

Minutes of a meeting of the **LICENSING COMMITTEE** held in the Meeting Room 1, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Tuesday, 10 September 2024 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

A Harrison (Chairman)
J Tyrrell (Vice-Chairman)

D Ashby
A C Beal
M D Booth

A Casson
M Geaney
R A Gibson

J L King
I Sheard
J Whitbourn

In Attendance: The Public Protection Manager and the Licensing and Business Support Team Leader

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors H J W Bingham and N Chapman

1. **MINUTES**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2024.

AGREED:

That the minutes be signed as a correct record.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

3. **ANIMAL WELFARE LICENSING POLICY**

Consideration was given to the report of the Assistant Director – Regulatory which sought final approval of the Animal Welfare Licensing Policy following a period of consultation.

The Public Protection Manager introduced the policy:

- The policy had been put out for consultation with key bodies and placed on the Council's website for six weeks, but no responses had been received.
- Therefore, the final policy presented was the same as the draft with a few grammatical changes.
- Once approved by the Committee, the policy would come into effect immediately.
- There was a recommendation for delegated authority to be given to the Public Protection Manager, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and the Chair of the Licensing Committee, to make minor detail and layout changes to the policy in between review periods.

Members made the following comments:

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- Members asked for an update as to the progress of premises inspections since the last meeting of the Committee.
 - Officers confirmed that there was a programme of inspections taking place on application and on renewal. The policy would further formalise the process for inspections and allow for inspections to also take place mid-term and when complaints have been received.
- Members queried whether vets were readily available to assist with inspections where required.
 - Officers confirmed that there was one vet who was committed to working with SHDC and within the last nine months there had been no significant issues surrounding vet availability for inspections.
- Members expressed concern about goldfish in bags being given away as prizes at fairgrounds.
 - Officers confirmed that this did not fall within the scope of the Animal Welfare Licensing Policy, but the Council could use its powers in other departments, such as Communities and Assets, to impose conditions on any hires taking place on council owned land to ensure this activity was not taking place.
- Members were encouraged by the progress in relation to inspections and vet attendance at inspections.
- Members suggested further small amendments to the wording of the policy to make it clearer.
- Members asked why animal grooming establishments were not included as part of the policy.
 - Officers explained that there was no legal basis for the Council to intervene in regard to these establishments and that this responsibility sat with Trading Standards in terms of standards of service provision and the RSPCA for animal welfare.
 - Members wished to confirm their support for lobbying the local MP in regard to animal grooming establishments being licenced.

AGREED:

1. That Licensing Committee approve and adopt the revised policy.
2. That the Public Protection Manager and Licensing Team Leader, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder and Chair of Licensing Committee, be authorised to make detail and layout changes between policy reviews, to ensure that the policy reflects legislative and statutory guidance changes, as well as ensuring that it reflects any changing corporate standards and accessibility requirements.

4. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT.

Members discussed their requirements for the annual refresher training due to take place in November/early December 2024.

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Officers agreed to take member suggestions forward and build this into the training that would be provided.

(The meeting ended at 6.58 pm)

(End of minutes)