

SPECIAL MEETING OF LICENSING AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 29th June, 2006 at 6.00 p.m.
in Committee Room 2, The Council House, Dudley

PRESENT:-

Councillor Ryder (Chairman)
Councillors Mrs Ameson, Mrs Aston, Blood, Bradney, Mrs Coulter,
Donegan, Mrs Dunn, Finch, Mottram, Rogers, Tomkinson and Woodall.

Officers

Assistant Director (Legal and Democratic Services), Licensing Officer
and Mr. J.Jablonski (all Directorate of Law and Property).

Also in attendance

Councillors G.H. Davies, Mrs. Martin and Tyler - by invitation
Ms. Lisa-Marie Smith - Deputy Force Solicitor (West Midlands Police)
Acting Superintendent Freail (West Midlands Police)

5 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of
Councillors Ms. Craigie and Taylor

6 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No Member made a declaration of interest in accordance with the
Members' Code of Conduct.

7 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 25th
May, 2006, be approved as a correct record and signed.

PROPOSALS FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF A SPECIAL LIQUOR LICENSING POLICY REGARDING THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT OF LICENSED PREMISES IN STOURBRIDGE TOWN CENTRE

A report of the Director of Law and Property was submitted on proposals for the introduction of a special policy regarding Cumulative Impact in respect of Stourbridge Town Centre. Attached as Appendix 1 to the report submitted was a draft Special Policy regarding cumulative impact for Stourbridge Town Centre which had subsequently been updated and copies of the updated Appendix had been circulated to Members of the Committee.

A presentation was then given by Lisa-Marie Smith, Deputy Force Solicitor and Acting Superintendent Freail (West Midlands Police) on an overview of the position; an analysis of the problem; the work done so far; statistics relating to licensed premises and crime statistics not only in Stourbridge Town Centre, but as compared with Merry Hill and Halesowen showing a clear increase in violent crime during the period April, 2001 to March, 2006 together with a month long review of alcohol related offences in Halesowen and Stourbridge showing that there were 40 alcohol-related offences in Stourbridge Town Centre and only 10 in Halesowen. Consideration was also given to the extent of any proposed Cumulative Impact Policy Area and it was suggested that streets immediately adjacent to the ring road, as well as those within the ring road, should also be included to take in a corner of the ring road from the Picture House to the ring road and also Foster Street East.

It was stressed that any Policy implemented would only form part of a strategy for policing and managing Stourbridge Town Centre and in this respect it was noted that from September, 2006 the Town Centre would comprise one beat area and not three beat areas as had historically been the case.

Arising from the presentation given Members asked a number of questions and made comments regarding the information given and were supportive of the need for a Policy based on the evidence presented.

The Assistant Director (Legal and Democratic Services) then gave a presentation on the legislative background to the introduction of a possible Cumulative Impact Policy arising from the introduction of the Liquor Licensing Act, 2003. The process by which such a Policy could be introduced was also outlined in that if the Committee, having considered the evidence approved the proposals in principle, there would then be a need to consult on the proposed policy and in this connection mention was made of the Special Meeting of Stourbridge Area Committee on Monday, 3rd July, 2006, as part of that consultation. Following consultation which, in response to a question asked, would include Magistrates, in addition to those bodies and representatives outlined in the report submitted, a final draft of the Policy would then be considered at a further special meeting of this Committee and, if agreed, recommended to Council for approval. Following approval, the Policy would be published as an amendment to the Council's Licensing Policy.

Consideration was also given to the effect of the Policy and its limitations and again it was stressed that the introduction of the Policy was not in itself a solution to the problems identified but rather was one part of an overall strategy which could embrace issues in respect of private hire and hackney carriage vehicles and changes to access within the ring road.

RESOLVED

That, arising from consideration of the proposals contained in the report, and Appendix 1 to the report, submitted, as updated, and the information given in the presentations made at this meeting, approval in principle be given to the introduction of a Special Liquor Licensing Policy regarding the Cumulative Impact of Licensed Premises in Stourbridge Town Centre, such area to comprise that area of Stourbridge Town Centre within the ring road together with that corner of the ring road from the Picture House to the ring road and Foster Street East and that, arising from this decision, the proposals for the introduction of a Special Policy be put out for consultation to the relevant consultees, as set out in paragraph 12 of the report submitted, together with representatives of Magistrates, in accordance with the Liquor Licensing legislation and associated guidance so that, following such consultation, a final draft of the Policy might be considered at a further special meeting of this Committee, with a view to making a recommendation to Council.

The meeting ended at 7.20 pm.

CHAIRMAN