

Licensing Policy Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 16 November 2020

Present: Councillor Ludford – in the Chair

Councillors: Grimshaw, Akbar, Davies and Leech

Apologies: Councillor Taylor

LPC/20/1. Minutes

Decision

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2018.

LPC/20/2. Policy temporary revision 2021-26 report

The report was presented by the Principal Licensing Officer.

The Principal Licensing Officer stated that the Licensing Act 2003 requires Manchester City Council to review the Licensing Policy every 5 years and that this would normally have had a 12 week consultation period before being brought before the Committee. The Principal Licensing Officer explained that the Coronavirus had had a huge impact on the ability to make effective judgements on the Policy due to the closure of licensed premises, the major effect on the economy and the ongoing changes with regards to premises freedom to open and trade.

The Principal Licensing Officer gave mention to 3 local residents groups in the Fallowfield, Withington and West Didsbury areas having raised queries regarding the rise in outdoor drinking due to premises being limited to off-sales during lockdown periods. These residents' groups felt that this had brought about an increase in litter in their areas. The Principal Licensing Officer also explained that residents' groups had enquired as to how they could play a larger part in contributing to licensing applications and stated that the Licensing officers would engage with these residents' groups to request details on how they feel improvements could be made.

The Principal Licensing Officer mentioned that there had been an enquiry as to including Public Health concerns to the Licensing Objectives and explained that it could not be added as this was not an obligation under current Government guidelines.

The Principal Licensing Officer stated that Licensing officers would work on the aforementioned issues and use the responses to inform future policy and recommended that the report was approved for inclusion of the Full Council meeting on 25 November 2020.

The Committee requested information on how Manchester University is involved in tackling disturbances in the CIP zones and the Principal Licensing Officer stated that they would bring back some details on this at the next Licensing Policy Committee meeting.

The Committee stated that they felt that the issue of Public Health was connected to Licensing matters and the Principal Licensing Officer agreed but stated that it was an issue to be mindful of only, in that Public Health cannot be added to the current Licensing Objectives under current Government guidance.

The Committee also raised the issue of how Government Policies around Coronavirus and Premises were at odds with Manchester's Licensing Policy in that drink had been allowed to be served as off-sales in open containers. The Principal Licensing Officer responded to say that there is now the benefit of hindsight to counter this kind of issue when shaping up the future Licensing Policy.

The Committee gave mention to Scotland having Public Health included in their Licensing Objectives and the Committee confirmed that they could see the benefits in this.

The Committee raised the issue of "bottomless deals" which encouraged overconsumption and the Principal Licensing Officer explained that Licensing officers and GMP make checks and judge each premises on their own merits.

The Committee also raised the issue of premises using branded containers which helped identify where litter was coming from and questioned if this required addressing further and the Principal Licensing Officer agreed and stated that this could be factored into future Licensing Policy.

In concluding information relating to the report, the Principal Licensing Officer stated that a full review was to follow.

Decision

To agree that the policy is submitted to Council on 25 November 2020 with a recommendation that the policy is approved and adopted with effect from 4 January 2021 subject to a full review being conducted in 2021 when feasible in light of the Coronavirus pandemic.