

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE

HELD AT 5.30 P.M. ON THURSDAY, 18 MARCH 2021

ONLINE 'VIRTUAL' MEETING - [HTTPS://TOWERHAMLETS.PUBLIC-I.TV/CORE/PORTAL/HOME](https://towerhamlets.public-i.tv/core/portal/home)

Members Present:

Councillor Kahar Chowdhury (Chair)
Councillor Shad Chowdhury (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Sufia Alam
Councillor Shah Ameen
Councillor David Edgar
Councillor Peter Golds
Councillor Mohammed Ahabab Hossain
Councillor Eve McQuillan
Councillor Victoria Obaze
Councillor Mohammed Pappu
Councillor Kyrsten Perry

Apologies

Councillor Amina Ali

Officers Present:

Ladi Lapite	– (Principal Enforcement Lawyer)
Tom Lewis	– (Team Leader - Licensing Services)
David Tolley	– (Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards)
Simmi Yesmin	– (Democratic Services Officer, Committees, Governance)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest made.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

The minutes of the Licensing Committee held on 17th December 2020 were agreed as a correct record of proceedings.

3. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 Public consultation on the Cumulative Impact Policies

Mr Tom Lewis, Team Leader, Licensing, introduced the report and explained that the Council must review its Cumulative Impact Assessment Policies every 3 years. As part of the review the Council must carry out statutory consultation in the same way as specified for reviewing the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy.

It was noted that the Brick Lane Cumulative Impact Area had been in place for 7 years and the Bethnal Green Cumulative Impact Area for 2 years. It was noted that the consultation process commenced on 28th January 2021 and would end on 22nd April 2021. The options in the consultation were to;

- Retain both CIAs (Cumulative Impact Assessments)
- Retain the CIA for Brick Lane and remove the CIA for Bethnal Green
- Remove both CIAs

It was noted that the Cumulative Impact Policy (CIP) was reviewed and updated to make the policy clearer and easier to understand. The policy made it clear that any application made within the CIA area would need for the applicant to demonstrate in the application why the granting of their application would not negatively add to the cumulative already experienced within the CIA zones. The policy clarified that the CIA areas did not create a stop of granting licences within the zones, but was very clear that where valid representations were received the onus was solely on the applicant to adequately rebut the presumption.

Mr Lewis then referred Members to the appendices to the report and highlighted the complaints received by the Licensing Team for each ward and the hotspot areas in the CIA zones. It was confirmed that Spitalfields and Banglatown ward and Weavers ward, which were the main wards that the Brick Lane CIA falls within, remains consistently one of the highest wards for complaints received by the Licensing Team. This was also the same for the Bethnal Green CIA area.

In response to questions the following was noted;

- There had been 60-70 responses received as part of the consultation so far.
- That all contested applications would still continue to come before the Licensing Sub Committee for consideration.
- That only one appeal had been lost in the CIA area over the past three years.
- That the onus was on the applicant to demonstrate how they would not negatively impact on the CIA area, by providing a more detailed application.
- That pavement licences were separate to a premises licence, which would be assessed individually and the Noise Team assess and visit the area before a decision is made.
- There was no way to temporarily remove the CIA areas to help businesses during this economic climate.

- That approximately 10-15 shadow licences have been applied for by landlords when premises have closed down during the pandemic in order to retain premises licence.

The Committee AGREED that the report to Council include information on the number of businesses that had closed due to the pandemic in comparison to the numbers that have opened since the pandemic, particularly in the CIA areas.

The Committee welcomed the report.

The Chair moved and it was **RESOLVED**;

1. The report be noted.

3.2 Update in relation to Prosecutions and Appeals

Mr Ladi Lapita, Principal Enforcement Lawyer, introduced the regular noting report which detailed licensing related prosecutions and appeals for Quarters 4 for 2019-2020 and Quarters 1 to 3 for 2020/2021.

The number of prosecutions over the quarters was noted and it was also noted that during Quarters 1-3 for 2020/21 no proceedings were concluded due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Members welcomed the report.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

The Chair extended his thanks to officers and members of the Licensing Committee for their contributions and support over the last municipal year.

The meeting ended at 6.35 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Kahar Chowdhury
Licensing Committee