

LICENSING COMMITTEE

10 JUNE 2021

UPDATE ON RE-OPENING OF HOSPITALITY

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To inform Committee of the work that the Licensing Team has been doing in preparation for the opening of hospitality in-line with the Government step approach to lifting lockdown.

2.0 Background

2.1 The COVID 19 pandemic has led to 3 national lockdowns in the UK from March 2020 to present day.

2.3 This report outlines the pro-active work that the Licensing Team has carried out to help prepare the local hospitality for lifting lockdown from the third national lockdown which began on 6 January 2021.

2.4 Following the Prime Minister's announcement of the easing of the lockdown restrictions an action plan for hospitality was prepared.

3.0 Actions Taken Re-Open Hospitality

3.1 The Licensing Team contacted approx. 120 licensed premises to determine when they planned to re-open and to check if they were aware of the restrictions at each step and to ask whether they would like a pre-visit before they opened.

3.2 To support the licensed trade and to ensure that everyone was aware of the differing rules and times of changes in the rules, a clear guidance document was produced and sent out to each licensed premises in Newark & Sherwood, along with a pre-opening checklist. A copy of these can be found at **Appendix 1**. In order that the information was correctly received it was addressed to the Manager/DPS of the premise rather than a named person.

3.3 This information was shared on the Council's website and on the Schemelink platform (for Pub Watch members).

3.4 To support the local licensing trade, monies have been secured to purchase 50 Schemelink licences for use of the local Pub Watch schemes.

3.5 Licensing Officers are working with the Chairman of the Southwell Pub Watch Scheme to get them transferred over to the Schemelink platform.

3.6 Approx. 35 pre-opening visits have been carried out by licensing staff, where advice and good practice were discussed with the licence holder/DPS to ensure that they were prepared in a COVID secure manner for re-opening.

3.7 Outdoor hospitality opened up on 12 April 2021.

- 3.8 On Saturday, 17 April 2021, 16 officers from the Public Protection team, worked in pairs and visited 60 licensed premises across the district that were offering outdoor hospitality. Inspection sheets were completed at each premise and advice given to premises as appropriate.
- 3.9 An evaluation meeting was held on 19 April 2021, where it was decided which premises required follow up visits and letters to set out the breaches that were found on the night of action. A total of 12 letters were sent out.
- 3.10 Follow up visits were then carried out and the general consensus was that the rules were being adhered to. Apart from one premise in Ollerton, which after 5 separate interactions with Officers (including the letter) the marquee that was in situ did not fall under the definition of “outdoor structure”. Therefore a £1,000 fixed penalty notice was issued along with a letter to stop the outdoor bar being used as it was not covered by the premise licence and was in breach of section 137 of the Licensing Act. The punishment for continued use if found guilty is 6 months imprisonment, a fine not exceeding £20,000 or both.
- 3.11 This premise has now complied with the outdoor structure definition for marquees and is covering the outdoor bar with TEN’s and has put in a variation application to cover the outdoor bar area.
- 3.12 A team of 14 staff from Public Protection headed out across the district on Friday, 21 May and visited 55 premises and on Saturday, 29 May a team of 6 staff visited 28 premises to ensure that rules were being followed with the re-opening of indoor hospitality from Monday, 17 May 2021.
- 3.13 Evaluation meetings were held on 24 May 2021 and 1 June 2021 where it was decided which premises required follow up visits and letters to set out the breaches that were found on the nights of action. A total of 9 letters were sent out.

4.0 Equalities Implications

- 4.1 There are equalities implications arising from this report.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 None from this report

6.0 Digital Implications

- 6.1 There are no digital implications arising from this report.

7.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee consider the contents of the report and identifies any issues it wishes to examine further.

For further information please contact Nicola Kellas on extension 5894

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