

## LICENSING AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

13 July 2020

Minutes of the Licensing and General Purposes Committee held remotely on Monday 13 July 2020 at 6:30pm.

Committee Members present: Councillors R.K. Bird, G.S. Browne, T.J.C. Byrne, S.J. Coleman, G.C. Curtis, B.J. Drayson (ex-officio), K.M. Field, K.M. Harmer, C.A. Madeley (substitute), A.S. Mier, R.B. Thomas and H.L. Timpe.

Other Members present: Councillors P.C. Courtel, P.J. Gray, Mrs S.M. Prochak and J. Vine-Hall.

Advisory officers present: Executive Director (MJ), Executive Director (AL), Assistant Director Resources, Head of Environmental Services, Licensing and Community Safety and Democratic Services Officer.

Also present: 4 members of the public, via the YouTube live broadcast.

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- LG20/1.      **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**  
**RESOLVED:** That Councillor A.S. Mier be elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.
- LG20/2.      **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**  
**RESOLVED:** That Councillor S.J. Coleman be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing municipal year.
- LG20/3.      **MINUTES**  
The Chairman was authorised to sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Licensing and General Purposes Committee held on 20 January 2020, at a later date, as a correct record of the proceedings.
- LG20/4.      **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTES**  
Apologies for absence were received from Andy Eaton, Deputy Legal Services Manager and Maria Benford, Human Resources Manager.  
  
It was noted that Councillor C.A. Madeley was present as substitute for Councillor Mrs D.C. Earl-Williams.
- LG20/5.      **DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**  
It was noted that all Members had a personal interest in Agenda Item 9 in so far as discussions affected Members' Allowances.

## PART I – RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

- LG20/6.      **TEMPORARY STREET CLOSURE ORDERS**  
Members received the report of the Executive Director outlining a policy for approving temporary street closure orders for public

celebrations, deferred from the last meeting of the Licensing and General Purposes Committee.

Although the legislation defined circumstances when the District Council could make a road closure order, a policy would assist officers in determining applications. Events were not to be promoted for private gain and were to be for a genuinely public event.

It was outlined to Members that the following points were to be incorporated into the policy:

- In all cases except Remembrance, a fee of £100 or a fee set by Cabinet would be payable.
- Applicants must comply with Police requests made to ensure the safety of a public event (e.g. carnival).
- A list of cultural or community events, or similar, that a road closure would facilitate was provided within the policy.
- For events not on the list, Orders would only be made if the previous year's audited accounts showed that over 50% of the profit from the event was paid to a registered or local charity, unless the Licensing Committee approved a lower percentage. For first-time applications, an undertaking must be given that this would apply.
- Applicants must provide an adequate event management plan (including risk assessments) with the application to show how the event could take place without creating unnecessary or uncontrolled hazards to the public.
- Applicants undertake to litter pick the road after the event as far as reasonably practical, or if this does not occur pay for any exceptional street cleaning costs.
- Applicants provide evidence of having adequate Public Liability Insurance.
- The applicant has a right of appeal against a refusal to the Licensing and General Purposes Committee.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions and the following points were noted from the discussions:

- any profit made that was not to be paid to a registered or local charity should be invested into the following year's event and event organisers would need to indicate the level of spending required. This should not be excessive;
- the table of events listed in the policy was not a definitive list and similar events would be added over time;
- any matters that did not fall within the policy (e.g. a for-profit event) would be referred to the Licensing and General Purposes Committee;
- it was requested and agreed that the following paragraph be removed from the policy: "For events not falling within this definition, Orders will only be made if the previous years' audited accounts show that over fifty percent (50%) of the profit from the event was paid to a registered or local charity. For first-time applications, an undertaking must be given that this will apply" and replaced with wording to ensure that "all proceeds of the event must be donated to a registered or local charity, allowing for a small carry-over in

monies that is deemed reasonable to support the continuation of the event for future years.”

**RECOMMENDED:** That the policy for approving temporary street closure orders, as amended, be approved and adopted.

## **PART II – DECISIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

### **LG20/7. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE GENERAL LICENSING PANEL AND TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING PANEL**

**RESOLVED:** That:

- 1) Members be appointed thereto other than on a political basis nem con (no Member objecting);
- 2) the following Members be appointed to serve on the General Licensing Panel and the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Panel: R.K. Bird, G.S. Browne, T.J.C. Byrne, S.J. Coleman, G.C. Curtis, Mrs D.C. Earl-Williams, K.M. Field, K.M. Harmer, Mrs S. Hart, A.S. Mier, R. Thomas and H.L. Timpe ; and
- 3) an audit of Member’s potential interests be carried out.

### **LG20/8. REVIEW OF LOCAL PAY AWARD**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director on the Review of the Local Pay Award 2020. 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 Executive Director outlined the key issues to be taken into account which included current inflation and future trends; the national local government pay award of 2.75% that had been proposed by the employers but not yet settled; the current budget allocation of 2%; 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. Any pay award agreed for staff would also be applied to Members allowances.

As part of setting the annual revenue budget for this year, Rother’s pay award for 2020 was budgeted at 2% and this figure had been used in the agreed Medium-Term Financial Plan for future years. Members were reminded that any enhancement beyond this budgeted figure would require full Council approval and have to be found from within the existing budgets and would further increase the financial pressure on the Council.

Members were mindful of the current uncertain climate and sought clarity on a number of issues prior to final determination. The following points were noted during the discussion:

- it was confirmed to Members that if a percentage increase was approved, it would be applied to all grades and Members could

agree to a fixed minimum amount payable, to ensure financial security for the lower paid members of staff;

- a 2.75% increase was suggested but with a capped amount applicable, and that Members' allowances be frozen for one year in order to be able to increase that capped amount and remain within budget. Members were advised that this would result in a 2.75% increase being applied up to grade 4 only, as the cap would have to be set at £600 to keep within budget;
- due to the difficulty in recruiting to professional posts as the pool of local government professionals nationally was diminishing, Members considered a 2% increase across the board and to setting a minimum amount payable at the lower grades. This would seek to assist in recruiting to the professional posts;
- every member of staff was on a pay grade relative to their post made up of increments which gave some degree of flexibility, protected staff and ensured equal pay;
- Members agreed that it was important to maintain good staff morale, attract talent, retain staff and ensure security;
- Members congratulated and thanked members of staff at all levels of the Council for their hard work during the COVID-19 pandemic and were keen to show that appreciation by providing financial security; and
- Members suggested freezing Members' Allowances for 1 year and awarding the savings made as a result as a one-off payment to staff. However, it was agreed to defer these discussions as any changes to the current agreed Members' Allowance Scheme would have to be considered by an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) in any event.

Members were keen to reward and recompense the staff employed by the Council and therefore agreed that the Council continued to support the Living Wage Foundation for the lower paid permanent staff, that a 2% pay award across the board for one year be approved with a 'root and branch' review of the pay structure during the year, paying particular regard to the lower paid members of staff. Members also agreed to Members' Allowances being considered further in the future.

**RESOLVED:** That:

- 1) the Council's commitment to matching the Living Wage from the Living Wage Foundation be continued for lower paid permanent staff;
- 2) a one year pay settlement increase of 2% across the board for 2020/21 be approved with a 'root and branch' review of the pay structure during the year, paying particular regard to the lower paid salary scales; and
- 3) Members Allowances be considered further in the future.

LG20/9.

**STAFFING DIGEST - APRIL 2019 TO MARCH 2020**

Members considered the Staffing Digest report of the Executive Director covering the period April 2019 to March 2020 which gave an

update in the field of staff management. The following key points were noted during the discussion:

- recruitment remained active; turnover was 7.49% for the first six months of the year and 5.71% for the latter part of the year, which was considered reasonable;
- the Council had successfully recruited six apprentices into various roles and service areas around the authority. The first apprentice under the new government scheme was due to complete their qualification later in the month;
- issues around professional post recruitment had been raised and remained a concern;
- the Rother Corporate Training Plan has been developed with the view of helping to support staff in achieving the corporate objectives, promote good mental health and wellbeing and to progress Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The well-being programme was to be further built on, with further drop-in sessions and workshops;
- three minor staff accidents had been reported during the year and all had been investigated fully. Refresher training for first aiders had continued;
- the Sussex Training Consortium had offered a wide range of programmes, including progress on CPD training for professions;
- further work was being carried out in the area of Mental Health, particularly as staff were working remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- the training budget had been protected to ensure courses could continue to be delivered to staff;
- the Council's Employment Advisory Service was open to all staff and Members and the Council only received information on the number of hours accessed, not of individuals utilising the Service. If the Service was unable to provide the assistance required, paid alternatives would be sought; and
- Members were pleased to note the amount of training available to staff to support their CPD and health and wellbeing.

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

**CHAIRMAN**

The meeting closed at 8.18 pm