

GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 6 September 2022

PRESENT – Councillors C L B Hughes (Chair), Lee, Renton, A J Scott and Snedker

APOLOGIES – Councillors Clarke, Crumbie, Donoghue, B Jones, Newall and Mrs H Scott,

ABSENT – Councillors Haszeldine and K Nicholson

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Allison Hill (Democratic Officer), Amy Wennington (Principal Lawyer (Litigation)), Brian Murray (Assistant Licensing Manager), Colin Dobson (Licensing Manager), Sgt C Dickenson (Durham Constabulary) and PC Newcombe (Durham Constabulary)

LG14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

LG15 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE HELD ON 19 JULY 2022

Submitted – the Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of the General Licensing Committee held on 19 July 2022.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the General Licensing committee held on 19 July 2022 be approved as a correct record.

LG16 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE GENERAL LICENSING SUB COMMITTEE HELD ON 19 JULY 2022

Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of the General Licensing Sub-Committee held on 19 July 2022.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the General Licensing Sub-Committee held on 19 July 2022 be approved as a correct record.

LG17 APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF LICENCE FOR PREMISES TO BE APPROVED AS A VENUE FOR MARRIAGES AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS - BLACKWELL GRANGE HOTEL

The Assistant Director, Law and Governance and Proper Officer for Darlington Registration District submitted a report (previously circulated) to give consideration to the renewal of a licence for the Blackwell Grange Hotel to be approved as a venue for Civil Marriages and Civil Partnerships in accordance with the provisions of The Marriage Act 1949 (as amended by the Marriage Act 1994); the Civil Partnership Act (2004); the Marriage and Civil Partnerships (Approved Premises) Regulations 2005 and 2021; and the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act (2013).

The submitted report gave a summary of the Blackwell Grange Hotel as approved venue; the designated rooms and maximum capacity for each room for civil marriage and civil

partnerships at the Blackwell Grange Hotel.

RESOLVED – That the licence for the Blackwell Grange Hotel as an approved premise for civil marriage and civil partnerships be granted for a further three years from 22 November 2022 and that the places designated where civil marriage and civil partnerships can take place indoors at the premises and the maximum of numbers of persons who can attend those marriage and civil partnerships continue to be:

The George Allan Suite – 130
The Bruhenny Suite – 300
The Havelock Restaurant – 150
The Gazebo * - 6

*ie two registrars, the couple and two witnesses inside the gazebo. Guests outside on the garden is unlimited.

LG18 INTERIM REVIEW OF POLICIES AND CONDITIONS RELATING TO HACKNEY CARRIAGES, PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES AND THEIR DRIVERS AND OPERATORS FOLLOWING CONSULTATION

The Group Director of Services submitted a report (previously circulated) for Members to give consideration to amendments to the Darlington Borough Council's Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy 2021, following public consultation which was authorised by this General Licensing Committee on 6 June 2022.

The submitted report provided information on the existing policy which was approved by Full Council on 26 November 2020, and implemented on 1 January 2021.

It was highlighted that the non-statutory best practice guide produced in 2006 was in the process of being revised and consulted upon due to the many issues that had impacted the trade, however it was unlikely that this guidance would be formally implemented until 2023.

It was reported that the Department for Transport recommends that policies are reviewed every five years but that interim reviews should be considered where significant issues arise; and on 28 April 2022 a liaison meeting was held with representatives of the trade and Licensing where proposals were raised that would help the trade maintain their business through these difficult times.

The proposed changes relating to vehicle age restrictions; topographical knowledge test; and window tint were highlighted in full in the submitted report along with extracts of the current policy and relevant sections of the Best Practice Guidance document.

On 6 June 2022 the General Licensing Committee approved these changes to be published for public consultation which was carried out between 13 June and 17 July 2022 and details of this public consultation, including the responses from the various consultees were detailed in the submitted report.

Members discussed the proposed changes and in particular the need to encourage the trade to increase the number of wheelchair accessible vehicles; welcomed in particular the change to no age restriction of vehicles provided engines are compliant with Euro 6 standards by 1

April 2023; and if there were any safeguarding issues to allowing no tint restrictions on vehicles.

RESOLVED – That the proposal for amendments to the Policy be forwarded to Full Council for final approval.