

LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Licensing Committee held on Tuesday, 1st September 2009 at 6.00 pm in the Reception Suite, Civic Offices, Telford

PRESENT: V.A. Fletcher (Chairman), E.J. Greenaway (Vice-Chairman), G.J.L. Davies, J.A. Francis, Y.C. Hicks, G.P. Hossell, C.N. Mason, and A.G.P. Williams.

LC-40 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meetings of the Licensing Committee held on 24th July, 27th July, 30th July and 3rd August 2009 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

LC-41 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors R.G. Chaplin, T.J. Hope, T. Kiernan, A.A. Mackenzie, H. Rhodes, C.F. Smith and K.L. Tomlinson.

LC-42 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

LC-43 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – PARISH OF HADLEY & LEEGOMERY

The report of the Head of Legal Services was presented to the Committee which sought to inform Members of a letter that had been received from Hadley & Leegomery Parish Council requesting that a review should be undertaken in relation to the Parish Ward arrangements in the Hadley & Leegomery Parish Ward.

Members were reminded that the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 had transferred to the Council powers to conduct reviews of both parish areas and parish electoral arrangements. Hadley and Leegomery Parish Council had requested that the Council should conduct a review of its Hadley and Leegomery Parish Ward. The Committee was referred to the copy of the letter that had been received from the Parish Council that was attached to the report.

The Committee were advised that if the Committee were minded to approve the proposed review the first requirement would be the preparation by the Council's Electoral Services Manager of a Terms of Reference document for the Committee's consideration. It was anticipated that the report submitting the proposed Terms of Reference would be submitted at the Licensing Committee meeting to be held on 21 October 2009.

Members were advised that Hadley and Leegomery Parish Council comprised two parish wards for the purposes of elections of councillors to its council: the Apley Castle Parish Ward with 2,378 electors which returned four parish councillors, and the Hadley and Leegomery Parish Ward with 7,143 electors

which returned 12 parish councillors. Members were further referred to the letter that had been received from the Parish Council's which stated its arguments for an alternative parish warding arrangement.

The Committee was further advised that the procedure for a review of parish electoral arrangements was laid out in Part 4 of the Act. The Act required that principal councils should be mindful of any guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government and by the Electoral Commission on how to conduct reviews.

Members were advised that the Act allowed for reviews to be triggered either by the principal council following an application from a parish council or in response to a petition from local electors. It was stated however that the principal council was not legally required to conduct a review in response to a parish council request, and the Committee could therefore decline the formal request from Hadley and Leegomery Parish Council. However, the request from the Parish Council was comparatively straight forward; did not affect any neighbouring parishes; the initial arguments were well put, and it was therefore recommended that this Council should undertake a review.

A review would commence with the Committee adopting and publishing a Terms of Reference document, which would initiate a twelve-month period in which the review had to be completed. It was believed that the review would run to a fairly short timetable. It would need to focus on two issues: firstly, whether it was desirable for particular areas of the existing parish ward to be separately represented on the parish council, and, secondly, whether the number and distribution of local government electors in the present parish ward made a single election of councillors impracticable or inconvenient.

Members were further informed that the Terms of Reference document would outline the timetable for the review, allowing sufficient time for public consultation with all interested organisations and with the electorate. A suggested timetable would allow for two months for initial submissions to be made; two months for comments on Draft Proposals, and one month for any comments on Final Proposals before the Committee published its Recommendations and, if need be, a Reorganisation Order.

Members did note the comments contained within the Parish Council letter that made reference to the current geographical position in relation to the current parish warding arrangements, the cost of any bye-elections that may be initiated within the current Hadley & Leegomery parish ward and the perceived difficulties that maybe experienced by local residents being unsure as to which of the current twelve parish councillors to approach due to the large nature of the particular parish ward.

RESOLVED – that following consideration of the letter that had been received from Hadley & Leegomery Parish Council that a review of the Hadley & Leegomery Parish Ward of the Hadley & Leegomery Parish Council be commenced with the preparation of the Terms of Reference document for the subsequent approval by the Committee in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

The meeting ended at 6.35 pm.

Chairman:

Date: