

Meeting LC m 11:12  
Date: 13 December 2011

## South Somerset District Council

**Draft Minutes** of a meeting of the **Licensing Committee** held at **the Council Offices, Brympton Way Yeovil** on **Tuesday 13 December 2011**

(10.00 am – 11.10 am)

**PRESENT:**

**Members:**

Dave Bulmer	Roy Mills
John Vincent Chainey	David Norris
Nick Colbert	David Recardo
Tony Lock	Martin Wale
Nigel Mermagen (Chairman)	

**Officers:**

Anne Herridge	Committee Administrator
Anita Legg	Licensing Officer

**Others:**

Cllr Peter Seib	Portfolio Holder for Licensing
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***NB: Where an executive or key decision is made, a reason will be noted immediately beneath the Committee's resolution.***

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### 17. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the Licensing Committee held on 11 October 2011, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the chairman of that meeting. The minutes from the Licensing sub Committee meetings held on 4 and 14th November, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the chairman of those meetings.

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### 18. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Paul Maxwell, Pauline Clarke, Tony Fife, Jenny Kenton, Linda Vijeh, William Wallace and Nigel Marston, Licensing Manager.

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### 19. Declarations of Interest (Agenda item 3)

Cllrs David Recardo and John Vincent Chainey declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7, as they were both members of Yeovil Town Council. The item was for noting only.

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## 20. Public Participation (Agenda item 4)

### Questions/comments from members of the public

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

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## 21. Consultation on a proposal to deregulate Schedule One of the Licensing Act 2003 - In relation to Regulated Entertainment. (Agenda Item 5)

The Licensing Officer presented the report as printed in the agenda, she explained that the response from SSDC had already been sent (before the consultation period had ended) and although it was too late to make any changes, members may like to raise any issues of concern at this meeting. The officer explained that the chairman and vice chairman of the Licensing Committee had scrutinised in full, the response sent by SSDC, although a few changes had been suggested they agreed with the response in general.

The chairman commented that the proposal to deregulate entertainment was okay in principle but was possibly not always going to produce the best results for SSDC. There were a lot of anomalies with the current regulations regarding some types of entertainment that needed a licence, he gave the example of the recent Road Traffic Accident on the M25 and the nearby large firework display that would not have required a licence compared with a couple of musicians playing in the corner of a pub who would need a licence.

Members were content to note the report and asked that they be kept updated on a regular basis.

**NOTED**

*Lead Officer:* Nigel Marston, Licensing Manager

*Contact Details:* [nigel.marston@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:nigel.marston@southsomerset.gov.uk) or (1935) 462150

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## 22. Zero Project Update (Agenda Item 6)

An apology was given to Cllr Peter Seib for the misspelling of his surname in the agenda report.

The Licensing Officer gave the background to the Zero project, which was aimed at the 14 – 17 year old age group, she explained that the aim was to show youngsters that they could enjoy a night out without alcohol; the youngsters were randomly breath tested and bulky clothing and handbags checked for bottles prior to entering the premises. Those found to be under the influence were then not permitted to attend the event and parents were called to collect them.

The drop in attendance to the events held in Yeovil had been disappointing but it was thought that it could possibly be due to fewer Youth Workers going into schools with flyers advertising the events. The Yeovil events were held during school holidays rather than on a school night. The Zero events held in Chard had been disappointing from the start as a lot of the young people had been drunk on arrival and had been subsequently turned away; it was understood that some parents often bought the alcohol for their children's consumption, which caused a problem in the area in general. The venue in Chard was also not as popular as the club that was used in Yeovil.

The Officer suggested that it may be a good idea to target alcohol education to youngsters from the age of 11 as by the time they reached the age of 14 they had often got into bad habits and been encouraged to try alcohol etc by their peers. It was hoped that this education would be undertaken in the school by one of the Zero project partners.

During discussion members and the portfolio holder for Licensing made several points some of which included:

- Appreciated that SSDC were part of a partnership involved in the Zero events but a way forward to encourage a better number of attendees was needed;
- Youngsters between the ages of 14 & 17 did not think the Zero events were 'cool' nowadays;
- Young people should be taught how to drink alcohol responsibly;
- The majority of young people in Chard had been made aware of the Zero events in Chard but had not been keen on the venue;
- The problem nowadays was not just irresponsible use of alcohol but drug abuse as well, testing for illegal substances should also be carried out prior to entering the Zero events;
- Should think about advertising the events through such sites as Facebook rather than just relying on adverts placed in schools;
- The agenda report had made reference to Holyrood School in Chard not handing out the flyers advertising the event, but it was unfair to blame the school as it does support the project;
- The situation was different in Yeovil than Chard, as Yeovil had a venue that was more enticing for youngsters, a different approach needed to be taken for the youngsters in Chard;
- The Zero event was not the only intervention in the area, there had been various drama productions shown to schools in the area, enacting events that could happen whilst drunk;
- The events in Chard should be put on hold for the moment whilst discussions took place with various interested partners over the possibility of holding future events, that would entail a great deal of work;
- The Zero events were monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

In response the Licensing Officer advised that she was in the process of checking with the SSDC Legal Service to find out if it was in order to advertise the events direct to the mobile phone numbers that they had on record. The only reason Holyrood School had been mentioned in the agenda report was because it was the only comprehensive school in Chard and young people had advised that they hadn't received an advertising flyer. Testing for drugs was not currently carried out prior to entering a Zero event. The next event in Yeovil was due to be held on 28 December and had been well advertised.

Members were content to note the report.

**NOTED**

*Lead Officer:* Anita Legg, Licensing Officer  
*Contact Details:* [anita.legg@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:anita.legg@southsomerset.gov.uk) or (1935) 462 137

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## 23. Enforcement Update - Street Trading, Taxi's and Alcohol Licensing (Agenda Item 7)

The Licensing Officer presented the report as detailed in the agenda, with reference to Taxis she referred to the taxi drivers who had failed to use the taximeters and explained that the Licensing Manager wanted to ensure that the meters were on during the time that the Hackney Hire vehicles were in use. The reason for this requirement is that drivers are not permitted to charge more than the fare shown on the meter; by switching it on, they can demonstrate to their customers that the correct fare has been charged. It is permitted to charge less than the meter rate, but they still needed to switch it on.

Members responded and raised several points some of which included:

- Could a customer refuse to pay if the meter had not been turned on?
- Officers and Councillors should be asking the reasons why the meters are not set, it was important that they were used;
- Found the charge was higher when a meter was used than when it wasn't.

In response to questions the Licensing Officer replied that the Licensing Committee set the price charged by taximeters under delegated power from the District Executive. SSDC do have a higher rate than some other areas but the prices were fair for a rural area, as there is an element of 'dead' mileage and the high costs of the fuel had to be taken into consideration. Taxi drivers must be made aware that they needed to set the taximeter at the start of a journey and enforcement would be carried out if they did not adhere to that. A press release had already been completed and a mystery shopper exercise had been carried out. She advised that there were different meter rates for day and late evening journeys (23:00 – 06:00 and Sundays and Bank Holidays amongst others). If anyone felt they had been overcharged they should contact the Licensing Service. If customers noticed the meter was not switched on they should inform the Licensing Service, as the fee could not be verified.

The Chairman advised that a report would be presented to members at the next Licensing Committee meeting giving options regarding taxi licensing arrangements for Town Councils.

With reference to Scrap Metal Dealers it was noted that members had recently been invited to the Police Station where the support officer in charge of scrap dealers, had advised members, amongst other things, that a recent condition had been imposed that all scrap metal dealers should have CCTV at various points on their premises.

Members wished to send their congratulations to the Enforcement Officer, Colin Chown, on the quiet, efficient and very successful way that he had dealt with pedlars at the recent carnivals held in the area.

Members were happy to note the content of the report.

**NOTED**

*Lead Officer:* Nigel Marston, Licensing Manager

*Contact Details:* [nigel.marston@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:nigel.marston@southsomerset.gov.uk) or (1935) 462150

**24. Licensing Committee Forward Plan (Agenda Item 8)**

Members were asked to note that a report to review the Licensing sub committees would be on the agenda for the Licensing committee meeting to be held in April as they would by then have been running for a year with new members

*Lead Officer: Nigel Marston, Licensing Manager*

*Contact Details: [nigel.marston@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:nigel.marston@southsomerset.gov.uk) or (1935) 462150*

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**25. Next Meeting (Agenda Item 8)**

Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Licensing Committee would take place on Tuesday 14 February 2012 at 10.00 am at the Council Offices, Brympton Way Yeovil.

*Anne Herridge Committee Administrator, Legal and Democratic Services SSDC  
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Chairman