

LICENSING COMMITTEE

2 SEPTEMBER 2021

UPDATE ON PUBWATCH SCHEMES IN NEWARK & SHERWOOD

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To update Members on the Pubwatch schemes currently operating in Newark & Sherwood.

2.0 Background

2.1 Pubwatch is a voluntary organisation set up to promote best practice. Its aim is to achieve a safer drinking environment in all licensed premises throughout the UK.

2.2 In Newark & Sherwood, we now have three active Pubwatch schemes. They are based in Newark, Ollerton, and Southwell. Each area meets once a month and discusses issues that affects them and helps the share of information.

2.3 Pubwatch meetings consider issues such as problematic customers, licensing issues, previous incidents and how they were handled and up and coming events that may impact on licensed premises.

2.4 The Licensing Committee has supported the local Pubwatch groups by promoting the Schemelink which is a mobile phone app which has been developed as a central point for easier data sharing of data and communication across Pubwatch for unifying online services for members, police and councils

2.5 Features of Schemelink include:

- Group chat
- Incident logs, which once submitted are sent through to all members
- Push notifications
- Notice board, for sharing information for example, photos of counterfeit notes
- Ability to poll about a ban rather than wait until the next meeting
- Banned gallery – which includes individual watermarks for members, so if images were shared inappropriately it would be easy to discover who had shared them.

Newark Pubwatch

2.6 The Newark Pubwatch meeting is well established and takes place on the last Thursday of each month and approximately 15 premises are represented. The police and licensing staff are normally in attendance along with trade representatives. There is an open invitation for the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Licensing Committee to attend. The meeting is always chaired by a local licensing trade representative.

2.7 The Schemelink App has now been rolled out to the Pubwatch in Newark and has been well received. So far there are 20 establishments that have either signed up to use the App or are in the process of activating it. The App has proved really useful in identifying individuals that are breaching Pubwatch and more importantly Criminal Behaviour Orders.

- 2.8 The Schemelink App has also been extensively used during the covid pandemic to issue guidance and advice to Pubwatch members to support them in re-opening after lockdown.
- 2.9 Overall the Newark Pubwatch is working reasonably well and it provides a useful forum.

Ollerton Pubwatch

- 2.10 The Ollerton Pubwatch is a smaller meeting than Newark as might be expected. It meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. The average attendance is around 10/12 local trade representatives with support from police and N&S licensing staff.
- 2.11 The attendance has been mixed over the years and is very dependent on the current cohort of DPS personnel and their commitment.

Southwell Pubwatch

- 2.12 This group has mixed history where support is very strong for a period of time but then wanes. At the moment the Group is well supported by the local trade. It is currently meeting every 3 months and has around 12 representatives. Pubwatch Southwell is also well supported by the local police who are now attending every meeting The Council's licensing enforcement officer reports that this group is now performing well.
- 2.13 The Pubwatch Group is currently transitioning towards the use of Schemelink as their method of communication and sharing information
- 2.14 The Licensing Act does not allow for conditions to be placed on Premise licences requiring attendance at Pubwatch meetings. Licensing staff encourage all premises to attend wherever possible.

3.0 Proposals

- 3.1 In order to support the local Pubwatch scheme it is proposed that a number of standing agenda items are produced by the Council to provide structure to the meetings. However, it should be remembered that the Pubwatch meetings are not managed by NSDC staff and therefore the agenda items will need to be agreed by the Chair of each meeting.
- 3.2 It is further proposed that a diary of future meetings will be produced and promoted locally to the trade. Additionally the diary of meetings will be shared with the Chairman of the Licensing Committee.

4.0 Financial Implications (FIN21-22/8433)

- 4.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

5.0 Equalities implications

- 5.1 There are no equities implications arising from this report.

6.0 Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives

6.1 ***Objective 2: Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, and increase feelings of safety in our communities:*** Some licensed premises serving to people on PubWatch have been the source of anti-social behaviour.

7.0 Digital Implications

7.1 None from this report

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

That Members support the local Pubwatch groups

Reason for Recommendation

To support Pubwatch and make the workings of Pubwatch more effective and efficient.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information, please contact Alan Batty on extension 5467

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