

Regulatory & Appeals Committee Minutes

Date: 4 December 2018

Time: 7.00 - 7.36 pm

PRESENT: Councillor J A Savage (In the Chair)

Councillors: Mrs L Clarke (OBE), M Clarke, A Collingwood, R Gaffney, A R Green, I McEnnis, R Raja, D Shakespeare (OBE) and Mrs J Wassell.

19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from C Etholen.

20 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Regulatory and Appeals Committee held on 2 July 2018 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman

21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

22 ANIMAL WELFARE REGULATIONS 2018

A report was submitted which sought agreement for the adoption of the provisions of the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) Regulations 2018, and approval for the introduction of fees payable from animal licensing applications. The report also requested that the Head of Housing and Environment be given delegated authority to carry out the powers and functions contained within the regulations.

The report stated that the provisions of the Animal Welfare Regulations 2018 had come into force on 1 October 2018, under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and would contribute to a thriving economy by providing protection from crime and allowing lawful businesses to continue to operate. The new regulations would introduce an updated licensing system in England for five activities involving animals, namely selling animals as pets, boarding for cats or dogs, hiring out horses, dog breeding and keeping or training animals for exhibition.

Members were informed that if an applicant was running more than one licensable animal related activity each would be assessed separately and set out in one licence. Existing licences granted under the old legislation that were in force on 1 October 2018 would remain valid until the expiry date and would then be renewed under the new regulations. Refusal to grant a licence would be subject to an appeal hearing by a panel of Members drawn from the Regulatory and Appeals Committee.

It was emphasised that the inspection process under the new regulations would be much more comprehensive requiring a qualified inspector to conduct the inspections. Under the new arrangements the relevant premises would be provided with a `risk rating` based on the level to which it met the standards set out in the regulations and guidance. This would fundamentally determine the length of the licence issued for a period of between 1-3 years. In addition it would become necessary for the inspector to hold a level 3 certificate granted by a body recognised and regulated by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation`.

The report also gave mention to the revised fees as set out at (Appendix A) to the report. This specified that they had been costed to reflect actual officer time required and would be revised annually to ensure that they continued to do so and therefore be cost neutral to the Council.

A Member queried whether the provisions of the new regulations would encompass the increasing level of dog walkers in the district. The presenting officer confirmed this in the affirmative where as part of the service they also took them home, stating that this was an additional area the legislation sought to address. Another Member sought clarification on how officers would differentiate between commercial breeders and those dog keepers who carried out this activity as a hobby. The presenting officer stated that officers would rely on local information regarding those breeders operating as a business, and thereby be required to hold a dog breeding licence.

RECOMMENDED That:

- (i) The provisions of the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 be adopted
- (ii) The powers and functions contained within the new regulations be delegated to the Head of Housing and Environment
- (iii) The fees payable in connection with animal licensing applications be introduced

23 POLLING DISTRICT AND POLLING PLACES REVIEW 2018

A report was submitted which requested that feedback from the consultation responses received with regard to the changes to Polling Districts and Polling Places as set out at Appendix E to the report be considered and agreed. This would then be referred to Council for its endorsement at its meeting on 10 December 2018.

The report stated that the Polling District and Polling Places review had commenced within the Wycombe District on 1 October and had ended on 29 October 2018. A total of 13 responses had been received ranging from no change

to several location changes based on necessity, convenience and fairness of allocation.

The report highlighted that the statutory responsibility for reviewing parliamentary polling districts and places rested with WDC. The legislative requirements regarding their designation were summarised at paragraph 8 of the report.

A polling district was defined as a geographical area created by a sub division of a UK parliamentary constituency for the purposes of a UK Parliamentary election. The Polling Place was defined as the building or area in which polling stations would be selected by the Returning Officer, ensuring that stations were within easy reach of all electors from across the district.

A full summary of the responses received were set out in Appendix E of the report and Members were invited to consider whether to (i) agree all the changes advised, or (ii) to reject all of the recommendations listed and to maintain the status quo, or (iii) to amend the arrangements to reflect some of the suggestions made.

A Member commented on the possible move of Chiltern Wood School polling station to Mapledean Nursery, stating that this would not be a viable solution as there was a single track road to get to both Mapledean and to the school causing various problems with limited parking spaces.

Another Member asked what was being done to rectify the issue of having polling stations in a different ward to which it served. It was emphasised that these situations were due to necessity in the struggle to find suitable locations for use. Due to the level of expense, mobile stations were not considered to be a viable option.

Members considered the responses in some detail, and agreed the following for recommendation to Council.

Chiltern Wood School (WA Abbey) - No change (status quo)

Oakridge School (WB Abbey) – No change (status quo)

Micklefield Community Centre (WK) – The polling district to be split and have the second polling place at Hicks Farm Rise Community Room.

Clare Foundation (AD) – Move to Golden Cross Public House.

RECOMMENDED: That the changes to the Polling Districts and Polling Places as set out at Appendix E to the report be agreed, subject to the comments set out above.

A report was submitted which requested that a minor amendment be made to the parish boundary within Lacey Green and Bledlow cum Saunderton, whereby 3 properties currently in the Lacey Green parish would be moved to that of Bledlow cum Saunderton. Based upon this parish amendment a formal request would need to be made to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England for a consequential amendment to the ward boundaries between the two parishes. A map of the existing boundary and the proposed boundary were attached at Appendix A to the report.

The Full Council meeting scheduled for 10 December would then consider whether to approve the requested change.

The report highlighted that WDC as the principal council had agreed to undertake a Community Governance Review in July 2018 to amend the electoral arrangements of the parish council. As such a consultation of local resident and other interested parties had been conducted in the relevant parishes running for a 3 week period from 8 - 29 October. A total of two responses had been received following 8 individual letters having been sent to residents of three properties that the change would affect. These were presented at paragraph 15 and 16 of the report.

The report stated that any changes agreed to the electoral arrangements would become effective from the next full parish elections, currently scheduled for May 2019. Due to the recent announcement however for the creation of a single unitary council for the whole of Bucks as of 1 April 2020, there was a possibility that the parish elections may be moved.

A Member questioned the cost and officer time implications if this minor change was effected. The presenting officer reassured the meeting that this would be minimal in both cases.

RECOMMENDED: That

- (i) A minor change to the parish boundary be made to move 3 properties from the parish of Lacey Green to the parish of Bledlow cum Saunderton.
- (ii) A formal request be made to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England for a consequential amendment to the ward boundaries between Bledlow and Bradenham and Lacey Green, Speen and the Hampdens District wards based on the defined Parish amendment.

Chairman

The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:

Ian Hunt - Democratic Services Manager

Iram Malik	- Democratic Services Officer
Matt Rae	- Electoral Services Manager
Neil Stannett	- Environmental Health Manager