

Runnymede Borough CouncilREGULATORY COMMITTEE26 January 2006 at 8.25 p.m.

Members of the Committee present: Councillors D.W. Parr (Chairman), Mrs. P.I. Broadhead (Vice-Chairman), A.J. Davis, P.A. Greenwood and B.J. Relph.

Members of the Committee absent: None.

514. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23 June 2005 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

515. REVENUE ESTIMATES 2006/07

The Committee received the draft Revenue Estimates 2006/07 for Taxi Licensing and Other Licences. Members noted that these budgets had previously been considered by the Leisure and Environment Committee until the formation of the Licensing Committee which could only consider matters in respect of the Licensing Act 2003.

In respect of Taxi Licensing, the Committee was advised that consultant's fees amounting to £2,500 had been inserted which related to the costs of Criminal Records Bureau checks. However, it was noted that of this sum £2,300 was fully recovered.

The Other Licences budget was newly created last year and Members were informed that changes had been made to salary allocations following a re-assessment of staff time incurred on this service. Changes in other allocations had been transferred mainly from the Licensing budget.

The Committee was pleased to note that there were no new costs involved, which was consistent with the Council's financial and service objectives, although figures had been adjusted to reflect a truer picture of staff time on these activities.

RESOLVED that –

- i) the draft Revenue Estimates for 2006/07 be approved as submitted and Corporate Management Committee be requested to make provision accordingly; and**
- ii) the proposed fees and charges for 2006/07 be approved, to be effective either from the first week of April 2006 or 1 April 2006 as appropriate.**

516 CHARITIES BILL – UPDATE

(Ref: Minutes of Licensing Committee, November 2003, page 1075, para 536 and Regulatory Committee, September 2004, page 326, para 232)

The Committee received an update report on the introduction of the Charities Bill; and details of current issues with which Officers were concerned.

Members noted that the Charities Bill was unlikely to receive Royal Assent before early Summer 2006; guidance and further regulations would be issued thereafter and a further report would be submitted if there were any significant resource implications arising therefrom.

Of particular relevance was the section on public charitable collections which would affect the way the service was organised and operated; but which was dependent on the Charity Commission who, subject to sufficient resources would have a primary future role.

The idea was that the Bill would provide a new unified licensing scheme which facilitated responsible fund-raising but deterred bogus collections without being overly prescriptive.

Officers confirmed that whilst deregulation would be the driving force for most types of fund-raising; street collections (including direct debit fundraising) would still need to be authorised once a charity or other organisation had obtained a five year 'health check' certificate from the Charity Commission.

The exemptions to these certificates were local short term collections such as carol singing events and Black Cherry Fair. However, Officers would ensure that checks were still made on the suitability of such collections, and a consistent policy for direct debit collections agreed, in conjunction with the Police, Charity Commission and colleagues elsewhere to prevent any nuisance to local residents and maintain good practice across Surrey.

Members noted that in respect of commercial clothing collections the Advertising Standards Agency would no longer be pursuing the operators of such activities; but Officers would be in response to concerns raised by local residents and charities.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 8.35 p.m.)