

# Crawley Borough Council

## Minutes of Licensing Committee

6 June 2006 at 7.40pm

### Present:

Councillor B M Brockwell  
Councillors B K Blake, J I Denman, B McCrow, J L Millar Smith, B J Quinn,  
C J Redmayne, L A Seekings, D J Shreeves (Vice Chair) and  
J A Singh

### Officers Present:

Leo Nwoye	Assistant Lawyer for Environment and Housing Directorate
Madeleine Shopland	Democratic Services Officer
Angela Tanner	Head of Environmental Services

### Apologies for Absence:

Councillors A G Brown, B J Burgess, D G Crow, R J Hull and C C Lloyd

### 1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### 2. Food Service Plan 2007-2008

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Environmental Service ES/184 on the Food Safety Plan 2007-2008. The report sought approval for the Food Safety Plan 2007-2008.

It was noted that the Council as the Food Enforcement Authority was required prepare a Food Safety Plan detailing how it would meet statutory deadlines on food safety. It is required to bring this plan before Members. The Head of Environmental Services indicated that although the Food Safety Plan was normally considered by the executive it was being brought to the Licensing Committee because of the committee's constitutional links to Environmental Health.

The Foods Standards Agency sets a framework that the local authority as the food safety authority must comply with. Failure to do so could result in an audit and the removal of the food safety responsibility. The Council is measured on annual returns to the Food Standards Agency.

Members were informed that recent EU legislation required food business to provide written documentation regarding their food safety management system. The Council

had bid for funding from the Foods Standards Agency to provide training in other languages and for those who required assistance completing the relevant documentation. The Head of Environmental Services stated that a 'Scores on the Doors' programme which requires food businesses to publish the results of food hygiene inspections on the premises was likely to come into effect in the near future.

Members requested that more explanatory information be provided for the tables detailing the risk rating of premises in Crawley and Gatwick (p15-16) and the ethnic breakdown of Crawley (p9)

The Committee noted that the Imported Food Office was previously accredited to ISO 9001 and questioned why it was that re-accreditation was not being sought. The Head of Environmental Services indicated that the Council was no longer paying for the badge indicating that the service was accredited. The badge indicates the quality of the service to customers. However, customers requiring imported food services must use the Imported Food Office, rendering the additional expenditure on a badge indicating its accreditation, unnecessary.

In response to Members queries regarding how premises were graded the Head of Environmental Services stated that premises were graded according to areas such as the confidence in the manager, the cleanliness of the premises and staff training. These areas were further sub divided. The Head of Environmental Services also explained that Customs dealt with illegal food whilst the Imported Food Office dealt with legal shipments, detaining any that was found to be unfit.

The Committee praised the tour of the airport offered to Members.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) To approve the contents of the Food Service Plan 2007-2008.
- (2) That explanatory information relating to the tables detailing the risk rating of premises in Crawley and Gatwick (p15-16) and the ethnic breakdown of Crawley (p9) be provided to Members.

### **3. Health and Safety Service Plan 2007-2008**

The Head of Environmental Services presented the report of the Head of Environmental Service ES/185 on the Health and Safety Service Plan 2007-2008, to the Committee.

The Council, as a health and safety enforcement authority, is required to produce a plan detailing how it will meet its statutory requirements concerning health and safety enforcement arising by way of Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The plan has been brought to the attention of the Licensing Committee as a result of its responsibilities in this area. The Council is measured on an annual return to the Health and Safety Commission.

The Head of Environmental Services indicated that ill health and accidents at work caused a great loss in working days. Stress and back injuries were identified as high causes of absence. She went on to state that the Council and the Health and Safety Executive would be launching a Fit 3 campaigns (fit for today, fit for tomorrow fit for life) to help tackle this area.

It was noted that the Council was a strong Member of the Health and Safety Liaison Group that operated within West Sussex.

Members were informed that a Circus Safety toolkit had been produced. The Head of Environmental Services commented that the Health and Safety Executive were responsible for enforcing the safety of fairs as opposed to local authorities.

In response to Members' queries the Committee were informed that those subject to an inspection were not usually informed in advance of when the inspection would take place. Members also requested that more explanatory information be provided for the tables detailing the risk rating of premises in Crawley (p9).

The Committee was informed that a Licensing Plan was planned for the future. This, however, was not a statutory requirement.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) To approve the contents of the Health and Safety Service Plan 2007-2008.
- (2) That explanatory information relating to the tables detailing the risk rating of premises in Crawley (p9) be provided to Members.

## **4. Gambling Act 2005 – Fees**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Environmental Service ES/188 on the setting of fees under the Gambling Act 2005.

Members were reminded that the Gambling Act 2005 would transfer the full responsibility for licensing premises for the purposes of gambling to local authorities in September 2007 and that applications for which a fee would be charged could be received from 21<sup>st</sup> May 2007.

The Head of Environmental Services informed the Committee that it was suggested that Crawley, as per a number of other local authorities, charge three quarters of the maximum fees set by central government. She emphasised that the Gambling Act 2005 was new legislation and whether this level of charging was sufficient or too low or high, was unclear at present. She went on to state that a high level of demand was not anticipated and additional staff had been considered unnecessary.

The Head of Environmental Services commented that higher prize gaming machines should be placed in a separate area away from children and inspections carried out to ensure that children were not accessing these machines. Certain permissions under the Licensing Act 2003 allow licensed premises to have a limited number of gaming machines. The Head of Environmental Services confirmed that if the licence holder wished to install more this would be picked up under the Gambling Act 2005.

Members questioned why it was that transitional fast-track applications were cheaper than transitional non-fast-track applications. The Head of Environmental Services stated that only certain applications could be fast-tracked.

It was agreed that Licensing Committee Members would receive training regarding the Gambling Act 2005 at a later date.

**RESOLVED**

- (1) To approve the fees as proposed.
- (2) To review the level of the fees 6 months after their implementation.
- (3) To RECOMMEND that Council delegate the power of setting fees to the Head of Environmental Services and that the Constitution be amended accordingly.

**5. Closure of Meeting**

With the business of the Committee concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.40pm

B M BROCKWELL  
**Chair**