

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO LICENSING COMMITTEE

meeting date: TUESDAY, 26 MARCH 2024
title: ANNUAL MEETING FOR PREMISES LICENCE HOLDERS
submitted by: MARSHAL SCOTT – CHIEF EXECUTIVE
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1 PURPOSE

1.1 To determine whether a meeting should be arranged for the Committee to meet premises licence holders.

1.2 Relevance to the Council’s ambitions and priorities

- Community Objectives }
- Corporate Priorities } Consideration of these issues will promote the Council’s aim to be a well-managed Council.
- Other Considerations }

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 A request has been received from Clitheroe Pubwatch for the Council to arrange a meeting of licence holders and managers. Whilst the request does not identify any specific topics for discussion, the meeting would be a useful forum for members of the licensed trade to explain any concerns about current issues.

3 ISSUES

3.1 Such a meeting would accord with the stakeholder engagement processes incorporated in the training standard recently published by the Local Government Association and the Institute of Licensing. The standard encourages Licensing Committee Members to meet with local best practice groups, such as Pubwatch, to understand what the groups do and the benefits they bring to the day and night-time economies, and to meet local licensees to understand the challenges which they face.

3.2 Although the approach from Pubwatch refers to a meeting with licence holders and managers in general, logistically this may be difficult to organise and accommodate. The Premises Licence public register shows 790 premises as having been licensed under the Licencing Act 2003, although some such licences have been cancelled and many entries relate to temporary event notices. Nonetheless, there are potentially several hundred premises licence holders in the Ribble Valley. In view of the fact that the request has been received from Clitheroe Pubwatch, it may be that any invitation is restricted to the schemes which currently apply in Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley, with the co-ordinators of those schemes circulating any invitation to their members. The Clitheroe and Whalley schemes consist of approximately 40 members. Whilst Longridge is not formally organised, there is a point of contact for communication with town centre licensees.

3.3 Were issues to be brought forward which are of wider significance, arrangements could be made for a more extensive meeting or for consultation.

3.4 Committee may wish to consider extending any invitation to the police and the Council's environmental health department and licensing enforcement staff, who also have general powers in relation to licensed premises.

3.5 For Committee's information, various premises and the Council are engaging with Schemelink which assists with communication between premises and details of which can be seen on the following link:

Schemelink.co.uk

3.6 It should be noted that such a meeting would differ from the annual taxi meeting. The taxi meeting is a valuable resource to assist the Council in listening to the views of the trade and formulating appropriate local policies and procedures. Alcohol licensing policy is set far more on a national basis, although the Council does issue a statement of licensing policy at least every 5 years. The current policy expires on 6 January 2026, so consultation would take place in 2025. (The Whalley CIA runs until April 2025, with any consultation due to commence this year, if appropriate.)

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – No implications identified.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – No implications identified.
- Political – No implications identified.
- Reputation – No implications identified.
- Equality & Diversity – No implications identified.

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

5.1 Determine whether a meeting should be held with holders of premises licences issued under the Licensing Act 2003.

5.2 Determine how extensively any invitation should be circulated.

5.3 Advise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services of any matter which Committee might wish to discuss at any meeting, and persons to be invited to assist the Committee at the meeting.

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