279 or 282(1) of the Act in relation to specified

premises (s. 284 of the 2005 Act);

- f) Power to exchange information (section 350 of the 2005 Act);
- g) Power to institute criminal proceedings (section 346 of the 2005 Act);
- h) Functions relating to the determination of fees for premises licences (the Gambling (Premises Licence Fees) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007 (S.I. 2007/479));
- i) Functions relating to the registration and regulation of small society lotteries (Part 5 of Sch 11 to the 2005 Act);

Business and Planning Act 2020

5. Functions relating to pavement licences (sections 1 to 7 of the 2020 Act).

Code of Conduct

The Constitution contains a supplement to the members' code of conduct which deals with the role of elected members in relation to licensing committee hearings (see part 5 of the constitution).

Appendix B

TERMS OF REFERENCE - Licensing (Hearings) Sub-Committees

Any three members of the Licensing committee may constitute a Licensing (Hearings) Sub-Committee having the following terms of reference:

To discharge the following functions:-
Under the Licensing Act 2003:

1. Determination of application for premises licence where representations have been made;
2. Determination of application for provisional statement where presentations have been made;
3. Determination of application for variation of premises licence where representations have been made;
4. Determination of application to vary designated premises supervisor following police objections;
5. Determination of application for transfer of premises licence following police objections;
6. Consideration of police objection made to interim authority notice;
7. Determination of application for club premises certificate where representations have been made;
8. Determination of application to vary club premises certificate where representations have been made;
9. Decision to give counter-notice following police objection to temporary event notice;
10. Determination of application for grant of personal licence following police objections;
11. Determination of application for renewal of personal licence following police objections;

12. Revocation of personal licence where convictions come to light after grant etc;
13. Determination of application for review of premises licence in a case where relevant representations (within the meaning of Section 52 (7) of the Act) have been made;
14. Determination of application for review of club premises certificate in a case where relevant representations (within the meaning of Section 88 (7)) have been made;