

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

MINUTES of the meeting of the LICENSING SUPPLEMENTARY COMMITTEE, which was open to the press and public held on TUESDAY 11 AUGUST 2020 and held remotely at 7.30pm

Present

Councillor Stamirowski (Chair) Councillor Powell (Vice Chair) Councillors Campbell, Kalu, and Wise.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Elliott, Hall, Hordijkenko and Howard.

Also Present

Petra Der Man – Lawyer

Fenella Beckman - Director of Housing Services

Sabu Samarnath – Service and Improvement and Change Manager - Housing Services

Sean Longley and Nick Stabeler– Licensing and Housing Enforcement Managers

1. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Supplementary Committee held on 22 July 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record. .

2. Declaration of interests

None were made.

3. Borough-wide Licensing: Fee proposals to introduce new licensing schemes

3.1 The Director of Housing Services introduced the report. She said that on 11 March 2020, Mayor and Cabinet agreed the additional licensing scheme. Implementation of this scheme had been paused due to the covid pandemic. The application to the Secretary of state for the selective scheme had also been paused and it was expected that it would be submitted next year.

3.2 There was then a summary of the proposed additional and selective licensing schemes.

3.3 The Chair asked about HMOs and the number of units that are subject to licensing. She was advised that 5 units and above are subject to mandatory licensing and there is also an additional scheme which deals with properties above commercial premises where there are three residents living in two or more households.

3.4 Councillor Campbell asked for clarification regarding the difference between 'lettable units' and 'each bedroom' as referred to in paragraph 5.9 of the report.

She was advised that a lettable unit can be let to a single family and is one tenancy. A room must be of a minimum size before it can be defined as a bedroom within an HMO.

- 3.5 Following a question from Councillor Campbell, the discount to be applied to selective licences including a discount for eligible portfolio landlords was explained.
- 3.6 Councillor Wise said that the additional scheme for HMOs is very good and thanked officers for their hard work. She asked about the current situation regarding the proposed selective licensing scheme and whether officers thought the scheme would be successful when an application is made to the Secretary of State. The Director of Housing Services said that her team is committed to submitting the application because it is considered to be of benefit to this borough. Central government had asked for applications to be paused during this pandemic, so now was not the right time for an application to be made. It was her understanding that if an authority puts forward a convincing argument to the Secretary of State regarding the need for a borough wide selective licensing scheme, then the application would be approved. Officers were currently focussing on residents who are struggling during this pandemic. They also intend to work with landlords, encouraging them to retain their tenants when the moratorium for evictions has been lifted.
- 3.7 Councillor Wise reminded officers that the ward boundaries were changing and that any future application to Secretary of State would need to reflect the new ward boundaries.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the proposed Additional Licensing Scheme fee for HMOs as outlined in paragraph 5 of the report be approved: and
- (ii) the proposed Selective Licensing Scheme fee, which will be part of the application to the Secretary of State, as outlined in paragraph 6 of the report be approved.

The meeting ended at 7.55pm.

Chair