

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: Licensing Sub-Committee **Date:** 4 December 2014

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, **Time:** 10.04 - 10.34 am
High Street, Epping

Members Present: Mrs M Sartin (Chairman), Mrs R Gadsby, P Keska and Ms G Shiell

Other Councillors:

Apologies:

Officers Present: R Ferriera (Assistant Solicitor), S Kitts (Licensing Officer) and M Jenkins (Democratic Services Assistant)

49. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made pursuant to the Member's Code of Conduct.

50. PROCEDURE FOR THE CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

The Sub-Committee noted the agreed procedure for the conduct of business and the terms of reference.

51. CO-OP 113 CHURCH HILL, LOUGHTON, ESSEX IG10 1QR

The three Councillors that presided over this item were Councillors M Sartin (Chairman), R Gadsby and G Shiell. The Chairman welcomed the application representatives and requested that they introduce themselves. In attendance, on behalf of the application were Mr R Arnot of Wardhadaway law firm and Mr G Gaston, the designated premises supervisor for the Co-operative Group Food Ltd in respect of the premises at 113 Church Hill, Loughton, Essex IG10 1QR. It was noted that there were no objectors present. The Chairman then introduced the members and officers present and outlined the procedure that would be followed for determination of the application.

(a) The Application before the Sub-Committee

The Licensing Officer informed the Sub-Committee that an application had been received on 17 October 2014 from the Co-operative Group Food Ltd for a premises licence at 113 Church Hill, Loughton, Essex IG10 1QR. The application set out the relevant licensing activities applied for:

- Monday to Sunday 06:00 – 23:00

The application had gone out to consultation, the responsible authorities receiving a copy of the application. The application had been advertised at the premises and in a local newspaper.

The District Council had received letters from Essex Police, Quality Assurance and Safeguarding Service at Essex County Council and EFDC Public Health stating they had no representations to make. The authority also received an acknowledgement letter from Essex County Fire and Rescue. It was advised that a representation had been received from Loughton Town Council, however this was subsequently withdrawn as the applicant had later agreed to amend the sales of alcohol items, commencing from 07:00 hours, instead of 06:00 hours.

The authority had also received three representations from residents, their objections related to the prevention of crime and disorder, prevention of public nuisance and protection of children from harm.

The applicant had provided Members with their corporate training guide as supporting documentation. The document had also been offered to objectors for their consideration. Hard copies were circulated at the meeting.

(b) Presentation of the Applicant's case

Mr R Arnot, speaking on behalf of the application, stated that the Co-operative were the fifth largest retailer in the UK with 3,000 stores and 8 million members. The premises in question was an industrial unit, its business was a convenience store. The intended alcohol sales would make up 15% of turnover. The store was not a dedicated off-licence.

The Co-operative had a regional risk manager, the company applied policies and procedures to its operations with training and business audits.

The Sub-Committee was advised that induction training for new staff took 4 hours followed by an exam. Staff could not start work until they'd passed. Co-operative used a "buddy" system for new staff. Mr R Arnott added that there were two refresher courses for staff which involved passing an exam. The premises had 16 CCTV cameras. The cash till used by staff had a product bar code which scanned products and prompted the employee to follow company procedures. All information was captured and checked. The premises would be using Challenge 25 with customers. The layout of the premises was such that the alcohol would be on the far side so that customers had to walk the length of the public area to get there which made theft less likely. There were 20 members of staff at the premises.

He reminded the Sub-Committee of legislation which stipulated that shops should be allowed to sell alcohol unless otherwise directed by evidence, pointing out as well that there were no objections from the statutory consultees.

Mr R Arnott acknowledged local objections from residents to the application however he advised that the objections made did not appear to be evidence based. An objection appearing in the meeting agenda referred to allowing "unfettered drinking of alcohol" was untrue as there was strict enforcement concerning the sale of alcohol. Another representation claimed that there were too many outlets in the area selling alcohol, Mr R Arnott advised that this argument was not relevant in making a licensing decision.

(c) Questions from the Sub-Committee to the Applicants

Members asked about the number of parking spaces for the site. Mr R Arnott replied that 12 spaces were available but added that most customers arrived there on foot.

The Sub-Committee asked about staff supervision at the store. The applicants advised that in regard to new establishments, local managers were used initially to help the store through its formative period.

(d) Closing Statement from the Applicant

The applicants said they had nothing further to add to their case.

(e) Consideration of the Application by the Sub-Committee

The Sub-Committee asked the applicants to leave the Council Chamber so they could consider the application as presented to them in private. During their deliberation the Sub-Committee received no further advice from the officer present.

RESOLVED:

That the application for a New Premises Licence in regard to the Co-operative Group Food Ltd store at 113 Church Hill, Loughton, Essex IG10 1QR be granted subject to the conditions consistent with the operating schedule and with the amended condition as agreed with the applicants which the Sub-Committee members felt were appropriate, proportionate and in the public interest as set out below:

- (a) Sale of alcohol hours to be amended to 07:00 – 23:00 Mondays to Sundays.

CHAIRMAN