

LICENSING COMMITTEE

3 SEPTEMBER 2020

COUNTY WIDE BEST BAR NONE SCHEME FOR 2019/20

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To update Members with the 2019/20 county wide Best Bar None Scheme.

2.0 Background

2.1 A report was presented to Licensing Committee in June 2019 seeking support for the 2019/20 scheme. A copy of the report is attached as **Appendix 1**. It was anticipated that the scheme would be accepting applications during the autumn. This is not the case.

3.0 Review of the Scheme

3.1 It was always considered appropriate to review the findings from the previous year's scheme and to amend the scheme in line with any lessons learned. However, in undertaking the review it became apparent that a more fundamental review of the scheme was required.

3.2 This review was carried out by licensing staff from across the county. The main recommendation was that the current scheme was too process driven and focused heavily on licensed premises having the correct policies and procedures. It was thought that this approach favoured the larger pub chains that had centralised policies and procedures produced by the head office. Having looked at this element in more detail it became apparent that there was also some duplication between the requirements of the Best Bar None Scheme and the legal requirements of holding the licence and that the BBN scheme should reflect something over and above the legal requirement.

3.3 When the review was complete the element that was missing from the scheme appeared to be the measurement of customer experience and the enjoyment of the venue and the feeling of it being a safe place to visit.

3.4 Members may be aware that Best Bar None is a national scheme and that local authorities can adopt the scheme in their area subject to it meeting the national criteria set out for the scheme. The 'customer experience' does not yet form part of the national criteria, at least not in the form that the Nottinghamshire authorities envisaged taking it forward.

3.5 Discussions have now taken place with the national executive of the Best Bar None organisation to discuss the changes that Nottinghamshire would like to see become part of the scheme. These were favourable received the national executive have asked for a local scheme to be developed for their consideration.

3.6 The Nottinghamshire Authorities' have been developing local scheme that gives a better balance between legal compliance and the customer experience. The covid19 situation has somewhat overshadowed this work and whilst the Best Bar None Scheme is being developed it is not seen as a priority either for the local authorities or the licensed premises at this stage. However, work is progressing so that a scheme is in place and is ready to roll out when it is considered appropriate.

4.0 Proposals

4.1 In light of the above it is proposed that the 2019/20 scheme is put on hold until some clarity is received in terms of licensed premises being in a position to trade in a more 'normal' environment. It is hoped that the scheme can be relaunched in the spring/summer of 2021

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

(a) Members note the outcome of the review of the Nottinghamshire County Best Bar None Scheme; and

(b) support the delay of the Scheme to spring/summer of 2021

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Alan Batty on Extension 5467.

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