

Chair of Licensing Report

The Council's Licensing Team continues to be extremely busy responding to the public concerns regarding the operation of the town's licensed premises, in accordance with Government guidelines. Over 2000 business contacts providing advice and support with covid-secure guidance have been undertaken. Regular updates to the website & the licenced trade have also been provided as local restrictions have changed. 25 Community Protection Warnings and 6 Notices have been issued to address covid issues across hospitality and close contact sectors.

In the main, strong and positive dialogue continues to be established with businesses and most of the town's licensed premises are following and implementing the measures positively with regards to the Government's social distancing requirements and regulations. Regular business advice has been communicated via email, letter drop and a series of street walks to support compliance. However, there have been a small number of premises that the Council and working with partner agencies have required further intervention around their Covid operating procedures. Officers have worked hard to ensure compliance and many businesses have responded positively. We continue to take a balanced approach. Unfortunately, it has been necessary to take enforcement action on a small number of business premises that have refused to comply. To date, 8 Prohibition Notices have been issued, a summons has been issued under Licensing Act regulations and a premises has been subject to a direction for closure due to their persistent breach of the Government's Coronavirus Regulations and action has been taken by a number of partners to address this for the safety of the town.

Taxi licensing now operating via postal applications, but all usual checks in place. Issues with knowledge test and safeguarding training are being addressed with third party providers. Proactive intervention work reinstated in relation to targeted vehicle safety checks.