

# Review of Licensing Services Task and Finish Panel

**Date of meeting: 23 October 2012**

**Portfolio: Safer, Greener and Highways**



**Officer contact for further information: Alison Mitchell**

**Committee Secretary: Adrian Hendry**

---

## Recommendation/Decisions Required:

- (1) That consideration is given to the scope and the Terms of Reference for this review, the reporting deadline, and how it is to be conducted; and
- (2) That the Terms of Reference for this Task and Finish Panel be agreed and submitted to the 27 November 2012 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## Report:

### Background

1. At the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2012, Councillors J Hart and Mrs S Watson submitted a request that the Committee set up a Task and Finish Panel to review the Licensing Sub-committees. A copy of the request is attached.
2. Subsequent to the setting up of this Panel by the O&S Committee the following Councillors have nominated themselves to sit on the Panel: Councillors P Smith (Chairman), K Angold-Stephens, James Hart, R Morgan, J Philip, D Stallan and S Watson.

### Scope of the Panel

3. The request (attached) and the subsequent debate by members raised a number of issues which the Committee members considered should be included in the scope of the Task and Finish Panel. These are set out below

### The Request:

- Move the meetings to the evenings so that Councillors with full-time jobs could join the Committee.
- Create South, East and West Licensing Sub-committees, so local councillors with local knowledge could decide the cases; and
- In cases where nightclubs, pubs or shops applied for changes to the hours in which they were licensed to sell alcohol, the relevant parish/town, district and county councillors and the nearest 50 properties (residential and business) to the application premises should be informed by letter to make them aware that an application had been submitted.

4. Matters raised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during the debate:
- How are residents in the locality made aware of licensing applications?
  - Training of members of the Committee and training for other members;
  - Should all licensing matters be heard in the evenings or only the premises licences' applications?
  - The location of the meetings and cost for the hiring of the hall;
  - Potential costs for the overrun of these meetings;
  - Costs of Officers time for evening meetings; and
  - Potential costs to the applicant.
5. Members are asked to consider the Terms of Reference (draft attached) taking account of those matters listed above and any other matters that they consider should be included.

### **Information required by the Members**

6. At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee members indicated the information which they would require to assist in this review:
- How do other neighbouring Councils conduct the licensing sub-committees?
  - Which other Councils hold evening meetings and consult them;
  - A wider consultation should be undertaken with Parish and Town Councils and other groups who are likely to be affected by this proposal;
  - Proposals for the geographic areas covered by the sub-committees;
  - Information as to the make up of types of cases heard by and the length of meeting of the sub-committees over the last year;
  - Taking account of the type of cases last year what would be the likely number of evening meetings (and daytime) meetings which would be held each month; and
  - To calculate the additional costs of evening meetings.
7. Members are asked to identify whether they require officers to research those matters listed above and any other information they require.

### **Timetable**

8. Members are requested to consider a timetable for the conduct of this review bearing in mind that a bid for further funds would have to be made at the appropriate budget setting round for officer's time and potential costs for hall hire.

### **Guidance**

9. In order to assist the Panel, a set of 'Notes for Guidance' for the operating of a Task and Finish Panel is attached. This sets out how a Task and Finish Panel should ideally go about scoping its programme of work, gathering information and evidence. The note also suggests how final reporting back to the main Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the larger Council is undertaken. A draft layout for a final report is also attached as a useful practical example of what the Panel are required to produce.

### **Reason for decision:**

Decision of Overview and Scrutiny Committee to set up the Task and Finish Panel

### **Options considered and rejected:**

Not to set up the Task and Finish Panel. This would not comply with the decision of

## Overview and Scrutiny

### **Consultation undertaken:**

The Task and Finish Panel may direct that a consultation exercise is undertaken

### **Resource implications:**

This will depend upon the outcome of the report

Budget provision: This will depend upon the outcome of the report

Personnel: This will depend upon the outcome of the report

Land: None

Community Plan/BVPP reference:

Relevant statutory powers:

Background papers:

Licensing Act 2003 as amended and other relevant licensing legislation,

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications:

Key Decision reference: (if required) No