

**BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO LICENSING COMMITTEE**

**19 JANUARY 2011**

**REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE LEGAL  
AND REGULATORY SERVICES**

**LICENSING ACT 2003**

**UPDATE ON THE WORK OF THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES FORUM**

**1. Purpose of Report.**

- 1.1 To advise the Committee on the work of the Responsible Authorities Forum since its creation some two years ago.

**2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities**

The work of the Forum links to the Corporate Improvement Objectives of:-

- Building safe and inclusive communities
- Creating vibrant and thriving towns, and
- Continuing to promote Bridgend as a place to visit

**3. Background**

- 3.1 By virtue of the Licensing Act 2003, the following public bodies comprise the seven Responsible Authorities:-

- The Police
- The Fire Service
- The local authority Trading Standards Service
- The local authority Environmental Health Service (noise and other nuisance)
- The local authority Environmental Health Service (health and safety)
- The Planning Authority
- The local authority Social Care Service with responsibility for protecting children from harm

- 3.2 Responsible Authorities must be fully notified of all licence applications and are entitled to make representations to the licensing authority in relation to the grant, variation or review of licences. As well as making representations to the Licensing Authority, the Responsible Authorities provide guidance in their areas of expertise on promoting the licensing objectives and some have enforcement powers under the Act as well as other legislation relevant to licensed premises.

- 3.3 To enable the Responsible Authorities to work most effectively and best target resources, it was recognised that they should meet regularly to discuss and exchange information and participate in specific initiatives. The Licensing

Committee was advised of the creation of the Responsible Authorities Forum in January 2009 and this report provides Members with an update on the success of the Forum since that time.

#### **4. Current situation / proposal.**

- 4.1 One of the successes of the Forum has been the fact that through the exchange of information, problem premises have been identified and monitored on an ongoing basis with a view to appropriate action, including licence review being taken. It was originally intended that the Responsible Authorities would meet quarterly. The current position is that meetings take place monthly, enabling prompt action to be taken where necessary and appropriate.
- 4.2 To date, one premises has been successfully reviewed. In this case one of the Responsible Authorities applied for the review and two others supported it through representations relevant to their areas of expertise. A number of other licence reviews are currently being considered.
- 4.3 Joint working has been enhanced by the Responsible Authorities Forum enabling specific problem areas to be tackled. This has included a joint working protocol between Trading Standards and the Police in relation to underage test purchasing at on-licensed premises such as pubs and clubs. This complex new area of enforcement has worked well and is an extremely useful addition to the more traditional underage sales enforcement in the retail setting.
- 4.4 One of the successful joint initiatives facilitated through the Responsible Authorities Forum has sought to address the significant problem of proxy sales whereby adults, often complete strangers, see fit to purchase alcohol on behalf of children. A hard hitting poster and leaflet campaign has been piloted in one area of the county borough targeting retailers and members of the public. It is hoped that the campaign can be rolled out county borough-wide in the new financial year.
- 4.5 A comprehensive information pack for the licensed trade has been prepared covering the full range of Licensing and Public Protection requirements applying to the sector, including health and safety, nuisance and underage sales. The pack has formed the basis of a number of training sessions delivered to the trade by Responsible Authorities which have been well received.
- 4.6 One of the largest areas of work for the Responsible Authorities Forum over the last few months has been the development of a Traffic Light Scheme for licensed premises in the county borough. The scheme is based upon the award winning Cardiff Traffic Light Scheme which appears to have made a significant impact on the problem of alcohol related violent crime in the city centre pubs and clubs. Points are imposed upon premises for unacceptable behaviour while points are deducted for specified good practice. As its name suggests the Scheme operates on a red, amber green system whereby premises with the lowest points total will be green and those with the highest red. Those premises entering the red zone are put onto an action plan and assistance is given to enable management to improve the situation and return into the amber and then green zones.
- 4.7 The Cardiff scheme has been piloted locally, but given the very different demography and trade composition in the county borough it became apparent that

changes were necessary to better reflect local need. To this end it is hoped that the 'Bridgend Scheme' will have its own clear identity, will extend county borough-wide and apply to all licensed premises including shops and late night takeaway type premises as well as pubs and clubs In order to get the correct balance and to achieve a scheme that is 'right' for the county borough, trade consultation is currently on going.

- 4.8 The work of the Responsible Authorities Forum has gone from strength to strength since its creation was first reported to the Committee two years ago. There is much work still to do to address the concerns surrounding the licensed trade locally and through its joined-up, targeted approach it is clear that the Responsible Authorities Forum will continue to make a major contribution to this end.

## **5. Effect upon Policy Framework& Procedure Rules**

- 5.1 None

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 6.1 There are no negative equality implications.

## **7. Financial Implications.**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications

## **8. Recommendation.**

- 8.1 The Committtee is asked to note the above report.

**Andrew Jolley**

**Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Regulatory Services**

**Date 12 January 2011**

**Contact Officer:** Helen Picton  
Service Manager Trading Standards

**Telephone:** (01656) 643237

**E-mail:** helen.picton@bridgend.gov.uk

**Postal Address** Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB

## **Background documents**

None