

LICENSING AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

10 April 2017

Minutes of the Licensing and General Purposes Committee held at the Town Hall, Bexhill-on-Sea on Monday 10 April 2017 at 6:30pm.

Committee Members present: Councillors S.D. Elford (Chairman) (in part), Lord Ampthill, R.K. Bird, Mrs D.C. Earl-Williams, K.M. Field, T.W. Graham, Mrs J.M. Hughes (Vice-Chairman), I.G.F. Jenkins, M. Mooney and C.J. Saint.

Advisory officers present: Executive Director of Business Operations, Executive Director of Resources, Service Manager – Corporate and Human Resources, Service Manager – Environmental Services and Licensing, Deputy Legal Services Manager and Democratic Services Manager.

In the absence of the Chairman at the commencement of the meeting, the Vice-Chairman took the Chair until the arrival of Councillor Elford, who had been delayed.

COUNCILLOR MRS HUGHES IN THE CHAIR

LG16/21. MINUTES

The Chairman was authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing and General Purposes Committee held on 23 January 2017 as a correct record of the proceedings.

LG16/22. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P.R. Douart and Mrs S. Hart.

PART I – RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR ELFORD IN THE CHAIR

**LG16/23. REVIEW OF LOCAL PAY AWARD
(6.1)**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director of Resources on the Review of the Local Pay Award 2017. Pay award discussions had been on-going with Staff Side/UNISON and Members' views were being sought on proposals for a pay settlement to enable negotiation with Staff Side/UNISON to be progressed.

The Service Manager – Corporate and Human Resources outlined the key issues to be taken into account which included the national local government pay award that had been set at 1%; current inflation and

future trends; the current budget allocation of 1% which did not restrict Members' ability to award higher or lower than this amount; the 2% pay award requested by Staff Side/UNISON (detailed at Appendix A to the report); the Living Wage (from the Living Wage Foundation separate from the National Living Wage) which sought to provide a socially acceptable wage level and recruitment trends.

Members were keen to support an increase of 1.5% and sought clarity on a number of issues prior to final determination, as follows:

- the number of staff effected by the Living Wage was very small, circa 8;
- recruitment and retention – difficulties recruiting to professional posts was not linked to salary levels, it was more complex than that and included amongst other reasons a general shortage of professionals in the market place; in comparison to neighbouring Councils, Rother District Council generally paid at a lower level; market supplements for certain professional grades were not considered a good idea and could be very divisive; and
- budget impact if an increase of 1.5% was agreed – there would not be a full year impact in year 1, as the pay award was effective from September and was therefore only for seven months; Members were reminded that the Members' Allowance Scheme was now linked to the staff pay award and these would be increased at whatever level was agreed for staff.

Members were keen to reward and recompense the staff employed by the Council and therefore agreed to recommend to Cabinet that the Council continued to support the Living Wage Foundation for the lower paid permanent staff and that a 1.5% pay award be approved.

RECOMMENDED: That Cabinet be requested to recommend to Council that:

- 1) an appropriate additional award be given for the lower paid permanent staff, to continue to bring their pay point into line with the Living Wage Foundation's Living Wage level be approved; and
- 2) a one year pay settlement increase of 1.5% for 2017/18 be approved.

PART II – DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

COUNCILLOR MRS HUGHES IN THE CHAIR

LG16/24. (5.1) LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION LICENSING CONFERENCE

Members of the Committee received a report from Councillor Mrs Hart on the Local Government Association Licensing Conference that she had attended in February. In the absence of Councillor Mrs Hart, the Deputy Legal Services Manager outlined the key issues that had arisen from the conference as detailed in the report, which included safeguarding loopholes and licensing mapping. A copy of the Local

Government Association's Taxi and PHV Licensing Handbook for Councillors was tabled and Members were encouraged to read the whole document, but in particular the "fit and proper person test" section at page 13. A copy of the presentation in relation to Licensing Committees: Decision Making and Rule of Natural Justice was also circulated to all Members.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

COUNCILLOR ELFORD IN THE CHAIR

LG16/25.
(6.2)

STAFFING DIGEST – OCTOBER 2016 TO MARCH 2017

Members considered the Staffing Digest Report of the Executive Director of Resources covering the period October 2016 to March 2017 which gave an update in the field of staff management. The following key points were noted:

- Recruitment remained active and turnover was 4% for the Period October 2016 – March 2017 (Previously 5.4%). Issues around professional post recruitment had been raised and remained a concern.
- One disciplinary hearing had been held.
- The new Workforce Plan Phase 1 was being finalised which covered apprentices, new skills sets for staff and managers and the customer relationship between Human Resources and services. Phase 2 was due to start in the new financial year.
- Officers were waiting for further clarity around the public sector apprenticeships scheme.
- In-house IT training remained popular.
- The Sussex Training Consortium management program had started with newly developed programmes launched. Two managers had started the first line manager program and there would be a number of places on the middle manager programme in autumn.
- A number of further training sessions via the Sussex Training Consortium had been made available to staff, providing cost effective training in a variety of subjects.
- There were no health and safety incidents in this period.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

LG16/26.
(7.1)

TOURING CARAVAN SITE CONDITIONS

Members received and considered the report of the Executive Director of Business Operations that detailed proposed changes to the Council's touring caravan site conditions.

Members had agreed to amendments to the conditions for both static holiday and permanent residential caravan sites in October 2016; however a decision on approving amended conditions for touring sites had been deferred until a judgement of a Property Tribunal against the Council's existing conditions had been given. The appeal had been

found in favour of the Council and therefore it was appropriate to consider revising conditions relating to touring caravan sites.

The revised standard conditions were based on model conditions published by the Government and sought to control public health and safety, in addition to providing emergency plans and meeting new requirements to treat surface water to prevent local flooding. Also included was a condition regarding the maintenance of a register proving occupiers had a permanent address elsewhere; it was noted that East Sussex Fire and Rescue supported the conditions.

It was noted that should a caravan site operator wish to extend the maximum number of days permitted for touring caravans (currently 21 days) they could apply for a variation to their licenced conditions together with an appropriate business plan / justification for the extension. Whilst some Members were surprised that the maximum number of days was set at 21 and had been so since 1975, this had not proven to be an issue with operators who had been consulted as part of the process.

It was agreed to add a reference to encouraging recycling to the Holiday Site Model Conditions under part G, Refuse Disposal.

One response had been received in response to the consultation and this was appended to the report for Members' consideration.

RESOLVED: That the revised conditions for touring caravan sites be adopted, together with an additional clause under part G, Refuse Disposal, to encourage recycling and that these conditions be imposed on new licences with immediate effect and on existing licences when these are transferred or re-issued.

CHAIRMAN

The meeting closed at 7:25pm

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