



LICENSING AND ENFORCEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

MEETING : Tuesday, 9th February 2016

PRESENT : Cllrs. Randle, C. Witts and Pullen

Officers in Attendance

Vikki Fennell, Solicitor from One Legal
Darren Mountford, Senior Licensing and Markets Officer
Rebecca Tuck, Licensing Enforcement Officer
Tony Wisdom, Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES : None.

13. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Councillor Pullen was appointed Chair of the meeting. He introduced those present and outlined the procedure for the appeal hearing.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made on this occasion.

15. APPEAL AGAINST DECISION TO REFUSE TO GRANT A PERMIT FOR AN A BOARD FOR ROOTS COFFEE AND COMMUNITY CIC

Licensing and Enforcement Officer

The Licensing and Enforcement Officer introduced her report which detailed an appeal by Mr Ian Meredith against the decision to refuse an application for a permit to place an A-board on the highway under the Highways Act 1980 by Roots Coffee and Community CIC of 69, Alvin Street, Gloucester GL1 3EH.

She outlined the background to application and drew Members' attention to the Guide for Licensing Advertising Boards on the Highway attached to the report as Appendix 1.

She advised that an application to place an advertising sign on the highway had been received on 22 September 2015 and is attached to the report at Appendix 2.

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The application was circulated for consultation with Development Control (Planning Services), Environmental Protection, Heritage and Gloucestershire Highways, The responses were detailed at Section 5 of the report.

Mr Meredith was informed that the application had been refused on 11 January 2016 and he subsequently appealed the decision which resulted in the appeal being referred to the Sub-Committee for determination.

Mr Ian Meredith

Mr Meredith wished to place on record his appreciation of the helpful manner in which the licensing and enforcement officer had kept him informed of the progress with the application and appeal.

He advised Members that he was a volunteer at Roots which was a voluntary organisation set up to serve the community. Profits were ploughed back into the community and the premises were also a community hub.

As the premises were located in a side street at 69, Alvin Street the sign was useful in directing people there. The main objection centred on the sign not being in Alvin Street as it was not possible to site it on that street. He noted that the sign was within three metres of the intersection with Alvin Street on a wide pavement and was unobtrusive.

He noted that there had been no complaints and he questioned why the Council should raise an objection when the community had not.

He noted that the Council was trying to be more involved with the community and, where possible, to support community projects where there were no cost implications.

He believed that the application was a prime example of where the Council could provide such support at no cost. He drew Members' attention to the word 'normally' in the guidance and made an appeal for common sense.

The Chair stated that all Members supported the work of Roots but the Sub-Committee had to have due regard to legislation. He asked for further details of the work undertaken in order for the sub-Committee to see how the sign impacted on the work of the organisation.

Mr Meredith stated that Roots provided a community hub for Kingsholm. The NHS, Gloucester City Homes and the City Council booked rooms in the premises and other activities including craft based sessions attracted people from further afield.

In answer to a question, he estimated that 70 per cent of the coffee bar trade was from Kingsholm but events attracted a broader attendance.

Councillor Randle was advised that during the Rugby World Cup an overly zealous worker on behalf of the sponsors had removed two signs. The Council had replaced one and the Rugby World Cup organisation had replaced the other.

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Councillor Witts complimented Roots for enhancing the area and asked how reliant the organisation was on passing trade for viability.

Mr Meredith stated that it was hard to quantify as the organisation had only been there for one year and that it was difficult to measure.

Councillor Randle was advised that there was affixed sign on the wall of the Albert Hotel advertising the premises.

Mr Meredith had nothing to add to his statement.

The Licensing and Enforcement Officer drew Members' attention to the options available to them at paragraph 2.1.

The Sub-Committee withdrew to consider their decision and upon their return the Chair read the following statement:-

The Sub-Committee have read the report, listened to Mr Meredith's representations and noted the objections.

The decision of the Sub-Committee is to refuse to grant the application because Members are not satisfied that the A-board complies with the Council's policy for licensing A-boards on the highway. The A-board does not comply for a number of reasons including size, position and location.

RESOLVED that the application be refused.

The Chair advised that the Sub-Committee believed that what was needed was a direction sign and would suggest to the applicant that he considered this. The Council would be happy to offer any assistance that it could.

Time of commencement: 6.15 pm hours

Time of conclusion: 7.00 pm hours

Chair