Contact Officer: Jenny Bryce-Chan

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

LICENSING AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Wednesday 18th December 2024

Present:	Councillor Eric Firth (Chair) Councillor Zarina Amin Councillor Mohan Sokhal Councillor Timothy Bamford Councillor Andrew Marchington Councillor Paola Davies Councillor Ali Arshad Councillor Alex Vickers Councillor Jane Rylah
In attendance:	Fiona Goldsmith, Public Protection Group Leader David Stickley, Senior Legal Officer
Apologies:	Councillor Donna Bellamy Councillor Yusra Hussain

1 Membership of the Committee

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillor D Bellamy and Councillor Y Hussain.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 14th February 2024 be approved as a correct record.

3 Declaration of Interests

An 'other' interest was declared by Councillor Timothy Bamford in relation to being a member of the West Yorkshire Joint Services Committee.

4 Admission of the Public

All agenda items were considered in public session.

5 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

6 Public Question Time

No questions were asked.

7 Proposed Revision to Statement of Licensing Policy 2025 - 2030

The Committee received a report highlighting the proposed revisions to the Statement of Licensing Policy.

Fiona Goldsmith, Public Protection Group Leader advised the Committee that it was a statutory requirement to prepare and publish a Statement of Licensing Policy at least every 5 years, and that the previous policy had been approved and adopted at Council in January 2020. Changes to the policy reflected the Secretary of State Guidance under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 as amended in December 2023 and provided more guidance in relation to public safety. Additional information had been added to the enforcement section of the Policy, as well as additional sections relating to the Alcohol Toolkit, Spiking Prevention, Sustainable Events Management, Martin's Law and a Safer Nighttime Economy for Kirklees.

Engagement had taken place with key stakeholders, the Chief Officer of Police, the Fire and Rescue Authority, each Local Authorities Director of Public Health, Premises License Holders, Local Club Premises Certificate Holders, businesses and residents within the area, via written correspondence. Information had also been shared through social media platforms and on the Kirklees website to ensure a robust policy.

An eight-week formal statutory consultation had taken place between July 2024 and September 2024, of which 9 responses were received. This included four members of the public, four existing license holders and one Parish Council.

The Committee queried the low number of responses to the consultation and were advised that the Licensing Department had gone above and beyond the statutory requirements for consultation.

RESOLVED:
The Committee agreed that the proposed revisions to the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy for the period 2025 – 2030 be formally submitted to full Council on Wednesday 15th January 2025 for adoption.

8 Cumulative Impact Assessment – Consultation Results

The Committee received a report detailing the results of the consultation for Cumulative Impact Assessments to be introduced in Huddersfield and Dewsbury Town Centres.

Fiona Goldsmith, Public Protection Group Leader, advised that at a meeting on the 19th July 2024, the Licensing and Safety Committee were asked to determine if there was sufficient evidence presented to them, for the Licensing Authority to proceed with the consultation on the proposal to introduce Cumulative Impact Assessments within the boundaries of Huddersfield and Dewsbury Town Centres. Members resolved that the Licensing Department commenced formal consultation and returned to the Licensing and Safety Committee with the results.

Ms Goldsmith shared that the Cumulative Impact Assessments helped to identify the potential impact on the promotion of one or more of the licensing objectives, on a significant number of licensed premises concentrated within one area. Work had been undertaken with Public Health Colleagues, and data provided by West Yorkshire Police provided indicative evidence that offences were linked to off licenses, with off sales, in both areas. However, the Cumulative Impact Assessment

was not purely based on hard data, but also perception and public views, which were included within the report.

An eight-week consultation had been carried out between July 2024 and September 2024, alongside the Review of the Statement of Licensing Policy, so that it could be incorporated into the Policy if it was adopted. In total 135 people responded to the consultation.

The Committee queried the cost of the consultation and the implementation of the Policy. Ms Goldsmith advised that there would be no extra cost to adopt the Policy, but that it would be a useful tool for members to use when considering new applications and variations to existing licences within those areas.

Ms Goldsmith advised that the Cumulative Impact Assessment did not change the way licensing applications were dealt with. The Licensing Department and the Police would consider the Operating Schedule and if it did not fall within an area with particular issues, an objection would not be submitted. However, the Cumulative Impact Assessment would strengthen any decisions to refuse an application, within problem areas, if objections were received.

The Committee queried the results of the Cumulative Impact Assessment. Ms Goldsmith advised that it was a statutory requirement to review it every three years, however if crime statistics dropped dramatically, or increased issues elsewhere, a review could be held sooner.

RESOLVED:
The Committee agreed that a Cumulative Impact Assessment be introduced in both Huddersfield and Dewsbury, and that it be formally recommended to full Council on Wednesday 15th January 2025 for adoption.

9 Licensing Services – Update Report

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the activities undertaken to discharge the Council's Licensing functions between 1st October 2023 and 31st March 2024.

Fiona Goldsmith, Public Protection Group Leader advised that the current number of hackney carriage and private hire licenses was 5820 as of the 21st October 2024. There had been 2304 applications received which was an increase compared to the previous two years; however, the number of driver renewal applications was less, this was due to a change from issuing annual licenses to issuing 3-year licences.

Ms Goldsmith highlighted that in August 2021, the Licensing Service introduced Service Standards with the aim to process vehicle applications within 5 working days, and driver and operator applications within 10 working days, following receipt of completed applications. Progress towards these standards identified that 75% of driver application were processed within target, 92% of vehicle applications were processed within target and 84% of operator applications were processed within target.

The figures highlighted that customer service had improved considerably and would continue to improve with the effective processes that had been put in place.

Ms Goldsmith highlighted the information in relation to the number of delegated decisions that had been taken by the Group Leader for Licensing with regards to new and existing hackney carriage / private hire driver's fitness and suitability.

RESOLVED:
The Committee noted the Licensing Services Update Report from 1 October 2023 to 31 March 2024, and agreed that officers be commended for the work they have undertaken.