

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 9 January 2019

**Present: Councillor Joy Podbury (Chairman)
Councillors Hastie (Vice-Chairman), Dr Hall and Simmons**

Officers in Attendance: Nollaig Hallihan (Food and Safety Team Leader) and Mark O'Callaghan (Democratic Services Officer)

Other Members in Attendance: None

APOLOGIES

GP8/18 Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs Thomas. Councillors Ellis, Gooda and Lewis-Grey were not present.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

GP9/18 There were no disclosable pecuniary or other significant interests declared at the meeting.

NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS WISHING TO SPEAK

GP10/18 There were no Visiting Members who had registered as wishing to speak.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING DATED 17 OCTOBER 2018

GP11/18 Members reviewed the minutes. No amendments were proposed.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting dates 17 October 2018 be approved as a correct record.

CONSOLIDATED MODEL BYELAWS FOR SKIN PIERCING AND OTHER BEAUTY TREATMENTS

GP12/18 Nollaig Hallihan, Food and Safety Team Leader, introduced the report which included the following comments:

- Tunbridge Wells was operating under existing byelaws issued in 1998 and 2016.
- The Department of Health had revised and consolidated the two byelaws into one which also took account of recent technological developments.
- It was important for the industry to be regulated effectively due to the public health implications of the treatments being offered.
- The new byelaws had recently been adopted by Maidstone Borough Council and were in the process of being adopted by Swale Borough Council. Adoption of the same byelaws by all three authorities in the shared service would help bring consistency and best practice across the partnership.
- The new single set of byelaws would give clarity to all businesses and ensure clear and consistent public health controls.
- There were few practical changes for existing business. However, in the new financial year, all businesses would be advised of the changes and visited to ensure compliance.

The discussion included consideration of the following additional matters:

- The 1998 byelaws covered acupuncture and skin piercing. The 2016 byelaws extended controls to microblading (eyebrow tattooing) and cosmetic piercing (piercing other than of ears and noses).
- Disposable needles were recommended to eliminate the risk of cross-contamination. 90 per cent of practitioners also used autoclaves to sterilise equipment despite not being required.
- There were no reported cases of HIV being transmitted through a related business in Tunbridge Wells. Two complaints of other infections were later established to be due to poor personal hygiene after the procedure rather than the procedure itself.
- Reference within the report to a 'potential' health and safety project run next year had been confirmed following approval of the required resources. The project would be completed during financial year 2019/20.
- All inspection resources were in-house. Three members of the seven person team were already qualified with two further members due to qualify in April 2019. The remaining two members would be trained and qualified next year.
- All new businesses were inspected on first registration but legislation did not provide for regular inspections without due cause. Implementation of new byelaws was such a due cause.
- Staff and processes changed over time and it was unsatisfactory to not be able to re-inspect more regularly.
- Businesses were required to register and this was provided for under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act. London Boroughs operated an annual licensing scheme under separate legislation. Kent authorities were pressing for a similar scheme but this was not currently possible and would be hampered by a lack of resource.
- Inspections would initially be unannounced but if the proprietors were unavailable an appointment would be made.
- Other methods of engaging with businesses were being explored, these might include seminars, training sessions and newsletters.

RESOLVED – That the Department of Health consolidated Model Byelaws for acupuncture, tattooing, semi-permanent skin colouring, cosmetic piercing and electrolysis, as set out at Appendix A to the report, be adopted.

URGENT BUSINESS

GP13/18 There was no urgent business.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

GP14/18 The next meeting was scheduled to be held on Wednesday 3 April 2019, at 6.30pm in Committee Room A at the Town Hall.

NOTES:

The meeting concluded at 6.45 pm.

An audio recording of this meeting is available on the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council website.