

## **Agenda Item 6.4- Review of the Licensing Act Cumulative Impact Assessments**

### **Appendix 9**

#### **Comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

As part of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's (OSC) duty to review budget and policy framework items, the Committee considered the Cumulative Impact Assessment 2021-24.

OSC welcomed this report and recognised the importance of this work in helping to tackle anti-social behavior, crime and disorder, public nuisance, and protecting children from harm in Bethnal Green and Brick Lane.

OSC heard that the council has carried out a review to ensure that the policy it is still valid and fit for purpose. A public consultation was carried out in January 2021 and engaged residents and organisations in the hospitality trade. OSC was pleased to note that residents have been sufficiently consulted and the majority are in support of the policy, with 55% supportive of the Brick Lane policy and 58% supportive of the Bethnal Green policy. The Committee noted that there was some negative feedback from businesses in the hospitality sector who felt that the policy is restrictive, especially considering the impact COVID has had on their income, and the council must support businesses in their recovery to ensure these concerns are mitigated.

OSC was also pleased to hear that this policy is supported by the Metropolitan Police who feel that this policy assists them to tackle anti-social behavior through ensuring applicants for licenses consider how they will run their business and mitigate any adverse impact they may have on the area.

OSC questioned whether this needs to be a borough wide policy and extended beyond Brick Lane and Bethnal Green. OSC are concerned that given the statutory timelines there is not sufficient flexibility to react to rising anti-social behavior hotspots which are linked to license premises and it leaves a long time to wait to address the impact. Following discussions, OSC is reassured that we are not time limited if the evidence presents a need to extend this policy to other areas of the borough. OSC was also pleased to hear that should there be issues with any premises not covered by the policy, there are other powers in regards to tackling premises which cause anti-social behavior, namely the Licensing Committee reviewing a license which could result in it being revoked or further conditions added to it. OSC would like to receive a note in writing which sets out the other mechanisms for councilors and residents to bring premises up before the Licensing Committee for review.