

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE

ORIGINATING SECTION: PUBLIC PROTECTION SERVICE

REPORT TO : LICENSING COMMITTEE 14 November 2017

TITLE : UPDATE ON THE WORK OF PUBLIC PROTECTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the work of the Council's Public Protection and Environmental Health Service (PPS) where there is a connection with businesses and persons who require a licence from the Council. It also brings provides an update for members on national policy changes and proposals affecting licencing work.

This report covers the time period September to October 2017.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That members note the report.

3. KEY ISSUES

3.1 Taxi Safety Operations

Two evening taxi safety operations have taken place during September and October. In total 39 vehicles were inspected and the drivers had their private hire or hackney carriage driver's licences checked. All vehicles were found to be in a safe condition and all drivers correctly licensed. Less serious issues were found with 10 of the vehicles with owners given 7 days to rectify the problems. Examples include not displaying door stickers, number plate light bulbs out and spare tyres under inflated.

3.2 Under Age Sales Test Purchase Operation

An under age sales alcohol test purchasing operation took place in October during which 11 off-licensed premises were tested. On all occasions the businesses refused to sell the alcohol to the two female volunteers aged 15 and 16 years old. Everyone tested asked to see the volunteers' proof of age identification. It was particularly encouraging to find staff at self-service tills challenged for identification.

3.3 Alcohol Licence Review successful

The Trading Standards review of the alcohol licence of an off licence in Blackburn has resulted in the shop losing its licence.

The review, which followed two failed test purchases for under age sales of alcohol, was brought by the Trading Standards team and supported by the Police. The general Licensing Sub Committee decided to revoke both the premises licence and a member of staff's personal licence. In coming to this conclusion the Committee recognised that officers had exhausted their options in trying to work with the shop to reduce sales.

3.4 Safeguarding Awareness Training for taxi drivers

Safeguarding training is now mandatory for all hackney carriage and private hire drivers in Blackburn with Darwen. A series of training sessions was held in September for existing

hackney and private hire driver licence holders. The training was delivered by the Safeguarding Team. There are now 85% drivers who have attended safeguarding awareness training. The aim is to have all Blackburn with Darwen’s drivers having completed this course by the end of the financial year.

3.5 Routine work carried out

The following table provides some of the key figures on work carried out by members of staff working in the Licensing Team from 1 September – 31 October 2017.

Vehicle licences processed	312
Driver licences processed	68
Licensing Act licences processed	54
Visits to new DPSs	44
Inspections of premises/vehicles carried out	120

3.6 National Issues

The Government has launched a consultation on proposals to reduce the maximum stake on some fixed odd betting terminals (FOBTs).

The 12 week consultation launched by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport is seeking views on a range of options on cutting maximum stakes of B2 gaming machines from £100 to between £50 and £2.

The Government said it is necessary “... to reduce the potential for large losses on the machines and the risk of harm to both the player and wider communities in which these machines are located, such as the increased health costs associated with problem gambling.”

In addition to the consultation, there will be a package of measures taking effect to strengthen protections around online gambling and gambling advertising to further minimise the risk to vulnerable people and children:

- New advertising guidelines
- Strengthening the code on responsible gambling advertising
- Responsible gambling initiatives - Gambling operators should step up on funding for research, education and treatment. If not, government will consider other options, including introducing a mandatory levy on gambling operators.

4. RATIONALE

To inform members of the Licensing committee about the key work carried out by staff working within the Council’s Public Protection and Environmental Health Team where there is a connection with businesses and people needing a licence from the Council.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

None

9. CONSULTATIONS

None

10 . CONTACT OFFICER

Denise Andrews – Business Compliance and Licensing Manager
Telephone 01254 267648