

CITY OF DURHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Licensing Committee held on Monday 4th April 2022 at 16:30 via Zoom.

Present: Councillors S Walker (in the Chair), E Ashby, A Doig, G Nair and H Weston.

Also present: A Shanley (Parish Clerk) and Sgt 484 Caroline Dickenson (Licensed Economy Team Sgt at Durham Police).

1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr N Brown.

2. To receive any declarations of interest from members

None received.

3. To receive and approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting on 21st March 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st March 2022 were unanimously **agreed** as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4. To receive any public participation comments on the following agenda items.

None received.

5. Update on recent licensing applications in the parish area

The Clerk confirmed that the objection letter to the recent Botanist application had been submitted to Durham County Council. The Clerk also advised that he understood that the Sidegate Residents Association would also be submitting an objection on similar grounds.

Members expressed their concerns at the cumulative impact of more and more licensed premises coming into the City and **agreed** to draft a separate letter to the Head of Licensing at DCC to request a further urgent assessment of whether a cumulative impact policy is needed for the City centre. Caroline Dickenson advised that the Police would be happy to be a co-signatory to that letter.

6. Update on best-run licensed premises award for the City

The Clerk advised that the certificates for each of the licensed premises who had won the best-run licensed premises competition have been purchased and a photograph with the winning premises would take place on 12th April 2022. The Clerk advised that a press release would be sent out thereafter in order to highlight this achievement.

7. To consider the joint operation of 25th and 26th March 2022 in Durham City around licensed premises

The Chair reminded Members that the Parish Council had funded an enhanced dog-sniffing drugs operation of licensed premises in the City over 25th and 26th March.

The Chair advised that she, Cllr E Ashby and the Clerk had attended the SWaN hub on 25th March and gave excellent feedback on its operation.

Caroline Dickenson advised that the joint operation had been a success with 32 individuals questioned who either had drugs on their person or else were suspected of having consumed drugs earlier in the evening.

Caroline advised that the Police would be working proactively with licensed premises on how to tackle these issues.

Caroline also highlighted that a number of persons stopped and questioned were under the age of 18 and Caroline advised that the Police would be proactively speaking with licensed premises around how to spot fake IDs etc.

Caroline also highlighted a concern about one premises where the number of patrons had far exceeded the premises' legal capacity and advised that she would be speaking with the Fire Authority about this.

The Chair thanked Caroline and her team for their exceptional work over the weekend and for their support in tackling issues related to the night time economy of the City.

8. Progressing the late-night levy for Durham City proposal

The Clerk reminded Members that, in agreeing to provide emergency funding for the SWaN hub in the City, the Parish Council had also agreed to progress a request to DCC that a late-night levy be introduced on premises which remain open after midnight.

The Clerk advised that, in attempting to draft this letter, it was clear that a more thorough report was needed in order to convince DCC of the need for such a levy.

It was therefore proposed that a consultant be approached in order to support the production of such a report to DCC. Caroline highlighted that former PC Bruce Storey was instrumental in the case of Newcastle City Council's late night levy and advised that she would try and locate contact details for Bruce to ask if he might be able to support the Parish Council with this report.

It was **agreed** that a report should come to Full Council on this issue at the earliest opportunity.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked all for their attendance and contribution and closed the meeting.

Signed,



**Chair of the City of Durham Parish Council Licensing Committee
(19th April 2022)**