

WIRRAL COUNCIL

LICENSING ACT 2003 COMMITTEE

21 MAY 2008

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION

EVALUATION OF THE IMPACT OF THE LICENSING ACT 2003

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members in respect of an evaluation undertaken by Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) of the impact of the Licensing Act 2003. The report will also provide details of the number of reviews carried out in respect of Premises Licences.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Licensing Act 2003 came fully into force on 24 November 2005. The first review of the impact of this legislation was completed in March 2008. The review brings together the findings of a number of projects in relation to the four licensing objectives and the wider aims of the reforms brought about by the Licensing Act 2003. The full report can be found using the following link <http://www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/1BDA71E1-97D9-42D5-8F3D-0860F2B3166D/0/Licensingevaluation.pdf>.

2.2 A summary of the findings include:

- The overall volume of incidents of crime and disorder has remained stable and not risen.
- There is no evidence of increases in overall alcohol consumption.
- There has been no serious adverse impact on the provision of live music.
- The transfer of alcohol licensing to local authorities is viewed as success.
- The alcohol licensing system is more democratically accountable and residents are better able to influence licensing decisions.
- There is much better partnership working between local authorities, the police and other responsible authorities and licence holders.
- The new powers, including the ability to review licences, have been welcomed by local authorities and the police and have been used to good effect.
- There is no clear picture of consistent improvements in respect of the dispersal from premises.
- The impact on overall crime levels appears to be limited.
- There is yet to be a discernable change in the diversity of evening and late night venues.

2.3 The main conclusion of the report is that;

“...people are using the freedoms but people are not sufficiently using the considerable powers granted by the Act to tackle problems and there is a need to rebalance action towards enforcement and crack down on irresponsible behaviour.”

2.4 Since the implementation of the Licensing Act 2003 Wirral has used the powers available and thirteen reviews of licences have been undertaken. The premises that have been subject to a review are listed in Appendix 1 (attached).

3.0 FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There may be financial implications arising out of this report.

4.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no equal opportunities implications arising out of this report

5.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

6.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

6.1 This report affects the entire Borough

7.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no Human Rights implications associated with this report.

8.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Effective control of Licensing legislation can assist in raising standards and improve the perception of community safety.

9.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no planning implications arising out of this report.

10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 There are no background papers.

11.0 RECOMMENDATION

11.1 That the Report and Appendix1 be noted.

Alan Stennard
Director of Regeneration

This report has been written by Margaret O'Donnell who can be contacted on 691 8606