

LICENSING COMMITTEE

9 September 2015

Present: - Councillor Mike Lilley (Chairman)
Councillors Roger Buston, Margaret Fairley-Crowe,
Ray Gamble, Dave Harris, Pauline Hazell, Darius Laws,
Richard Martin

10. Have Your Say

Mr Hamilton addresses the Committee in relation to Mingles, which he regarded as an unlicensed sexual entertainment venue. He gave details of his protest at the premises and the responses he had had from the owners and patrons. Sally Harrington, Planning and Licensing Service Manager responded to the points made and explained that the premises did not require a licence as a sex entertainment venue as the activities that took place at the premises were not licensable. The premises had been through the planning process and had the appropriate permissions. The Licensing Committee could not go beyond its remit and insist on a licence for the premises when there was not licensable activity taking place. Councillor Lilley expressed the Committee's sympathy with Mr Hamilton but reiterated that it could not go beyond its remit in this matter.

11. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 27 May, 10 and 12 June and 12 August be confirmed as a correct record.

12. Purple Flag Presentation

The Enterprise & Tourism Development Manager, Karen Turnbull gave a presentation to the Committee on the Purple Flag initiative and giving details on the Colchester evening and night-time economy study 2015.

The Committee discussed the work of a wide variety of agencies seeking to improve the night-time economy and in particular that of the Street Pastors and the SOS bus whose work was crucial in supporting patrons of the various bars and clubs in the town. There was discussion around the public's perception of the town at night and the reality which indicated that there had been a reduction in crime and that the town was providing an increasingly mixed offer designed to appeal to a broader age group. A significant element of the work going forward would be to publicise this and change people's perception of the night-time economy. Consideration was being given to the establishment of a forum to which all venues operating in the town would be invited. One of the concerns that had frequently been voiced in relation to pub watch was its relevance to other establishments such as theatres and restaurants. It was hoped that by broadening the base of the group more operators would be encouraged to attend and this in turn would assist in promoting the town.

13. Licensing Enforcement Policy

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Professional Services on the draft Enforcement Policy for Licensing, Gambling and Sex Establishments. Enforcement was an essential part of the Council's licensing function and to ensure that it was carried out in a transparent and consistent manner it was considered appropriate and necessary to have in place an enforcement policy. The new enforcement policy together with the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy would provide potential applicants and licence holders with clear guidance on the operation and enforcement of licensed premises.

RESOLVED that the proposed Licensing Enforcement Policy be approved.