

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LICENSING COMMITTEE – 9 JULY 2003

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF ADMINISTRATION

LICENSING ACT – ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

Purpose of report

To report to members the latest position over the administrative arrangements for the implementation of the Act.

Decision required

To agree that this Council should administer the Act itself in collaboration with Charnwood Borough Council on certain issues.

Policy matters

The principle of partnership arrangements is a policy issue.

Financial/staff resources

The Council has approved a budget to cover the initial implementation costs.

Health/anti-poverty issues

None.

Crime and disorder

One of the four licensing objectives relates to crime and disorder.

Human rights

These specific issues have no impact on human rights.

E-government

E-government principles will be observed in any systems that are introduced.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Members will recall that at your last meeting on 29 May 2003 I verbally reported upon discussions that were taking place with authorities across the county as to how the Licensing Act should be administered with the possibility of there being a countywide partnership.
- 1.2 Since your last meeting further discussions have taken place with the authorities and it soon became apparent that the proposed central administrative unit, the main thrust of the partnership, would simply be a "back room" operation intended to deal with the administrative processing of all applications including the issue of a licence where no representations had been made. However, what that central arrangement did not provide for is the resourcing at the local level to receive applications, answer applicants' queries and to deal with those applications, where representations are submitted. Members will be aware that these more contentious applications prove to be the most time consuming and therefore the resource required at the local level would not only have to be a sufficient number but also knowledgeable and experienced to adequately process these more contentious matters.
- 1.3 I have appended for members' reference a for and against for the suggested centralised unit from which it will be clear that there are other issues which question the adequacy of these arrangements.
- 1.4 At the last meeting attended on 2 June 2003, officers were asked to advise within the next fortnight as to whether the authority would commit itself to the proposed partnership arrangement and given the perceived difficulties referred to above I felt unable and unwilling to commit the Council.
- 1.5 Whilst at this stage I cannot produce any facts and figures for you in terms of the partnership approach as opposed to the District Council administering these matters in isolation, it is my perception at this moment in time that the Council, the licensees and the public would be best served if we were to administer the system ourselves.
- 1.6 **Members are asked to consider whether they support this view.**

2. CO-OPERATION

- 2.1 Whilst in the opinion of officers the suggested partnership arrangement would not benefit this authority it has been considered that there would be some merit in pursuing a "collaborative approach" with a neighbouring authority.
- 2.2 That authority is Charnwood Borough and the sort of areas where again there is an opportunity for joint working covering such aspects as enforcement where there may be a possibility of sharing our resources in that direction, joint training exercises where again the costs of arranging and holding such training could be shared between our authorities and may be an opportunity for mutual aid in licensing ie staffing support, expertise etc.

2.3 There is a further consideration to this in that effective enforcement of the legislation will rely upon good co-operation with the police and Charnwood and North West Leicestershire share the same policing area ie the north area of the Leicestershire Constabulary and therefore again there is an opportunity for more effective arrangements across those two areas.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 **Members are asked to consider the principle of working in collaboration with Charnwood Borough on certain issues in administering the Licensing Act.**

Background papers: None.

R Eaton
Head of Administration

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