
CENTRAL LICENSING COMMITTEE, 23.11.09

Present: Councillor W Tudor Owen (Chairman)

Councillors: Robert Anderson, Louise Hughes, Evie Morgan Jones, J R Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams, Dewi Llewelyn, Peter Read, Ieuan Roberts and Gwilym Williams.

Also present: Amlyn ab Iorwerth (Licensing Manager), Sion Huws (Propriety Officer) Geraint Edwards (Solicitor) and Eleri Parry (Senior Committee Officer).

Apologies: Councillor W. Gareth Roberts

Welcome: Geraint Edwards, Solicitor, was welcomed to his first meeting of the Central Licensing Committee and he was thanked for his commendable work in the field.

Speedy Recovery: A speedy recovery was wished to Barbara Owen, Committee Officer who was receiving hospital treatment.

1. CHAIRMAN

Councillor W. Tudor Owen was elected Chairman of this committee for 2009/10.

2. VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor Eryl Jones-Williams was elected as Vice-chairman of this committee for 2009/10.

3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any member present.

4. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of the meeting of this committee held on 27 April 2009, as a true record.

5. MINUTES OF THE CENTRAL LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEES:

Submitted, for information, the minutes of the following meetings:-

3 April 2009	8 April 2009	15 April 2009
1 May 2009	12 May 2009	22 June 2009
24 June 2009	6 August 2009	15 September 2009
24 September 2009	21 October 2009	

RESOLVED to accept the information.

Arising

Minutes of the Licensing Sub-committee 21 October 2009

The Licensing Manager reported that an appeal had been lodged against the decision of the Central Licensing Sub-committee to revoke the Premises Licence of Bangor Blues public house on 21 October 2009.

Members expressed their frustration regarding several aspects of court procedures in relation to licensing appeals.

A member referred to a recent situation when he had been unable to submit evidence in Welsh because a prior notice had not been given to the court and he expressed great dissatisfaction regarding the situation.

The Solicitor suggested that in future, the Council should enquire of prospective witnesses in which language they wished to submit their evidence, in order to arrange with the court that appropriate provision was available to them.

Furthermore, members expressed concern because courts overturned decisions of the Licensing Sub-committee. A member explained that he was doubtful of magistrates' ability to deal with licensing appeals because they were not well versed in the field. It was noted further that members of the Central Licensing Committee attended frequent training in the licensing field and it was suggested that magistrates should attend similar training.

The officers explained that licensing appeals were new hearings and it was acceptable to submit new evidence.

RESOLVED: that the Licensing Manager requests the Court Service in Gwynedd to meet with the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Licensing Committee and the Licensing Manager in order to discuss members' frustration with the ability of the bench to deal with licensing matters and also to convey dissatisfaction of members regarding the lack of provision for holding hearings bilingually.

6. GAMBLING POLICY

Submitted – the report of the Head of Regulatory Department on the review of the Council's Gambling Policy.

The Licensing Manager reported that the Council was required to review its Gambling Policy every three years; that the existing Gambling Policy had been adopted by the Council in January 2007 and it was now time for it to be reviewed and adopt a new Policy.

It was explained that there had been wide consultation on the Policy and little response had been received.

Details were provided of the proposed amendments.

RESOLVED: to approve the amendments that are to be incorporated in the Gambling Policy and to recommend that the full Council adopts the amended Gambling Policy.

7. CABS SAFE

Submitted – the report of the Head of Regulatory Department on the introduction of the Cabsafe Scheme in Gwynedd in order to provide a safer service for service users.

The Licensing Manager reported that the hackney and private hire industry was of a satisfactory standard in Gwynedd with conscientious individuals working in the industry. Nevertheless, it was explained that some illegal vehicles were operating in the county and despite the fact that the service was attempting to pursue the illegal operators, he noted that it was difficult to obtain the required evidence.

It was emphasised that the illegal operators did not have the required insurance to carry people and inspections had not been undertaken to ensure the safety of the vehicles or suitability of the drivers.

It was noted that the Cabsafe scheme had worked successfully in many counties in Wales and the local industry supported the scheme.

Details were provided of implementation, costs, introduction timetable and advertising arrangements for the scheme in Gwynedd.

The Manager agreed to hold discussions with the Council's Trading Standards Department in order to ensure that taxis advertising in pubs had been licensed by the Council.

RESOLVED to trial the Cabsafe scheme in Gwynedd for a period of a year from 1 April 2010.

8. BAKEWELL CONFERENCE

Submitted - for information, the report of Cllr. Eryl Jones Williams, Vice-chairman of the Central Licensing Committee on the Licensing Conference he had attended in Bakewell, Derbyshire.

RESOLVED to accept the report.

The meeting commenced at 10:30am and concluded at 11:15am.