

CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the LICENSING & REGULATION COMMITTEE held on 14 FEBRUARY 2013

PRESENT: Councillor P N Shepherd - Chairman
" D G Meacock - Vice Chairman

Councillors: S P Berry
N L Brown
Mrs J A Burton
M J Cunnane
D J Lacey
S A Patel
C H Spruytenburg
H A Trevette

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillors G K Harris, P M Jones, M Prince, N Stewert and M Vivis

19 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2012, copies of which had been previously circulated, were agreed by the Committee and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

21 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED –

That under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Note: The relevant paragraph number from Part 1 of Schedule 12A is indicated at the end of the Minute heading.

22 LICENSING SHARED SERVICE DEFINE STAGE REVIEW PRESENTATION

The first part of the review was underway to create a shared service with South Bucks District Council. A single team would be created to undertake joint enforcement, i.e. respecting each individual Council's decisions. The new shared service would be expected to make cost savings, raise some income through fees charged and give a better service to users.

The presentation described the work that has been done so far, understanding the current work processes and service delivery. The study

asked the customers of this service, the staff and Members for feedback. From this feedback a vision for the new service had been created; to “provide a consistent, transparent, efficient licensing system across Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils”.

It was noted through the results of the survey, that Chiltern has had a very different approach to the service, compared to South Bucks. South Bucks District Council currently had a much more expensive paper based system whilst Chiltern already had many services on-line. This difference was particularly noticeable in the costs of the service to each council and so SBDC appeared to have more opportunities to gain savings. Councillors asked whether there was any need for change at CDC but were advised that there were still considerable improvements that could be made at CDC. Currently there were 12 electronic forms but all should be available electronically for cost savings and efficiency.

Many of the proposed savings and efficiencies would come from the recommended joint IT system. This would allow customers to enter their own details on-line, reducing input errors, allowing information to be available faster and acting as a reminder for required data and automatic renewal. More information about applications could also be available on-line, which would reduce the number of Hearings required. A pre-application information service, which would be chargeable, could also result in better applications and the survey indicated that customers would like this service to be made available.

Councillors asked whether the fees and charges made could virtually cover the cost of the service at CDC and SBDC, as was the case at some other local authorities. It was advised that those Councils were large metropolitan Councils with many licensed establishments and that would not be achievable in these largely rural areas.

It was asked for an indication of what the cost of investment in a new IT system was likely to be, but this was not yet available. It was advised however that the previous investment in new IT systems for this area had produced considerable savings.

Councillors asked how it would work in practise if the team were located in one or other Council. It was advised that Officers could drive easily to either Council to attend advice appointments.

The Chairman thanked Martin Holt for a good piece of work with benefits and savings.

RESOLVED –

That the Licensing Shared Service Define State Review be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.43 pm