



REPORT TO:	Licensing Committee
DATE:	4 th December 2013
LEAD OFFICER:	Head of Planning and Public Protection
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SUBJECT:	Forward Work Programme 2013/14

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.2 To advise Members of a proposal to amend the existing Forward Work Programme for Licensing.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 The existing Forward Work Programme is attached, at appendix 1, for Members information.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Members approved the existing forward work programme in June 2013. Unfortunately, due to a number of unforeseen circumstances, Officers have been unable to adhere to its requirements, resulting in Officers having to reprioritise their time.

3.2 It has taken a considerable amount of Officer time to prepare for the implementation of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013. This piece of legislation was rushed in by Parliament, giving Local Authorities very little warning; it has therefore had to take priority over planned work of the Section. Officers have had to compile reports to Cabinet and County Council to secure the correct delegations and authorisations together with setting the fees for such applications. Officers have undertaken a detailed fee setting exercise to ensure that they can be confident that the fees are fully justified.

3.3 Members may be aware that the Section is in the process of moving over from one licensing database to another. Officers have been heavily involved in data mapping and also envisage that they will have to devote a large proportion of their time to ensuring that all relevant data is in

place and fully functional, once the transfer of data is complete. Additionally there have been a number of unforeseen delays in the transition process, which has meant that any work, since August, that has been processed using our existing database will not automatically be transferred to the new system. Officers will have to manually re-enter this data when the new system goes live.

- 3.4 To add to this burden, staffing levels have been reduced due to the Licensing Support Officer having to take maternity leave sooner than expected. This has had a knock on effect on the remainder of the licensing team who are having to absorb the workload of the Licensing Support Officer.
- 3.5 There are a number of complex policy reviews that need to be undertaken, which will require extensive research by Officers, for example taxi licensing, Sex Establishment, Street Trading. Members will be aware that work is ongoing with the taxi licensing review and it is envisaged that part of the policy will be brought before Members early next year for consideration.
- 3.6 Officers would therefore like to present to Members in March a two year Forward Work Programme incorporating the above policy reviews.

4. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 For Members to note the contents of the report and, approve for Officers to present a revised Forward Work Programme to the next Licensing Committee in March.