

Knutsford Town Council

Town Clerk: Adam Keppel-Green

Council Offices, Toft Road, Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 6TA

01565 653929 www.knutsfordtowncouncil.gov.uk

townclerk@knutsfordtowncouncil.gov.uk



Kim Evans
Licensing Team Leader
Cheshire East Council
By Email

Friday 17th May 2024

Dear Ms Evans,

REVIEW OF LICENSING POLICY

Knutsford Town Council seeks to play an active role in the administration of Knutsford and wishes to be able to review licensing applications during the relevant consultation periods. However, the council's ability to do this is hampered by the current policy of Cheshire East Council not to publicise the applications for premises licenses. As you will be aware, should the Town Councillors wish to review the detail of an application, for example layout plans etc, they are told to visit Macclesfield Town Hall which is inconvenient and simply means we are unable to review applications.

You are currently reviewing the Cheshire East Council Licensing Policy, and the Town Council requests that you introduce policy to:

- Publish licensing applications in full on the Cheshire East Council website so that those wishing to submit comments can do so with all the relevant information without having to attend Macclesfield Town Hall
- Issue a weekly notification of registered applications to town and parish councils across the borough, with links to the full applications

This would be similar to how the council publishes details of planning applications. Many other councils have similar systems, for example:

- Stroud (district) – parishes are sent the details as published online, but the district council will supply the full application on request.
- Dorset (unitary) – parishes are sent a weekly email listing all licensing applications open for consultation with direct links to the full licensing application. It's Statement of Licensing Policy expressly refers to notifying parishes of applications.

- Chichester (district) – The full applications are published online, with a portal which enables users to find previous applications and decisions. It's Statement of Licensing Policy expressly refers to consulting parishes.
- Wiltshire (unitary) – Individual emails are sent to parishes with application information and a link to the website for the full application. It's Statement of Licensing Policy expressly refers to consulting parishes.

The Town Council believes that the council's current approach of requiring visits to Macclesfield Town Hall is outdated and lacks transparency. It is directly contrary to your council's corporate policy:

- It is not OPEN as it reduces transparency, information which could be made available to the public is obscured.
- It is not FAIR as it creates a barrier to people accessing information, this affects those without transport or means to access Macclesfield Town Hall such as those working
- It is not GREEN as it requires people to travel to Macclesfield rather than access information remotely which increases carbon emissions

The Town Council considers that the review of licensing policy presents an ideal opportunity for Cheshire East Council to implement a fairer and more transparent system for publishing information about licensing applications. This will particularly enable the Town Council to play a more active role in the licensing system and provide informed comments on applications from within our areas.

Yours sincerely,



Adam Keppel-Green

Town Clerk

cc. Cllrs Coan, Dean and Gardiner – Knutsford Ward
Cllrs Moreton and Kain – Licensing Committee Chair/Deputy