



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

DRAFT MINUTES

Licensing Committee

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of a meeting of the **Licensing Committee** held on **Wednesday 20th March 2019**, Room 18.2 and 18.3, 18th Floor, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP.

Members Present: Councillors Angela Harvey (Chair), Heather Acton, Melvyn Caplan, Murad Gassanly, Jim Glen, Louise Hyams, Karen Scarborough, Shamim Talukder, and Jacqui Wilkinson.

Officers present: Annette Acik, Interim Director of Public Protection and Licensing, Greg Ward, Director of Regeneration and Economic Development, Andrew Ralph, Head of Licensing and Regulatory Service, Kerry Simpkins, Licensing Policy and Strategy Manager, Barry Panto, Senior Assistant Solicitor, Catherine Brice, Head of Westminster Markets, Ros Hick, Licensing, Head of Service Central, and Kisi Smith-Charlemagne, Senior Committee & Governance Officer.

Apologies for Absence: Councillors, Rita Begum, Susie Burbridge, Peter Freeman, Aicha Less, Tim Mitchell and Aziz Toki. Officers: Heidi Titcombe Principal Solicitor.

1 MEMBERSHIP

There were no changes to the membership of the Licensing Committee.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 Councillor Angela Harvey declared that she was married to Cllr David Harvey, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Education and Community.

3 MINUTES

- 3.1 **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting held on Wednesday 28 November 2018 be signed by the Chair as a correct record of proceedings.

4 MARKETS STRATEGY UPDATE AND MARKET PICH APPLICATION PROCESS

- 4.1 The Committee received a report and was given a presentation on the Strategy for Westminster City Markets 2019-2022. The Licensing Committee were advised that the goal within the Economy Team was to help the markets to thrive and prosper by ensuring they can adapt to new challenges, have a reliable infrastructure to assist their day to day operations and maintain their very central role in Westminster as invaluable community and cultural assets. Officers advised that they recognised the differences between each of Westminster's six markets and wanted to celebrate those differences, as markets provide variety and diversity, history and character.
- 4.2 The Licensing Committee were informed that the markets strategy had been created to provide a strong framework with 7 key themes that will be taken forward, increasing the level of sophistication for the council's street trading operations and provide the team with the tools to apply for the benefit of traders and customers. Officers explained that local plans had been developed for each individual market based on the consultation feedback. Officers advised that a series of activities and objectives had also been proposed to ensure that the markets thrive during the lifetime of the strategy and beyond. It was proposed that the council works closely with the wider, host communities that surround and nurture each of the markets - residents, local workers and local businesses as well as the traders themselves.
- 4.3. Officers also presented a report which set out the proposed approach to determine a licence application for a street trading pitch on a market in Westminster and the selection criteria to be adopted. Officers advised that the approach was designed to provide an effective way of managing available street trading pitches on markets, in line with statutory / policy requirements. The Licensing Committee was advised that the proposed approach also ensured the choice made would broaden the market offer in line with agreed local market plans, placing markets at the heart of our communities. Officers advised that the approach aimed to encourage start-up businesses, and support market improvement and sustainability.
- 4.4 The Members of the Licensing Committee welcomed the reports and presentation and thanked officers for a comprehensive piece of work. Members felt that this was an ambitious strategy with a strong chance of delivering the council's vision for its WCC markets. Members made enquiries regarding the balance between the sale of fresh produce and hot food, the consideration given to the commercial offer and demand lead products. Members queried the local plans for Maida Hill market. Members also sought further clarification on timed-allocated windows for market pitch applications, it was felt that the new approach was complex.

4. **RESOLVED:** That the report be noted by the Licensing Committee.

5 **DEVELOPING AN EVENING AND NIGHT TIME VISION**

- 5.1 The Licensing Committee received a report which set out the approach to the development of the council's Evening and Night Time Vision. The Licensing

Committee were asked to consider the proposals for the councils Evening and Night Time Vision and provide any feedback or comments to assist officers in its development. Officers advised that the vision will enable the council to set out how it would like to see the evening and night time economy develop over the next 20 years. It was proposed that the vision would become a pro-active tool which will focus future policy and strategy development and guide operational and service delivery.

5.2 Officers advised that our city is one of the most popular evening and night time (ENT) destinations in the world and through our planning, licensing, culture, regeneration, community safety and economic powers, our role had been vital in shaping our city at night. However, the council does not have a clearly articulated vision or strategy that directly provides a framework for an aspirational ENT environment. Officers explained that they hope to design an ambitious 'Evening and Night Time Vision' that clearly articulates what we want our City to be able to offer by 2040. Members queried the 'Green initiatives' as part of Business growth is balanced with residential amenity and good regulation, specifically relating to water, air cooling and heating. Members also sought clarification on the involvement of the Evening and Night Time Economy Task Group with the development of the vision.

5.3 **RESOLVED:** That the following be approved:

6 LICENSING POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND PROPOSED SYNERGY WITH THE CITY PLAN

6.1 The Committee received a report considering the approach to revising the councils licensing policy. In preparation of the review of the councils licensing policy under the Licensing Act 2003 officers sought the views of the Licensing Committee on the proposal to synergise the licensing policy with the councils new City Plan 2019 – 2014. Officers advised that in considering the approach to revising the councils licensing policy there was an opportunity to review the current policy framework and synergise any revision with the council's city plan. It was noted that officers were in the early planning stage of the revision for the licensing policy work. The Licensing Committee were advised that the Synergy between the city plan and licensing policy at its most basic, will ensure that both documents support each other, but it will also actively promote the development of the city over the next 20 years and contribute more effectively to the delivery of City for All.

6.2 Members queried the neighbourhood approach to the licensing policies, referring to Soho and seeking assurances that there would be no noise breakout. Members also queried the table in paragraph 3.4 of the report labelled 'Licensing policy objectives or best practice', it was felt that this table should include reducing smoking under of outside residential premises. Members discussed the effects of noise on mental health and that WCC had become a 'Dementia City'. Members also queried whether 20 years was too long for the policy, as things change and did not want to be in the same situation 10 years down the line.

6.3 **RESOLVED:** That the report and of the overall direction of the policy be noted.

7 **SOHO ANGELS AND NIGHT HUB UPDATE**

7.1 The Committee received a report on the Soho Angels and Night Hub initiative and its results to date. The Soho Angels and Night Hub were now operating every Friday night in Soho. The report also provided an update on the potential to work with partners and businesses to deliver similar services in other areas of the City. Officers informed the Licensing Committee that the council had developed a safe space (Night Hub) and volunteer network (Soho Angels) as part of its Nightsafe project, the Nightsafe project aimed to develop initiatives that will:

- Improve the safety and amenity of the public domain;
- Provide a harm reduction service where vulnerable people can access support and a safe space;
- Reduce the risk of crime, specifically to prevent intoxicated people from becoming a victim or perpetrator of crime;
- Collaborate with key stakeholders to establish a governance model that is sustainable and enhances the evening and night time economy;
- Support organisations that operate in the City at night (e.g. venue security staff, Police and Ambulance)

7.2 Officers advised that to test the Soho Angels and Night Hub service before full implementation of the service, a pilot was undertaken on the run up to Christmas 2018. The pilot ran on each Friday night from the 30th November to the 21st December 2018. The Night Hub was operated from St Anne's Church Hall in Dean Street between 10pm to 5am. Members welcomed the report and congratulated Officers and volunteers on a brilliant piece of work. Members queried the processes of recruiting volunteers and if the pilot would be rolled out to other areas of the borough.

7.4 **RESOLVED:** That the report be noted

8 **LICENCING APPEALS**

8.1 Barry Panto, Principal Solicitor, Shared Legal Services, provided an update on licensing appeals since the November 2018 meeting of the Licensing Committee. He confirmed that Shared Legal Services had been dealing with one appeal, the Windmill and the Hemmings case on the Council's behalf during this time. Mr Panto confirmed that Belgrave Square Gardens had withdrawn its appeal and the Council had recovered its costs.

8.2 Members queried the number of appeals and noted the most recent information on appeals which had been submitted in relation to decisions taken by the Licensing Sub-Committees.

8.3 **RESOLVED:** That the contents of the report be noted

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

9.1 Members had a brief discussion regarding WCC licensing policy with regard to the WCC model conditions.

10. FUTURE LICENSING COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

10.1 It was noted that the next meetings of the Licensing Committee would be held on Wednesday 3 July 2019 and 27 November 2019. All meetings are scheduled for 10.00am.

The Meeting ended at 12.55pm.

CHAIRMAN: _____

DATE _____