

LICENSING AND SAFETY COMMITTEE
03 JULY 2008
8.00 - 9.15 PM



Present:

Councillors Brunel-Walker (Chairman), Mrs Ryder (Vice-Chairman), Baily, Beadsley, Brossard, Browne, Finch, Leake, Osborne and Thompson

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Mrs Barnard, Burrows, Kendall, Virgo and Ms Wilson

Also present:

Laura Driscoll, Licensing Team Leader
Priya Patel, Democratic Services Officer
Rob Sexton, Head of Trading Standards & Services
David Steeds, Head of Environmental Health & Safety

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

5. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing and Safety Committee on 31 January 2008 and 21 May 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6. Health and Safety Law Enforcement Plan 2008-09

The Committee received a report that asked them to note the outturn report and adopt the Health and Safety Law Enforcement Plan as set out in the appendices of the report attached to the agenda.

The Head of Environmental Health highlighted that during 2007/08, the following work had been carried out:

- 75 businesses had been inspected and 102 other related visits had been made
- 185 complaints and enquiries had been responded to
- 228 accident notifications had been investigated
- formal notifications on how businesses should comply to legislation had been sent to 47 businesses.

It was reported that some of the actions included in the Plan had already been completed or were being progressed.

Members queried whether it was possible for people who had concerns about particular premises to make anonymous calls to the team. Officers reported that this was acceptable and that all calls would be investigated.

In response to members' queries it was reported that returns were made each year by the Council to the Health & Safety Executive. The health and safety enforcement service scored 2 to 3, meaning that statutory requirements were frequently met and that guidance was often fully met. It was noted that the team had staff shortfalls over the year and had employed agency staff. Councillor Beadsley asked that he be sent an e-mail explaining this score more fully.

It was reported that the Council had for a second year won the ROSPA gold award for health and safety. The Committee congratulated officers for their work to achieve this award.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Committee;

- i) noted the performance outturn report as set out in Appendix A of the report and
- ii) adopted the Health and Safety Law Enforcement Plan as set out in Appendix B for 2008-09, noting the particular focus on topic inspections and the inspection strategies for high risk businesses to ensure that resources were appropriately targeted.

7. **Annual Report 2007-08**

The Committee considered a report that detailed activities carried out by the Licensing Section during the municipal year 2007-08.

The Head of Trading Standards and Services reported that attached as Annex A of the agenda papers, was a list of licences, registrations, permits and consents that had been issued or processed by the Licensing Section within the last year. This was an indication of the number of transactions that the Section had with local businesses to enable those businesses to operate and for the users to feel confident and safe in their use.

He highlighted that a significant amount of work had been carried out by the Section to ensure that appropriate conditions were added to the numerous applications for outside smoking shelters following the introduction of the no smoking legislation.

He reported that the Licensing Policy seemed to be working well following its review in the previous year. The Licensing Policy would now remain in place until 2011 and would be used to carry through the redevelopment of the Town Centre.

The Chairman recognised the significant volume of work that had been carried out by the team over the year and thanked officers for the excellent standard of work that had been carried out despite being short staffed.

The Chairman noted that the Licensing Policy had taken a great deal of time to put together and the fact that it was operating well demonstrated the excellent work that had gone in.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Committee received the report and

- i) noted the work carried out in 2007-08 and
- ii) agreed the work programme for 2008-09.

8. Hackney Carriage Tariff Charges

The Committee considered a report that asked them to review Hackney Carriage tariff charges. The Head of Trading Standards and Services reported that due to continuing pressure on the world market price of crude oil, petrol and diesel prices had risen sharply.

In response to members' queries, the Head of Trading Standards and Services reported that he would welcome the establishment of a Liaison Group with the taxi trade that was representative of the trade's needs. It would be useful to have open discussions with the trade in this way and that he would look into this further.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Committee agreed;

- i) to advertise from 10 July 2008 a change to the tariff in line with option 2 in the report, namely:
 - for the first 738 yards: £3.00 and
 - for each subsequent 240 yards: 20 pence.
- ii) that in the event of any objections being received and not withdrawn, the Committee delegate responsibility for considering those objections to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee;
- iii) that the date of implementation for any change will be 8 September 2008.
- iv) that officers would bring a further report on inflationary pressures to the Committee at its meeting on 2 October 2008.

9. Special Treatment Registrations

The Committee received a report that asked them to approve the competency guidelines for special treatment registrations.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Committee approved the competency guidelines for special treatment registrations attached at Annex A of the agenda papers.

CHAIRMAN