

COUNTY BOROUGH OF BLAENAU GWENT

**REPORT TO: THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING,
REGULATORY & GENERAL LICENSING
COMMITTEE (GENERAL LICENSING MATTERS)**

**SUBJECT: PLANNING, REGULATORY & GENERAL LICENSING
COMMITTEE (GENERAL LICENSING MATTERS) -
11TH FEBRUARY, 2020**

**REPORT OF: LEADERSHIP AND DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT
OFFICER**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR B. SUMMERS (CHAIR)

Councillors D. Bevan
G. L. Davies
D. Hancock
W. Hodgins
J. P. Morgan
K. Pritchard
K. Rowson
T. Smith
B. Thomas
B. Willis
L. Winnett

**WITH: L. Griffin, Team Manager – Licensing & Commercial
H. Jones, Senior Licensing Officer
M. Woodland, Solicitor**

ITEM	SUBJECT	ACTION
No. 1	<u>SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION</u> It was noted that no requests had been received for the simultaneous translation service.	

<p>No. 2</p>	<p><u>APOLOGIES</u></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mandy Moore, G. Thomas and D. Wilkshire.</p>	
<p>No. 3</p>	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.</p>	
<p>No. 4</p>	<p><u>ACTIVITIES REPORT FOR QUARTER 3 OF 2019/20</u></p> <p>Consideration was given to the report of the Team Manager Licensing.</p> <p>The Team Manager Licensing and Commercial advised that the report outlined the work of the Licensing Team for the third quarter from 1st October to 31st December, 2019 in respect of general licensing duties.</p> <p>The Team Manager noted that six complaints had been received during quarter 3 in relation to taxi drivers and referred Members to the summary of complaints and outcomes as detailed in the report. She further outlined the key points in relation to the Operational and Management Reports.</p> <p>At this juncture questions were invited from Members.</p> <p>In response to a question raised in relation to displaying identification for scrap metal collectors, it was advised that ID Badges must be displayed in the vehicle window. However, ID Badges are only issued to applicant and any persons employed would not have identification.</p> <p>The Member added that he had received complaints that scrap metal collectors had entered gardens without permission. The Team Manager suggested that any such complaints be report to the Licensing Team for investigation.</p> <p>A discussion ensued around the lack of multi-agency approach to police scrap metal collectors in a similar way to taxis, street traders, etc. A Member noted the importance of an enforcement policy for scrap metal collectors and indicated that they had examples of people trespassing onto private property to take scrap.</p>	

The Team Manager Licensing and Commercial advised that there were very complaints received in respect of scrap metal collectors and that a multi-agency approach would need to include the Police and Natural Resource Wales. The Team Manager continued that the Team's work programme was based on data and was evidence based, therefore if complaints were received for scrap metal collectors then consideration could be given to add this function to the Licensing Team's work programme.

In response to further issues raised around scrap metal collectors, the Team Manager encouraged Members to report complaints to the Licensing Team and also ask their constituents to report complaints in order for incidents to be recorded.

Another Member stated that residents are informed to report these incidents to the Police and asked if the Licensing Team worked with the Police as she felt that this evidence would be available from them. The Team Manager advised that dialogue was regularly undertaken with the Police in terms of licensing matters and stated that no such complaints had been received recently that she was aware of. It was agreed as an action point that a request would be made to Gwent Police to identify if any complaints had been received directly by them in respect of this area of work.

The Member added that residents are encouraged to report matters to the Police and felt that they would not report complaints to both the Council and Police. The Team Manager reiterated that licensing matters are reported to the Council by the Police and she had not been aware of any significant increase in complaints against scrap metal collectors, however the Team Manager reiterated that this matter would be discussed with the Police to identify if complaints were being received by them.

Another Member referred to busking in Tredegar Town Centre and asked if a policy could be drafted to move on the individual as he had caused a great nuisance in the Town Centre. The Member added that a Ward colleague had contacted Caerphilly Council who had a policy in place and suggested the Authority work with

Caerphilly to establish a policy for Blaenau Gwent.

The Senior Licensing Officer advised that Caerphilly Council did not have a Policy and was not aware a policy in any Gwent authorities. The issue of buskers was normally a more significant issue in larger city authorities such as Newport and Cardiff. The Senior Licensing Officer advised that the Council did not need a policy on everything and suggested that guidance could be developed in line with any complaints received.

The Member stated that it was a nuisance and he had received a number of complaints. The Team Manager reiterated that these complaints should be reported to the Licensing Team and that she was not aware of any recent founded complaints. The Member was aware that the busker caused a great deal of nuisance to taxi drivers and it was suggested that the officer speak with the taxi drivers in the Town Centre or the Police. The Team Manager stated that a request would be made of Gwent Police to identify if any complaints had been received. She advised that caution needed to be applied here that the Licensing Team were not seen to be canvassing for complaints, therefore she would not approach the taxi drivers direct but encouraged the Member to ask the taxi drivers to report any issues to the Licensing Team direct if they received further reports of issues.

The Team Manager Licensing and Commercial reaffirmed that the Licensing Team would raise the issue of busking and scrap metal collector complaints with the Police to see if any complaints had been received and consideration would be given to the inclusion of any proactive work in these areas in the work plan for 2020/21 accordingly.

The Team Manager – Licensing and Commercial advised that following discussions with the Chair it had been agreed that the Activities Report would be presented to Committee on a 6 monthly at the end of Quarter 4.

The Team Manager added that any matters of significant importance would be brought to the Committee separately.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and the Committee noted the activity report for this quarter.

No. 5

AREAS FOR MEMBER TRAINING/BRIEFINGS

No area for member's trainings or briefings were requested.	
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