

Medway Council
Meeting of Licensing and Safety Committee
Thursday, 12 April 2012
7.00pm to 7.35pm

Record of the meeting

Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next meeting of this committee

- Present:** Councillors: Carr, Mrs Diane Chambers (Chairman), Colman, Adrian Gulvin, Hicks, Kemp, Rodberg and Shaw
- Substitutes:** Councillor Mackness (Substitute for Councillor Etheridge)
- In Attendance:** Angela Drum, Head of Legal Services
Rosie Gunstone, Democratic Services Officer
Alison Poulson, Licensing and Local Land Charges Manager

992 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 20 July 2011 was agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

993 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Etheridge, Harriott and Kearney.

994 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

995 Declarations of interest

There were none.

996 Statement of policy in respect of Sexual Entertainment Venues

Discussion:

The Licensing and Local Land Charges Manager introduced the report on the Council's statement of policy in respect of sexual entertainment venues. She explained that a 1982 Act Hearing Panel held on 14 February 2012 requested that this Committee receives a report setting out options for designating a maximum number of premises with Sexual Entertainment Licences which would be considered appropriate within historic Rochester and/or High Street, Rochester.

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She explained the options open to the Committee which were set out in the report and, responding to Members' questions confirmed that it was not possible to restrict an area to council-wide or town-wide boundaries and stated that if the policy were to be amended it would be important to consult on a specific boundary that was clearly defined.

The Head of Legal Services, following a question, stated that if restrictions were placed only on Rochester High Street this would not preclude the Council from refusing applications elsewhere in Medway, even though no specific limits had been set for them, and that each case would be dealt with on its merits.

Discussion took place about the impact on areas in Medway if too many establishments were licensed. The Licensing and Local Land Charges Manager stated that it was possible for there to be 11 events of sexual entertainment in any period of 12 months where the individual events last no more than 24 hours and there is a month between each event, where an Sexual Entertainment Licence was not required (a Licensing Act 2003 licence would still be required in those cases). She requested that Members draw to her attention where any complaints were received in order that these premises could be monitored, to ensure that they were not exceeding the exemption.

The overall consensus was that there should be a restriction on the number of sexual entertainment licences in the centre of Rochester and it may be feasible for this to be the site of the conservation area. Officers were then requested to report back to the meeting on 24 July 2012 with full proposals including a suggested area boundary for Rochester. The timetable set out in paragraph 7.1 Option 2 was also agreed.

Decision:

It was agreed that officers liaise with the police and other relevant council departments and report back to the next Licensing and Safety Committee with a proposal for consultation in line with the following timetable:

- Licensing and Safety Committee – 12 April 2012
- Consultation with police and other relevant council departments to formulate a proposal
- Licensing and Safety Committee with proposals for consultation – 24 July 2012
- 6 week consultation period from 30 July to 7 September 2012
- Licensing and Safety Committee week commencing 17 September 2012
- Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 25 September 2012
- Council – 18 October 2012
- New Statement of Policy in use from 19 October 2012.

Chairman

Date:

Rosie Gunstone, Democratic Services Officer

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