

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.35 P.M. ON THURSDAY, 18 JANUARY 2024

COUNCIL CHAMBER - TOWN HALL, WHITECHAPEL

Members Present in Person:

Councillor Ana Miah
Councillor Leelu Ahmed
Councillor Suluk Ahmed
Councillor Gulam Kibria
Choudhury
Councillor Abu Chowdhury
Councillor Marc Francis
Councillor Peter Golds
Councillor Iqbal Hossain
Councillor Kabir Hussain
Councillor Shahaveer Shubo
Hussain
Councillor Ahmodul Kabir
Councillor Amy Lee
Councillor Rebaka Sultana

Apologies:

Councillor Faroque Ahmed

Officers Present in Person:

Tom Lewis	(Team Leader - Licensing Services)
Jonathan Melnick	(Principal Lawyer-Enforcement)
David Tolley	(Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards)
Thomas French	Democratic Services Officer (Committees)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

The minutes of the Licensing Sub Committee meetings held on 14th June, 26th September and 26th October 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

3. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**4. LICENSING ENFORCEMENT**

David Tolley, Head of Environmental Health and Trading Standards, introduced the report that reviewed the outcomes of late-night inspections and enforcement in connection with licensed premises undertaken by the Environmental Health and Trading Standards Service. Inspections are carried out late at night to premises where intelligence is received alleging a contravention of the Licensing Act 2003. The service also has a programme of enforcement visits that included test purchasing of age restricted products.

Tom Lewis, Licensing Team Leader, provided further detail.

Further to questions from the Committee, David and Tom:

- Explained the reason for the decrease in the number of licensing visits between 2022 and 2023.
- Provided background on and the rationale for use of Park Guards in enforcement activity.
- Provided an overview of coordination between Tower Hamlets Council and Hackney Council licensing enforcement.
- Provided information on the status of SEVs and how many are currently active in the borough.
- Provided more detail on the process of commissioning test purchases, including when formal legal action/prosecution would be pursued.
- Processes to alert new businesses about licensing requirements, such as the need for a license for food sales after 11pm. Infractions could be raised by the food team, or by residents making complaints.
- Provided information on the Team's timescales and targets for complaint investigations.
- Report specific case of unlicensed street trading to Tower Hamlets Enforcement Officers for proper action Request for impressive report on local authority food standards and safety from Safer and Stronger Communities Board of the Local Government Association

Further to questions, the Committee made the following observations:

- Having comparative data from neighbouring local authorities would assist the Committee to assess the Council's licensing enforcement performance.
- A process to identify and communicate licensing requirements to new businesses proactively would be beneficial, as Councillors sometimes receive complaints that no advance warning of licensing requirements is provided.

RESOLVED that the Licensing Committee:

1. Notes the activity that has been undertaken by the Environmental Health and Trading Standards Service with regards to regulating late night licensed premises

The meeting ended at 7.16 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Ana Miah
Licensing Committee