

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LICENSING COMMITTEE – 12 SEPTEMBER 2012

Title of report	COUNTY WIDE ALCOHOL LICENSING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
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Purpose of report	<p>(1) To make Licensing Committee aware of a County wide alcohol licensing project</p> <p>(2) To present Licensing Committee with the progress made with delivery of the improvement plan</p>
Strategic aims	<p>Business and Jobs Safer and Healthier District</p>
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	All costs will be met by Leicestershire County Council
Link to relevant CAT	Business CAT
Risk Management	Not applicable
Equalities Impact Assessment	Not applicable
Human Rights	Not applicable
Transformational Government	Not applicable
Comments of Head of Paid Service	The Report is Satisfactory
Comments of Section 151 Officer	The Report is Satisfactory

Comments of Monitoring Officer	The Report is Satisfactory
Consultees	None
Background papers	Leicestershire Together Strategic Commissioning Executive (24 May 2012) 3 Year Alcohol Harm Delivery Plan – Room 109
Recommendations	<p>(1) THAT LICENSING COMMITTEE NOTE THE CONTENT OF THE COUNTY WIDE ALCOHOL LICENSING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT</p> <p>(2) THAT LICENSING COMMITTEE RECEIVES PROGRESS REPORTS AT FUTURE MEETINGS</p>

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Work undertaken through the Leicestershire County Council Community Budgets – Substance Misuse Programme identified alcohol misuse as a significant and costly partnership wide problem that requires a targeted range of interventions to help address the issue. This has resulted in an agreement amongst partners of a need to increase the understanding of the role and impact of alcohol licensing and enforcement in relation to reducing alcohol harm.
- 1.2 The terms of reference have been agreed across the County at a meeting of Environmental Health Managers.
- 1.3 It should be noted that this project is not seeking to challenge the local decision making authority for Licensing, which clearly resides with District Chief Executives and Licensing Committee Members.

2.0 Project Team

- 2.1 It was recognised that Districts have a key role to play in alcohol licensing and District Chief Executives' were therefore invited to take on the role of senior sponsor for this project.

The project team consists of:

- Project Sponsor - Mark Hall, Chief Executive of Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
- Project Manager – Lee Mansfield, Environmental Health Team Manager, North West Leicestershire District Council
- Project Officer – Emma McHugh, Licensing Enforcement Officer, North West Leicestershire District Council

- 2.2 With the Management and Leadership of the project being undertaken by employees of North West Leicestershire District Council, this provides an opportunity to create a reputation as a forward thinking, quality licensing team across the County.

3.0 Council Priorities

3.1 The project will contribute to the Councils priority of making North West Leicestershire a 'Safer and Healthier District' by reducing the harm and inequalities caused by substance misuse.

4.0 **Project Outcomes**

4.1 The project will work collaboratively and collectively with local partners and stakeholders including other Licensing Authorities, Leicestershire Police, Home Office, County and City Trading Standards and the Health Authority to further explore licensing and enforcement practices and procedures to deliver the following outcomes:

- A shared vision and approach to licensing and enforcement across the place;
- Identification of opportunities for reducing the negative impacts of alcohol misuse through licensing and enforcement services;
- Identification and sharing of best practice, tools and guidance to support licensing and enforcement;
- Increased awareness amongst partners and key decision makers of the impact of licensing decisions across the place;
- Mechanisms available to use the full scope of the legislation that covers licensing and enforcement;
- Guidance on implementation of the forthcoming full cost recovery model for licensing;
- Improved provision of information to enable better informed and evidence based decisions to be made on licensing and enforcement issues that help to reduce the impact of alcohol misuse across the place;
- Identification and development of opportunities for place based or more local collaboration; and
- Developments are capable of responding to future challenges.

4.2 The success of the project will impact on residents of North West Leicestershire and others visiting our district by:

- Reducing levels of crime and disorder related to licensed premises;
- Reducing levels of public nuisance related to licensed premises;
- Ensuring public safety;
- Protecting children from harms related to licensed premises.

5.0 **Project Work Plan**

5.1 A work plan has been devised detailing the key strands of work. (Appendix 1)

Partners have agreed the following key priorities:

5.1.1 Alcohol Licensing Information Scheme

Development and implementation of an alcohol licensing information scheme for licensed premises across the County. The scheme will help residents choose where to visit by providing information about the level of compliance with the law. Each licensed premises will receive a rating from the local authority. The rating awarded to the premises shows how closely the business is meeting the requirements of their premises licence. When you visit a licensed premises you will see a sticker in the window or on the door showing you the compliance level for that business;

The licensing authority will assess how well a business is complying with the requirements of the Licensing Act 2003 by looking at:

- the prevention of crime and disorder;
- the prevention of public nuisance;
- public safety;
- the protection of children from harm.

5.1.2 Training Programme

A comprehensive training and development package will be devised across the partnership, maximising opportunities to share best practice and improve partnership working. This will be targeted at licensing officers, responsible authorities and Licensing Committee Members;

5.1.3 Policies and Procedures

A review of a range of policies and procedures to improve efficiency and effectiveness. These will include licensing hearings, reviews and temporary event notices.

6.0 **What will be different at the end of the Project**

6.1 Licensing Committee Members can expect an opportunity of further training. A training package will be developed and delivered to all Committee Members across the County. The training will cover Licensing Act 2003 and Statutory Guidance, Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Live Music Act.

6.2 It is hoped that an alcohol licensing information scheme will be launched and be operational in North West Leicestershire in early 2013.

6.3 As policies and procedures across the County are reviewed changes may be made to procedures currently in place at NWLDC. This will improve transparency and consistency of approach for businesses and residents.

6.4 Residents of and visitors to North West Leicestershire will have access to information detailing compliance levels of licensed premises.

6.5 Licence holders operating across more than one Licensing Authority area can expect more consistency in terms of administrative processes and decision making.

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July 2012

KEY



Theme	No	Initiative	Key Objectives	Potential Evaluation Measures	Lead /T&F Group	Progress Update	RAG rating
Reduce substance related crime and disorder							
Recognition	1	Devise and implement a visible accreditation scheme recognising compliant, responsible on and off licence premises	To drive up licensing compliance standards for on and off licences. Will enable resource and enforcement to be targetted on non compliant businesses	We have an accreditation scheme in place.	Emma	Research begun. T&F group in place. Draft criteria produced. 1 st meeting scheduled. Briefing note produced.	
Competence	2	Develop a template training package for Licensing Officers. Develop a template training package for Elected Members. Develop a template training package for Responsible Authorities. Content to include: (TENS processes, EMRO, late night levy, LA as a RA, CIP, greater use of prosecution powers for underage selling, Health Authority as a RA, closing strategies, removal of vicinity test)	To develop consistent understanding and application in licensing and enforcement work across the partnership. To ensure new powers are utilised to maximum effect across the partnership	Template training package developed. Licensing Authorities and Responsible Authorities are knowledgeable in the new powers and understand the potential opportunities	Emma	Collated current training material from Las and RAs. T&F group in place.	
Competence	3	Develop competency framework and skills matrix for those involved in licensing and enforcement activities	To develop a consistent method of assessing competence and identifying training needs	Competency matrix developed and launched. Las and RAs aware and are using it	Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO)	Matrix finalised by BRDO. To be launched in September	
Competence	4	Hold a workshop with Health Authority	To ensure HA are aware of their new role and responsibility and to agree processes of communication and reporting	Health Authority is aware of its new role. Las are aware of process of involving HA		1 st meeting has taken place. Workstream led by Anita/Verity. Emma taking support role	
Competence	5	Guidance Note: Magistrates To devise a guidance note detailing issues for magistrates to consider when making decisions regarding appeals against decisions made by licensing authorities	Consistency of approach. Informed decision making	Guidance note has been devised and made available to magistrates		Existing document issued by Magistrates association has been reviewed and added to	

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Policies and Procedures	6	Model conditions review- Full review of model conditions to ensure they incorporate any new powers available and are realistic, achievable and enforceable – Key priority	Consistency of approach-Ensure all conditions are legally enforceable -Share best practice	We have a pool of conditions that is available for the County to use		Draft set of conditions complete. Legal check completed. To be considered by business reference panel on 31 July	
Policies and Procedures	7	Review of Key Procedures (1) Mapping and agreement of standard process across county for: new licenses, licensing hearings, reviews and variations where representations are received and TENS (2) Explore potential for sharing of resources and expertise in management of	Shared approach to the management of licensing reviews across the County to improve consistency and effectiveness - More effective use of expertise across the place to support licensing and enforcement activities	We have a standard process in place, being used by all licensing authorities		Collating processes from other Las. Process of new/variation, reviews, TENS and hearings in draft	
Policies and Procedures	8	Licensing Authority: Inspection policy: To devise a method for risk rating licensed premises for the purpose of targeting resource for intervention	Effective targeting of resources and enforcement	Methodology in place		Collating policies from other LAs	
Policies and Procedures	9	Licensing applications Agree and implement amendment to licensing application to obtain all relevant information required across partnership to process efficiently Key priority	Improved application process, requesting all required information at outset	Amended application form being used		Revised form devised and used by some licensing authorities. Letter drafted to be sent to Home Office	
Partnership / Communication	10	Hold a County wide Partnership event to review new powers and agree how they can be best implemented across the partnership to maximise impact and effectiveness – Key priority	To inform Key Elected Members of purpose of project and expected outcomes	Meeting has taken place with Licensing Chairs and Vice Chairs (September)		EM has devised a list of PIs for benchmarking purposes and has requested data from LAs	

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Partnership / Communication	11	Hold a partnership event to capture and celebrate what has been achieved and next steps	Strengthen communication, co-ordination and collaboration across the partnership	Partnership event held (December)		not progressed	
Partnership / Communication	12	Contacts List Maintenance of complete list of licensing and enforcement contacts across the partnership Key priority	Improved ability to communicate key issues/information across the partnership	Each Licensing Authority and Responsible Authority are aware of the names and contact details of key partners in their locality		Contacts list handed out at launch event and emailed to all contacts by email	
Partnership / Communication	13	County Licensing Group To further develop the remit of the County Multi-agency Licensing Group	To ensure alcohol licensing issues are considered within a partnership framework. Ensure there is a link from the police strategic licensing group	The Terms of reference, constitutional arrangements and membership of the existing group has been revised		Emma discussed issues requiring improvement with Chair. Issues discussed at EH Managers group.	
Partnership / Communication	14	Local Licensing Forum To establish a quarterly forum in each district / borough where the licensing authority and responsible authorities can discuss operational issues	Improved ability to tackle local problems	Forum established. Agenda and frequency set		Preliminary meeting has taken place at NWLDC. Draft agenda set	
Information	14	Hotspot Mapping Alcohol related crime and disorder, ambulance pick ups and hospital admissions hotspot mapping across the County to identify key target areas and provide baseline for monitoring impact of action plan Key priority	Identification of key hotspot areas where licensing and enforcement activities need to be targeted. Baseline dataset to enable impact of interventions to be measured against	Each Licensing Authority and RA is aware of any hot spot areas within their District		T&F group established. 1 st meeting scheduled - August	
Information	15	Database for designated premises supervisors Explore potential for development of County wide database for designated premises supervisors and revoked Temporary Event Notice applications	Central repository enabling effective checks to be made on licensees prior to license award	We have explored the potential for devising the database		not progressed	

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Theme	No	Initiative	Key Objectives	Potential Evaluation Measures	Lead /T&F Group	Progress Update	RAG rating
Capacity	16	Police licensing capacity Additional capacity required to ensure consistent availability of licensing support for enforcement officers	Regular availability of licensing advice, support and expertise across the police force	Additional capacity has been created			