

MINUTES

ALCOHOL, ENTERTAINMENT & LATE NIGHT REFRESHMENT LICENSING COMMITTEE FRIDAY, 10 MAY 2013



COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor George Chivers
Councillor Breda Griffin
Councillor Reginald Howard
Councillor Bob Russell (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Susan Sandall
Councillor Mrs Jean Taylor
Councillor Frank Turner

OFFICERS

Licensing Officers (Richard Etherton, Chris Smith)
Community Safety and Licensing Service Manager (Mark Jones)
Solicitor to the Committee (Paul Rushworth)
Democratic Officer (Lucy Bonshor)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Pam Bosworth, Councillor Bob Broughton and Councillor Mark Ashberry.

2. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

None disclosed.

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 5TH APRIL 2013

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th April 2013 were agreed as a correct record of the decisions taken.

4. POLICE REFORM AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT 2011 - THE LATE NIGHT LEVY

Decision:

That the Committee note the legislative changes that the Police and

Social Responsibility Act 2011 had made to the Licensing Act 2003 but they did not wish to introduce a late night levy at this time.

The Community Safety and Licensing Service Manager, Mark Jones gave a short presentation to Members about the recent changes that the Police and Social Responsibility Act 2011 had made to the Licensing Act 2003 concerning the introduction of a late night levy. His report CSL029 had been circulated with the agenda. The changes to the act provided local licensing authorities with a tool to restrict opening and closing times and collect a Late Night Levy to pay towards extra enforcement and other costs associated with the late opening of premises.

Mr Jones informed the Committee that the introduction of the levy was another power for authorities to use if they wished which would result in a revenue stream. The levy covered the hours from midnight to 6.00am in the morning.

Currently there was good partnership working between the Council, the local police and publicans. Good dialogues were in place and pubwatch was used widely both in Grantham and Stamford. Although there were problems these tended to be with small groups of individuals and were not on the scale that city councils encountered. Generally the late night economy ran well and the partnership working had all relevant agencies on board.

Mr Jones introduced Chief Inspector Mark Housley to the Committee who was the District Commander for North and South Kesteven. CI Housley began by informing the Committee that violent crime in Grantham was down by 18% and 20% in Stamford. He then briefly spoke about changes made to the current style of policing that helped to cope with the night time economy in both Grantham and Stamford and kept the communities safe. At the present time he did not support the introduction of a late night levy as the legislation already in place and the partnership working was he felt, fit for purpose. However, it may be that the issue would be looked at in the future by the Police Crime Commissioner (PCC).

Mr Jones then spoke about what the introduction of a levy would mean and how it would affect the whole of the district, only those with exemptions would be exempt and it would have the potential to damage the night time economy. By imposing a levy it could mean that all premises closed at the same time and therefore everyone would be on the street at the same time. The time that the levy would be imposed would also cut the revenue received. The revenue would be split 30/70 with 70% being taken by the PCC for them to spend anywhere in the county but there would be an expectation that any levy raised would be spent within the District. He gave an example of all premises closing at 2am which following the 30/70 split would only give a revenue stream of £5,000, which for the work that would be entailed to implement the levy was not significant and would impact businesses and the late night economy. As yet nobody in the Country had implemented a late night levy and with the tools and legislation already in place for local authorities to use, the

implementation of a levy could be seen as a failure to use the tools correctly. A watching brief would be kept on the situation and crime within South Kesteven generally. If the committee did decide to implement a levy then it would have to be designed and then a full consultation would have to be undertaken. If any changes were made following the consultation, another full consultation would need to be undertaken before the scheme was put before Council for approval which would have cost implications.

A Member asked if a levy was imposed how many premises it would affect. Mr Jones replied roughly 30 depending upon what exemptions were made and this would include mainly town centre establishments but also country public houses. Another Member asked if the introduction of a levy would be enforceable on councils if they didn't introduce one. Mr Jones replied that it was a local choice function and it was not the intention for it to become enforceable.

It was proposed and seconded that a late night levy was not introduced at the current time and this proposal was unanimously agreed by the Committee.

5. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 10.17am.