At a meeting of the Licensing Committee held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ on Wednesday 25 September 2019, 10:00 AM - 10.30 AM

Present:

Cllr A Brown (Chair)
Cllr K Collins (Vice-Chair)

Members:

Cllrs R Berry
D Bowater (Sub for Cllr Wenham)
N Bunyan
S Chatterley

Cllrs S Collins
N Harris
I Shingler
T Wye

Apologies:

Cllrs I Dalgarno
R Wenham

Cllr G Mackey

Absent:

None

Members in Attendance:

None

Officers in Attendance:

Mrs M James  Principal Public Protection Officer (Licensing)
Mrs C Jagusz  Committee Services Officer
Ms R Munir  Solicitor, LGSS
Ms N O’Donnell  Licensing Compliance Officer

1. Minutes

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair and Vice-Chair.

2. Members’ Interests

None were declared.

3. Chair’s Announcements and Communications

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and advised that whilst this meeting would not be webcast, filming was allowed by those in attendance.
4. Questions, Statements or Deputations

None were received.

6. Review of the Licensing Policy

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Community Services on the review of the current Statement of Licensing Policy which the authority was required by law to review every five years. The current policy would be due for renewal in January 2020.

It was noted that a number of changes had been made since the Draft Policy had been provided to the Committee and these changes were as follows:-

- Page 6 – replacement of the word ‘irresponsible’ with the word ‘non-compliant’ in the second line of the first bullet point.
- Page 7 – removal of the word ‘gets’ which had been duplicated and the addition of the words ‘up to an audience of 500’ to the last bullet point so that it would now read ‘A performance of recorded or live music, up to an audience of 500, at an alcohol on-licensed premises within the area covered by the licence’.
- Page 7 - an additional bullet point would be added to the activities that are no longer licensable to read ‘A contest, exhibition or display of Greco-Roman wrestling or freestyle wrestling providing the audience does not exceed 1000’.
- Page 8 - the addition of the dates ‘between 24 June and 1 September 2019 and approved at full Council on 4 November 2019 and published via the website on 5 November 2019’.
- Page 9 – removal of references to the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and Disability Discrimination Act 1996 as these had now been superseded by the Equalities Act 2010.
- It was also noted that the response of Ampthill Town Council given in Appendix B to the report commented that the deregulation of certain activities ‘represented a retrograde step’. It was noted that deregulation was a legislative decision and therefore was not within the control of the Licensing authority.

In light of the report Members raised the following points and comments:-

- Further changes were highlighted with regards to grammar and it was confirmed that these changes would be made to the policy.
- Comments on climate control, submitted by a Member as part of the consultation, had not been included in the revised policy. Whilst it was noted that this area was not linked directly to the Licensing Policy, the issue of climate control had been raised at the meeting of Council in July 2019 and would be reviewed further.
• It was noted that only three Town and Parish Councils had responded to the consultation and it was confirmed that all Town and Parish Councils had been invited to consult along with the responsible authorities and all premises licence holders within Central Bedfordshire.

• Clarification was sought on whether the revised policy had taken into consideration the estimated increase in population within the next five years. The response noted that for the purposes of the consultation the current total population figure was used. It was also noted that an increase in population and subsequently an increase in licensed premises would not impact on how the licences would be managed.

• A concern was raised about anti-social behaviour issues and it was confirmed that a review could be called at any time should the premises contravene any of the four licensing objectives. This process would begin with the receipt of a complaint or a referral from a responsible authority i.e. Police or Noise Pollution Team.

• It was confirmed that all premises should display their licence at the entrance to the venue to ensure that the licensable hours are clearly visible.

• It was also noted that Central Bedfordshire Council had not adopted a saturation policy as this generally applied to cities and large towns.

RESOLVED

1. that the Committee approve the changes to the current Statement of Licensing Policy as set out in Appendix A; and

RECOMMENDED to Council

that the revised Statement of Licensing Policy, as set out at Appendix A, be adopted.

The meeting concluded at 10.30am.