

LICENSING AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MINUTES

12 SEPTEMBER 2011

Chairman: * Councillor Mano Dharmarajah

Councillors:

* Husain Akhtar	* John Nickolay
* Mrs Camilla Bath (1)	* Varsha Parmar
* Ramji Chauhan	* Mrs Rekha Shah (1)
* Thaya Idaikkadar	* William Stoodley
Manji Kara	* Krishna Suresh
* Ajay Maru	* Yogesh Teli
* Amir Moshenson	* Ben Wealthy

* Denotes Member present

(1) Denotes category of Reserve Members

54. Attendance by Reserve Members

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

Ordinary Member

Councillor David Gawn
Councillor Susan Hall

Reserve Member

Councillor Mrs Rekha Shah
Councillor Camilla Bath

55. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

56. Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2011 be agreed as a correct record, subject to a minor amendment to Minute 51 – “Councillor John Nickolay declared a personal interest in that he was a member of the **Old Gaytonians Association ...**”.

57. Public Questions, Petitions and Deputations

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were put, or petitions or deputations received at this meeting.

RESOLVED ITEMS

58. Commercial Safety Service Plan 2011/12

The Divisional Director Environmental Services presented his report concerning the Commercial Safety Service Plan 2011/12 advising that the Licensing and General Purposes Committee was responsible for the health and safety aspects of the Plan, to help ensure that the residents of the borough were protected. He noted that Cabinet had agreed the food aspect of the Plan at its meeting on 8 September as this area fell within its remit.

In discussing the content of Members asked for and received clarification on the content of the Plan as follows:

- Page 9 (8.1.1) – no Equality Impact Assessment was attached.
- With regard to the food aspects of the Plan, it was advised that these were the responsibility of the Cabinet but, the view of a Member was noted that when a food related business was closed temporarily for food related regulatory requirements this could result in a business closing down.
- Page 14 – noted that the 36 major injuries and fatalities did not demonstrate any benchmarking with other authorities to indicate where this was a high amount.
- Page 29 – 159 food related incidences - again was not assisted with appropriate benchmarking / explanations to inform the figure identified. Officers agreed that future reports would attempt to respond to this point.
- advised that there was a national requirement to split health and safety responsibilities between the Health & Safety Executive (major issues) and local authority (day to day issues).
- Page 33 – the identification of tuberculosis within the list was as a result of listing the most commonly occurring infectious diseases that were required by law to be identified in the report. Officers noted that the figures shown did not demonstrate the actions subsequently taken

where such disease instances occurred to reduce any further infection risk.

- With regard to the number of complaints identified it was agreed that this could have been further broken down to reflect the area of work the complaint related to and this would be identified in future reports.
- Arising from a question concerning whether the merger of staffing teams still reflected the correct level of resource the Director confirmed that the staffing team structure was lean but, that he was confident the level of resource was appropriate and that the team was able to work across a wide scale of responsibilities and address several issues on visits to premises.
- Page 21 – in noting that there were two vacancies within the current staffing structure it was advised that the positions were currently managed through temporary staffing provision as recent recruitment had proved unsuccessful in identifying suitable permanent candidates.
- Page 67 – responding to a question concerning the significant increase in responses workload it was advised that this was due to the more direct contact nature of the approach taken with local businesses by the service area. It was emphasised that the levels of advice remained the same robust style but, that where issues arose this was now enforced more rigorously than previously.
- It was advised that officers had no power to address issues around illegal workers as this was not within the Council's remit, but the council became aware of such issues there were referred to the appropriate agencies.
- Members questioned that with regard to the high costs in relation to contract labour whether officers were confident the budget would be suitable and officers confirmed they were confident that the aim was to stay within the identified budget parameters in relation to staffing provision.
- In reiterating the health and safety example of a large nearby retailer a Member expressed surprise that that greater controls were not exercised. Officers explained that large firms were required to have in place their own health and safety plan, in line with legislative and safety requirements. This meant that a greater proportion of time was allocated to smaller businesses which did not benefit from such internal provision and required greater education in responsibilities.

The Committee then thanked officers for the work put into the production of an excellent Plan, particularly with limited resources.

RESOLVED: That the Commercial Safety Service Plan 2011/12 be approved as the Council's Health and Safety Plan 2011/12.

59. Polling Station Review

The Committee received the report of the Director of Legal & Governances Services concerning the proposed reconvening of the Polling Districts Review Working Group, in response to the Council's statutory obligation to undertake a review of Polling Stations and Districts every four years.

The Committee agreed the membership and Terms of Reference for the Group as set out at Appendix 1, noting that the Group would submit a report for consideration by the November Committee.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Polling District Review Working Group be established to undertake the review of the polling districts and polling stations in Harrow;
- (2) it be agreed the membership of the Group be 5 Members (3 Labour, 2 Conservative) as follows:

Councillor Keith Ferry (Chairman), Councillors Mano Dharmarajah, Ben Wealthy, Marilyn Ashton and Joyce Nickolay;
- (3) the appointment of a representative from Harrow Association of Disabled People to the Review Working Group as a non-voting co-opted member be approved, such appointee to be notified to the first meeting of the Group;
- (4) the terms of reference of the Review Working Group set out at appendix 1 be approved.

(Note: The meeting, having commenced at 7.30 pm, closed at 8.43 pm).

(Signed) COUNCILLOR MANO DHARMARAJAH
Chairman